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## ***Farm managers underestimate lameness prevalence in Czech dairy herds***

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### **Abstract**

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Lameness is one of the most serious health and welfare problems faced by dairy cattle. The aim of this study was to assess how aware Czech farm managers were of this problem. The project was carried out on 14 Czech dairy farms. The proportion of lame cows observed (ie prevalence of moderate and severe lameness) on a farm varied between 9 and 64% while the farm managers' estimation ranged between 0 and 20%, showing that lameness prevalence was under-perceived by the Czech farm managers. There were no correlations between the farm managers' estimations and the observed total or severe lameness on each farm. Also, the observed prevalence of lameness did not differ between farms with managers who considered lameness to be a major problem in their herds and managers who did not, although their estimations did differ. The large variation in observed lameness prevalence between farms indicates that there is a large potential for reduction, which must start with increasing the farm managers' awareness of dairy cow lameness.

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