



## **Tail Docking Practices in California Dairies: Preliminary Results**

*Noelia Silva-del-Río, Dairy Advisor Tulare County*

*Pete Kistler, DVM*

An ongoing survey is being conducted to determine the tail docking practices in California dairy operations. Large animal veterinarians are being interviewed and the following information is requested from all their clients: herd name, location of the dairy, herd size, and tail docking practices in the dairy.

Preliminary results comprise complete data provided by ten veterinary practitioners in the San Joaquin Valley. Information on dairy operations located in Tulare (n=83), Kings (n=15), Kern (n=4) and Fresno (n=1) counties are included in the preliminary data set. The average herd size is 2,500 cows, ranging from 250 to 12,000. Eleven dairies are docking tails and four dairies used to dock tails but have abandoned that practice. In this preliminary survey, 89.3% (n=103) of the dairies are not docking tails and 86.2% (n=257,242) of the cows are in dairy operations where tail docking is not practiced. Results from this survey suggest tail docking is an uncommon practice in California.

We would like to thank the veterinary practitioners from Valley Vets who participated in this survey and to the veterinary practitioners that have agreed to be interviewed in the future.