



Thibault MONNERAY- family farm



Thibault MONNERAY



72 hectares



animal management

REARING CALVES WITH GRAZING FOSTER COWS FOR BETTER RESULTS AND SIMPLIFIED WORK

As soon as he settled into organic dairy production in 2018, Thibault wanted to set up a grass-fed farming system. Two main objectives: to reduce the working loads as much as possible and to be able to manage the breeding by limiting the time of on-call for better quality of living. He quickly milked his 60 jersey's once a day (2020) and seasonal spring calving. Quite naturally, the question of rearing calves with foster cows arose for reasons of working time and the health of the calves. After 4 years of practice, today there are 45 calves (heifers and veal calves) raised by 15 foster cows. The cows and the calves are doing rotational grazing in spring, which has improved the calves' health in addition to reducing feed costs. The calves start grazing quickly.

The foster cows of the male calves and crossbred females return to the milking parlours when their calves leave for the slaughterhouse. For Thibault, grouped calvings support this technique, but it is not compulsory. Finally, according to him, rearing calves with grazing foster cows only has advantages: fewer health problems, fattening calves reach their slaughter weight one month earlier, grazing heifers and above all comfort and a reduction of his workload.

His advice: Don't hesitate to take the calves out early in spring to have a healthier and more robust herd.

Farmer Interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NhboiwixlOg>



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