A deductive approach to animal health planning in organic dairy farming: *Method description*

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**AIM:** Introduce a participatory and farm-centric methodological approach, facilitating the comprehension of farm specific processes and encouraging farmers to increase animal health status.

**PRECONDITIONS:**

- **Vital key variables** that play a role in the way the system behaves are specified once for all farms.
- **Current animal health status** is determined for each farm on the basis of farm protocols, milk recordings, and animal based measurements.
- **Farmer, local veterinarian, agricultural advisor, and scientist** meet on-farm in a ‘round table’ situation.

**IMPACT MATRIX:** Provides an overview of complex situations and facilitates a **structured debate**.

The interconnectedness of 13 system variables is assessed at farm level.

The direct influence from one variable (line) on another (column) is scored with:
- 0 (no influence),
- 1 (weak change),
- 2 (proportional change),
- 3 (strong change).

**BENEFITS:** Based on the on-farm assessment and the impact matrix analysis the discussion results in the **formulation of farm-individual goals** in relation to the animal health status and the **identification of measures** that are expected to most likely improve the farm specific situation.

The participatory process facilitates **knowledge exchange** and **collective learning**.

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