



Media release from Grains2Milk

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(300 words)

Head: Plan ahead to cut heat stress

With the summer heat finally fading, now is a good time to think about what can be done during the cooler months to better manage heat stress in dairy herds next summer.

Dr Steve Little, Dairy Australia's Grains2Milk program leader said a good place to begin is *Cool Cows*, the new booklet and web-resource produced by Dairy Australia.

Cool Cows takes farmers through the process of reviewing how cows coped in the last hot season and identifying improvements to help cows cope better next year.

"You can use local weather data and your herd records to look at what impact heat stress had on your herd's milk production and reproductive performance," Dr Little said.

Many people are surprised to hear that heat stress can occur with temperatures as low as 25 deg C, given certain humidity levels.

"It's easy to get caught out when the hot weather arrives."

The most important step is to provide access to shade. For many, that might involve installing shade facilities, which can't be done overnight.

"The quieter months are the ideal time to do this," he said.

Dr Little suggested using the cooler months to review the farm's shade and cooling infrastructure and strategies used during hot weather and to plan for what needs to be done before the next hot season.

Management options such as better placement of troughs, improving trough flow rates, providing shade in the dairy yard or installing sprinklers needed to be done well in advance.

Farmers can work through the Actions Generator tool on the *Cool Cows* website to identify what can be done on their farm, and print out a personalised action sheet.

Cool Cows resources have been developed with funding from Dairy Australia and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

For more information visit www.coolcows.com.au or www.dairyaustralia.com.au

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image: Click on the following link to receive high res files of images by automatic email:

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Caption: The cooler months are an ideal time to plan and install heat stress management options such as shade or sprinklers at the dairy yard or installing or shade structures in paddocks.

About Grains2Milk (background information for media)

The Grains2milk program provides dairy farmers with the training, resources and support they need to make better decisions about using grains and concentrates in their businesses. The program is funded by dairy farmers through Dairy Australia.

Media contact: This media release has been issued by Monks Communication on behalf of Grains2Milk. Contact Monks Communication for inquiries about photos and interviews or to have your contact details removed or updated on our distribution list:

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