

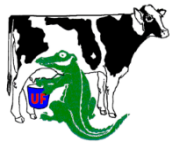
Family farm vs. mega farm in the USA



Albert De Vries

**Department of Animal Sciences
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida, USA
devries@ufl.edu**

UF | IFAS
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA





Een echt familiebedrijf

In de oude kruidenierswinkel werd iedereen nog persoonlijk geholpen. De generaties door blijkt de winkel van de familie Van Beek een echt familiebedrijf. Want zoons of dochters, er werd geholpen achter de toonbank en/of de kassa. Op de foto: Gerrit, Riek, Henk en Nette van Beek.







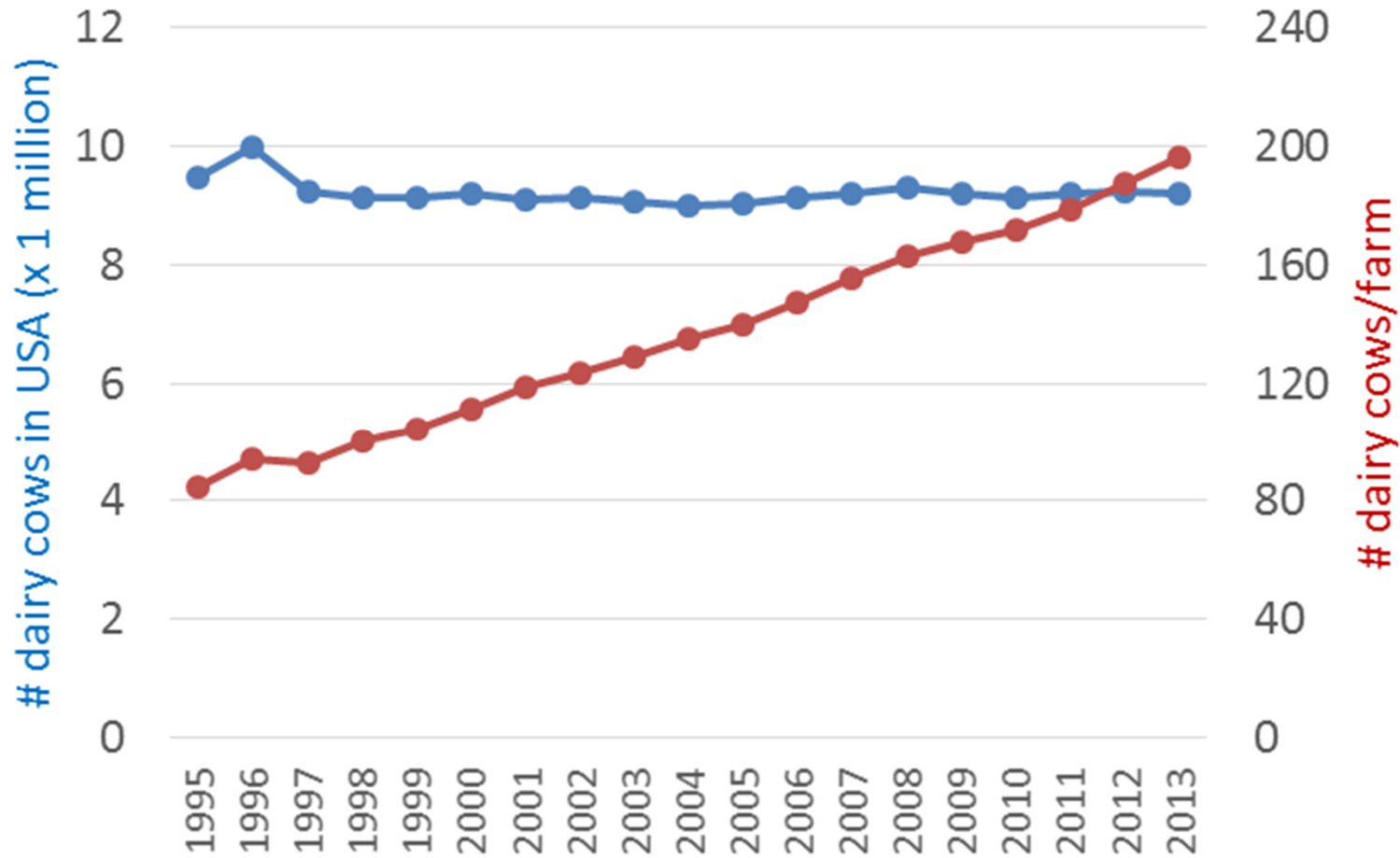
What is the issue?

- Ownership: family vs. corporation?
- Labor: family vs. hired?
- Size: few cows vs. many cows?

Almost all very large US dairy farms are owned by families
Most employees have families too

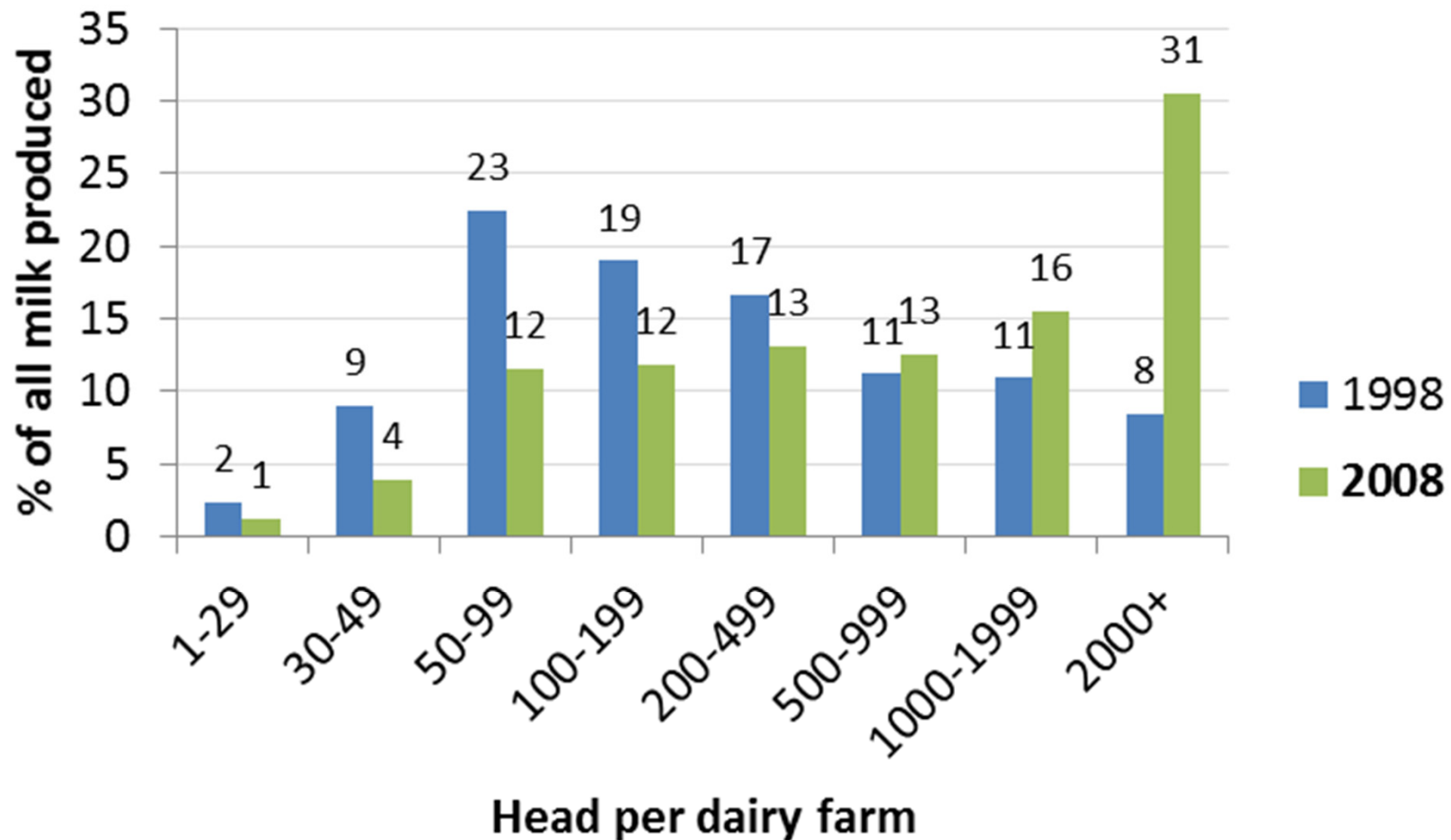


US dairy farm size is increasing



USDA, 2014

2.4% (n=1600) of dairy farms produced 47% of US milk in 2008



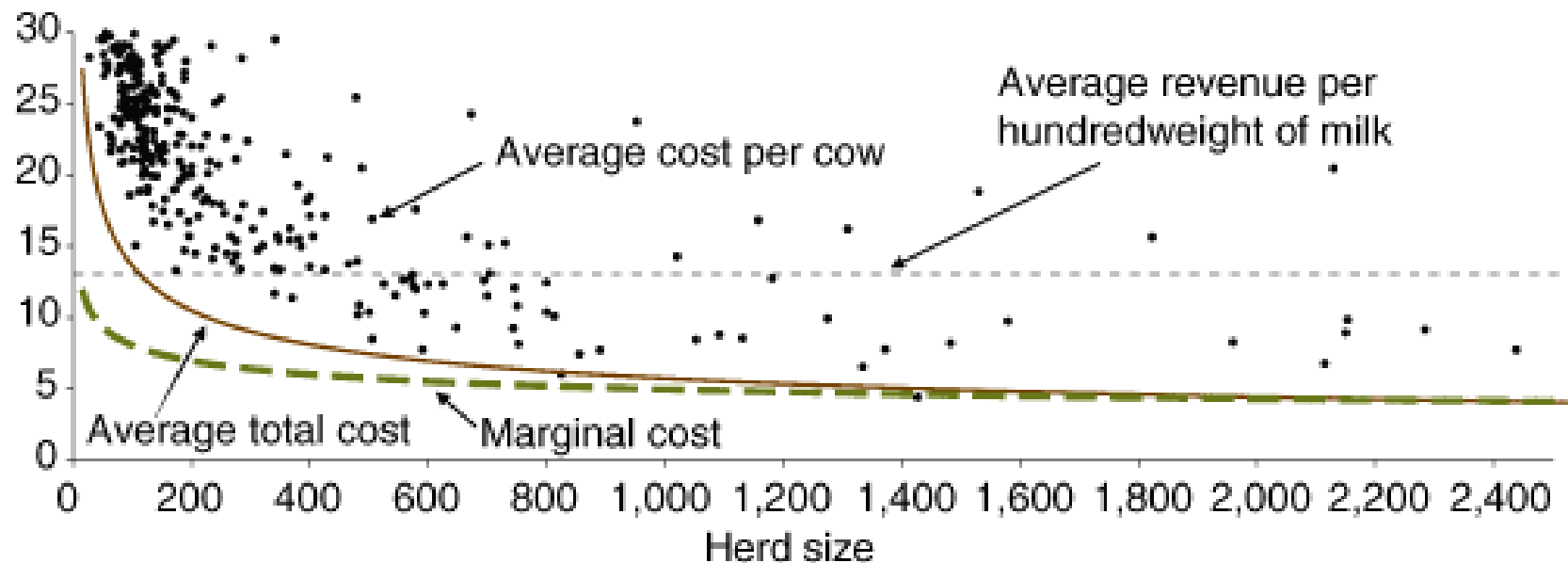
Census of Agriculture (2008)

Larger US farms

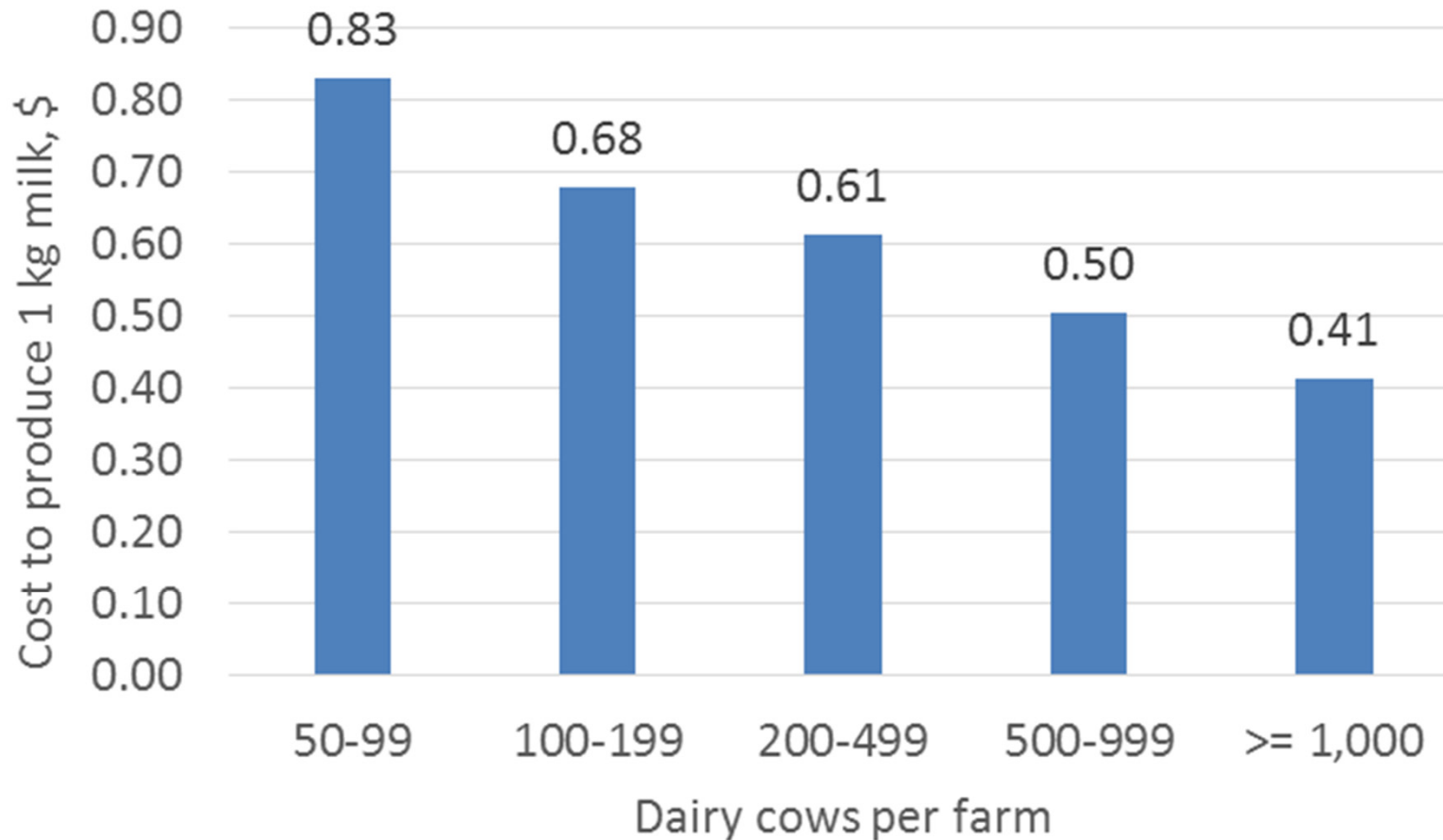
- Cows identified by numbers, not names
- Less access to pasture
- Standardized operating protocols
- Specialized/trained staff
- A business



Large US dairy farms are more efficient

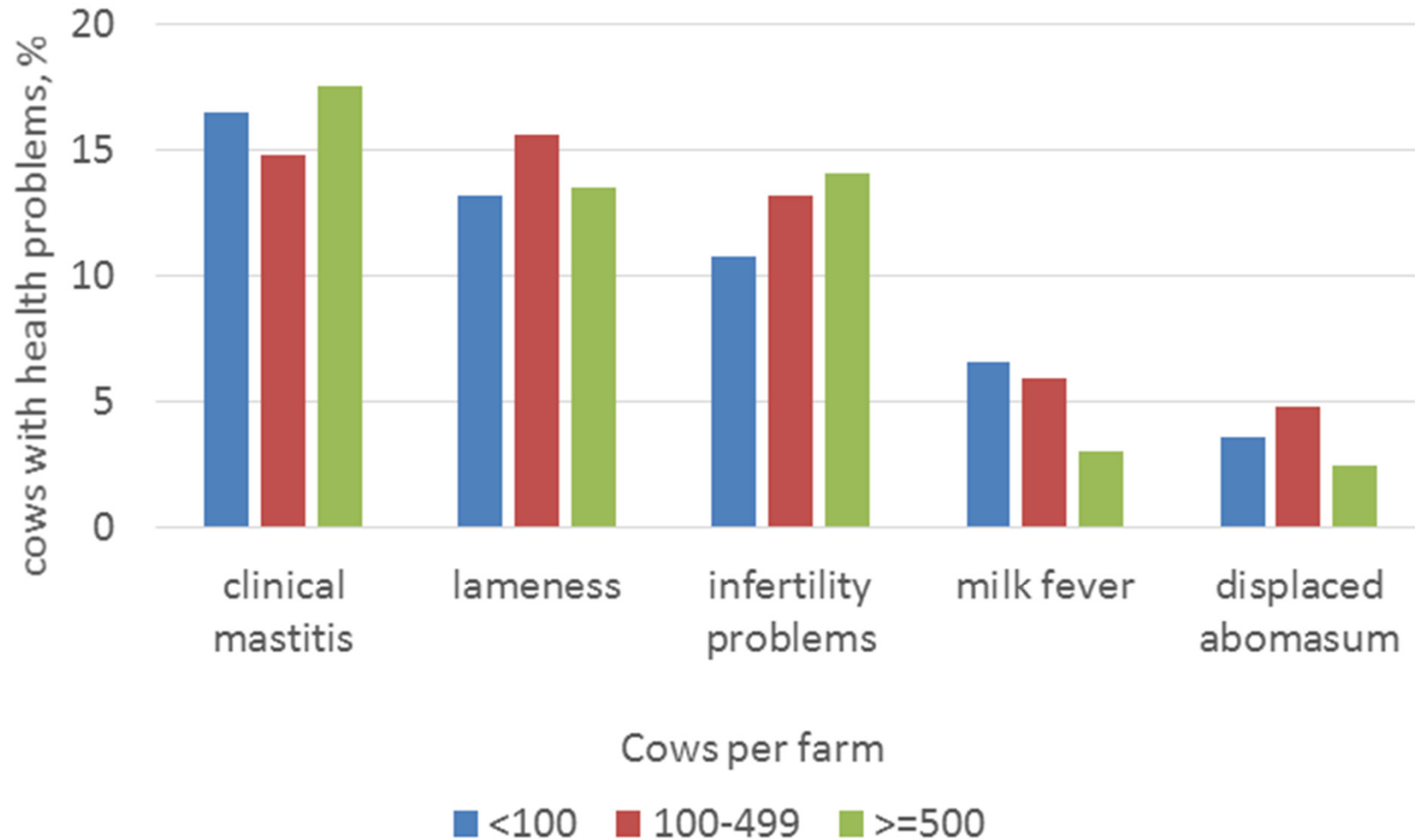


Cost to produce milk in 2012








USDA-ERS, 2014

Health problems



USDA-NAHMS, 2009

Herd size: DHIA (milk test) results

	# cows / farm							
	min	1	51	101	201	501	1001	2001
	max	50	100	200	500	1000	2000	9999
Number of farms	2912	4850	2823	1464	463	199	71	
Herd size	40	71	138	303	691	1346	3211	
Annual cull rate, %	36	37	38	38	39	40	41	
Annual death rate, %	4	5	6	6	7	6	7	
Somatic cell count	255	249	243	233	210	201	214	
Calving interval, months	14.0	13.8	13.7	13.5	13.2	13.0	13.1	
Annual milk yield, kg/cow	8517	9318	9722	10361	11294	11554	11356	

"At Threemile Canyon Farms, we believe that sound business practices and sound environmental practices go hand in hand."

- 32,000 dairy cows
- 36,000 youngstock
- 860,000 kg milk/day
- 16,000 hectares crops
- >200 employees



Bringing valued
products to
customers while
treating the land,
people and animals
with respect.

<http://www.threemilecanyonfarms.com>
Oregon, USA

Threemile Canyon Farms

Goals and Expectations

- “Manager: *My job is to set the goals, provide training and tools to achieve goals, set critical control points (CCPs) and monitor progress.*”
 - “Our focus is on prevention (vaccines, cow comfort, nutrition, critical control points)”
 - “It is not normal for cows to get sick or to die.”
 - “Its about nutrition and management.”
 - “We undergo a twice a year animal welfare audit.”
 - “Antibiotics and hormones are not looked upon well by the general public and are a risk to our operation.”
-

a US view: larger dairy farms ...

- Are the future
 - Profitable, efficient, sufficient cow welfare
 - Small farms may survive
- Fit in landscape: large open spaces
- Match American attitude of growth, self-reliance, rewarding success

