



Newsletter Grab from Grains2Milk

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(450 words)

Head: Keep cows cool this summer

Dairy farmers can be a step ahead of heat stress this summer with the launch of *Cool Cows*, a booklet and series of web-based tools released this month by Dairy Australia's Grains2Milk program.

Cool Cows provides information for dairy farmers and their advisers to keep cows cool and reduce the effects of heat stress which include a drop in milk production, reduced herd fertility and lower milk protein and fat tests. It can also trigger live weight losses and create animal health problems.

Many people are surprised to hear it doesn't take really high temperatures to trigger heat stress in dairy cows. They start to feel uncomfortable once temperatures hit 25 deg C which means heat stress is an issue in all Australian dairying regions, according to Dairy Australia's Grains2Milk program leader Dr Steve Little.

"Heat stress is not just about daily maximum temperature. The length or severity of hot conditions and humidity also contribute to the effect," he said.

The good news is that heat stress can be effectively managed on farm and the benefits are clearly visible.

"Providing ways for cows to stay cool will result in substantial benefits in terms of improved production, better farm profitability and more contented cows."

Cool Cows is full of suggestions to help cows cope in hot weather: ideas to provide shade and evaporative cooling, hot season strategies and ways to monitor how a herd is coping with the heat.

Some heat stress strategies are simple, quick and cheap to put in place, while others are longer term, involving more cost and effort.

Dr Little says dairy farmers need to start planning now to manage heat stress in their herds this season by making the best use of the resources they already have and looking to add to their ability to keep cows cool from year to year.

"The *Cool Cows* web-based tools help you work out what changes will best suit your farm, and be prepared for excessive heat load events in the hot season."

For example, a Weather Forecaster tool lets farmers monitor weather conditions in their region and the anticipated heat load on their herd.

The site's 'Actions Generator' helps farmers develop a list of options in terms of improving shade, evaporative cooling or changing farm management to further combat heat stress.

Dr Little says every dairy farmer will receive a copy of the *Cool Cows* booklet in the mail in late

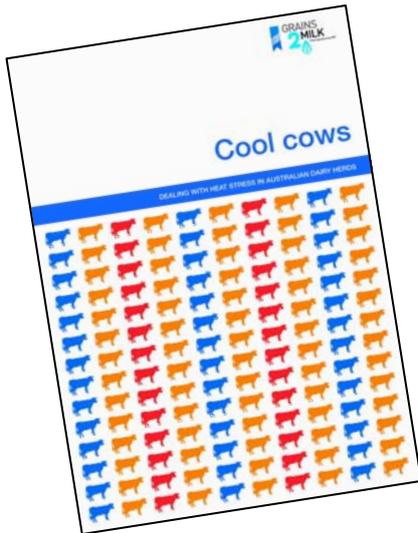
November.

Dairy farmers who do not receive a copy can call Dairy Australia's memberline and a booklet will be posted out ph 1800 004 377.

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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images: Cool Cows book cover & website home page. Click on the following link to receive a high res image by automatic email: grains2milk_keepcowscool@monkscom.com.au

Caption:: *Cool Cows*, is a new resource to help dairy farmers keep cows cool and reduce the effects of heat stress this summer. It includes a booklet and series of web-based interactive tools.

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.

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Note: we are in a poor reception area for mobile phones. Try the landline first.