



Media release from Grains2Milk

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(400 words)

Head: It's cool to be cool, if you are a dairy cow

With the hot weather already on our doorstep, dairy farmers are being reminded to take steps to keep their cows cool this summer. And it can be done for little or no cost.

Dairy Australia's Dr Steve Little explained that cows feel the heat as soon as the temperature rises above 25 degrees Celcius.

"Cows feel hot before we do, and when it affects their production, it affects your hip pocket. But it doesn't have to; simple steps can make a big difference," said Dr Little.

The first step is to go on alert. It's easy to keep an eye on how your cows are coping and on the weather by using the Weather Forecaster tool on the Cool Cows website.

"You can even subscribe to a free alert service that will send you an email when the weather forecast for the area indicates cows will be subject to high or extreme heat stress in the next few days," he said.

This season the Weather Forecaster tool has been expanded to cover more locations in dairy regions, following its popularity last summer.

"Now is the time to be planning what you'll do when you get those alerts."

For little or no cost, you can reduce the impact of heat stress on your cows by:

- Providing access to shade and cool drinking water at all times, even if this means changing the paddock rotation.
- Sprinkle cows with in the dairy yard before afternoon milking (and before morning milking if needed)
- Wet concrete in dairy yard for an hour before cows arrive.
- Changing milking times so cows are not walking to the dairy in the afternoon heat.
- Altering mating management and nutrition.

"Every dairy yard in Australia should be fitted with sprinklers to provide cows with evaporative cooling. It can be set up very cheaply and as well as keeping your cows cool, it will keep the flies away," said Dr Little.

"In very hot weather may be hardly worth sending cows down the paddock. Instead consider feeding high quality forage or a partial mixed ration on a sacrifice paddock or feed pad close to the dairy with access to shade and sprinklers. Give the cows the best paddocks for grazing overnight when it's cooler," said Dr Little.

For more ideas to keep cows cool, visit www.dairyaustralia.com.au and look out for Cool Cows on-farm events happening this summer.

Contact Steve Little 0400 004 841 email slittle@dairyaustralia.com.au.

ENDS



Image: Cows under water sprinkler

To receive high res image by automatic email, click on the link:

grains2milk_coolcows@monkscom.com.au

Caption: Sprinklers at the dairy yard can be set up very cheaply; as well as keeping your cows cool, it will keep the flies away.

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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