

Why Robotics?

COTY GOODWIN


About me

- 5th generation dairy farmer
 - Grandview Farm, Gordonsville, VA
- 2015 Virginia Tech graduate
 - CSES & Agronomy
- Recently married



About Grandview

- Milk over 100 cows mixed herd
 - Jerseys, Holsteins, Crossbreeds
- Compost bedded pack, retrofitted two Lely A4s
 - Automatic calf feeder
- Family owned & operated




Why robots?

- Milking in a stanchion barn prior to robots
 - Labor, time, production
- People management vs. equipment management
- All that data without DHIA

But do they work?

- With the right cows & right management robots are better than a traditional parlor
- Cell count, cleanliness
 - Make highest premium, visually not as clean
 - Learning curve on identifying robot sanitation issues



All that DATA!!

- Learning what to look at
- How to look at it
- When to look at it
- What to do when you identify a problem?

DATA continued

- **Training**
 - Courses offered through Lely
- **Technicians**
 - Lely invested in their product and customers
- **Trends**
 - Cow problems vs. herd problems

What's not good?

- **Cold Weather!!!!**
 - Everything can and will freeze
- **T4C not user friendly**
 - Reports limited, creating reports
- **Limited research on robots**
 - Canada

Opportunities to Increase Success

- **Increase profits with better feeding system**
- **Homegrown feeds in robot/less feed**
 - Roasted beans, HMSC, fabba beans, field peas




Opportunities Continued...

- **Rumen health**
 - Protocols for low rumination (off feed cows)
- **More cows/more milk per stall**
 - Attachment time
 - Milk speed
 - Milkings per cow



Do over?

- **Changes**
 - Barn, drainage, retro-fit stanchions, platforms, heating
- **Timing?**
- **Planned growth of herd better**



Conclusion

- **Best decision we've ever made**
 - Time spent wisely
- **Better quality of life**
 - Freedom from milk schedule, flexibility with chores
- **More aligned with consumers' views**

