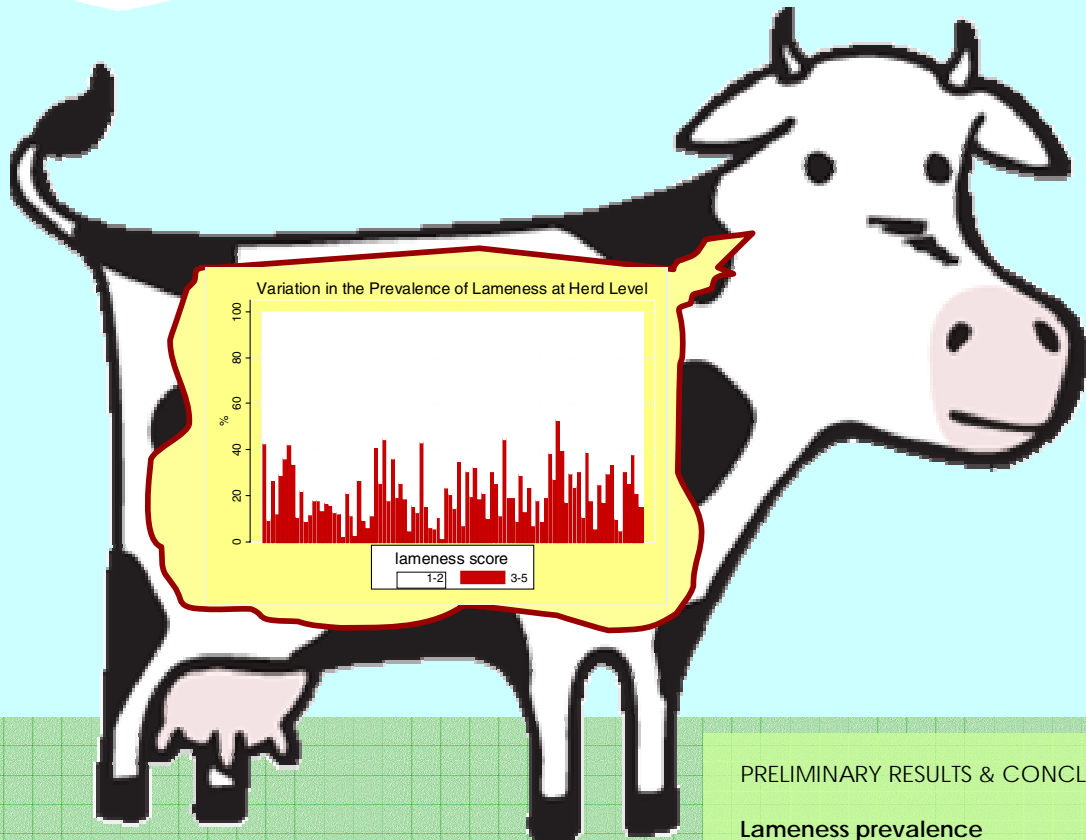


Assessing Lameness of Dairy Herds in Insulated Free Stalls



INTRODUCTION:

Lameness

- one of the most important diseases in modern dairy herds
- influences animal welfare and farm economy

The purpose of this study

- explore prevalence and risk factors for lameness
- evaluate the lameness scoring system carried out indoors, without disturbing the daily routines of a farm

MATERIAL & METHODS:

Sampling

- all voluntary Finnish dairy herds, with an average herdsize 40,
- insulated cubicle free stall built between 1990 and 2002

Lameness scoring

- 92 herds, and 4145 cows scored
- done by a veterinarian (one of 3)
- according to the five scale system described by Sprecher et al. (1997)
- while the cows walked back from the milking station after normal milking

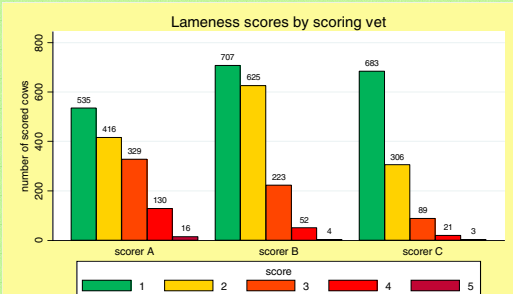
PRELIMINARY RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS:

Lameness prevalence

- 19% at herd level at least moderately lame (scores 3-5)
- Huge variation between herds (2-53%)

Modelling the risk factors

- both the walking surface and the evaluator affect the results, and should be included the model as confounders
- *Is to be continued...*



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