

Some changes you make. Some just happen. Here's how to manage both on your dairy

No two weeks on a dairy look the same. You rebalance the ration, regroup a pen, bring on a new milker. Meanwhile the bunker composition changes, the weather turns, and a number drifts without anyone touching it. Every one of those shows up in your data eventually. The question is whether you can connect the change to the number while it still matters.

THE SHORT VERSION

- Change on a dairy comes in two kinds: **planned** (a decision you made) and **unplanned** (something that happened to you)
- Planned changes need a **record**. Log what you changed and when, so you can check later whether it did what you wanted
- Unplanned changes need **watching**. You can only react to a shift you can see, and the **Spade Farm Agent** can do the watching for you, summarizing what moved so you don't have to dig through every number yourself
- The two meet in the middle: once you've found an unplanned change, log it too. That's how a bad week becomes something the farm learns from
- Spade Farm handles both. **Farm Timeline** is the record. The **Spade Farm Agent**, the daily **Dashboard**, **Farm Stats** and **Compare** are how you watch

Two kinds of change

EACH KIND NEEDS A DIFFERENT HABIT

A DECISION YOU MADE

Planned

You raise the energy in the ration to push milk. You regroup fresh cows. You start a new hoof care protocol. You made the call, you know the date, and you have an outcome in mind.

NEEDS A RECORD

Farm Timeline

SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO YOU

Unplanned

Forage quality shifts as you move through the bunker. A heat stretch settles in. A pump starts running rough. Nobody decided anything, but the cows notice anyway.

NEEDS WATCHING

Spade Farm Agent

Dashboard

Farm Stats

Weather KPIs

Compare

WHERE THE TWO MEET

Once you've found an unplanned change, **log it on the timeline as well**. Backdate it to when it started and give it a category. Now it sits alongside everything you did on purpose, and the next time the numbers move, you're choosing between everything that actually happened, not just the changes you planned.

A weekly routine that works

- 1 Log changes the day you decide on them.** Ration changes, protocol adjustments, staffing. Thirty seconds each.
- 2 Check your core numbers daily, or have the agent do it.** Intake, milk, components, SCC, and weather when it's hot. You're looking for anything that broke from its usual range. Your agent can be an extra set of eyes: ask it for a summary of what moved, or save a daily check as a skill and run it with one tap.
- 3 Review the timeline in team meetings,** ideally with your nutritionist or herd manager. What changed, what moved, and what needs a closer look? Filter by category and the agenda builds itself.

Common questions

Which numbers should I check every day?

Start with dry matter intake, milk per cow, components and somatic cell count. Add THI during hot weather. Those catch most feed, health and environmental shifts early. Or ask the Spade Farm Agent to summarize what moved.

Does tracking a change prove it caused the result?

No. It shows what moved around the time of the change. Use it to narrow down what to look at, and if the decision is expensive, test it properly with comparable groups.

Does the Spade Farm Agent use my timeline?

Yes. The agent reads your Farm Timeline events, so when it explains why a number moved, it can point to the changes you logged around the same time. The more you log, the more useful its answers get.

Want to see what the last few changes on your dairy actually did?

Your Spade contact can sit down with your data, backfill the changes you remember, and walk through the numbers around each one.