



# Newsletter Grab from Grains2Milk

For immediate release: 16 January 2009

(350 words)

## **Head: Happy cows are made in the shade**

Nothing beats shade for keeping cows cool in hot weather. It's cheap and a cow's first choice for coping with rising temperatures and humidity.

Options to provide permanent and portable shade are set out in '*Cool Cows*,' a new resource to help farmers deal with heat stress in dairy herds.

*Cool Cows* comes in the form of a booklet and website with interactive tools, produced by Dairy Australia's Grains2Milk program.

Shade should be the first priority in managing heat stress, according to Dairy Australia's Grains2Milk program leader Dr Steve Little.

"Shade protects cows from direct sunlight, reducing the radiant heat load by 50% or more, so it is no wonder that cattle actively seek out shade during hot weather," he said.

Cows eat more and produce more milk when they have access to shade.

Many people are surprised to find it doesn't take really high temperatures to cause heat stress.

"The effect is a combination of temperature and humidity, with dairy cows starting to feel uncomfortable once temperatures hit 25 deg C," he said

Heat stress results in a fall in milk production, reduced herd fertility and lower milk protein and fat content. It can also trigger live weight losses and create animal health problems.

"Providing shade is a good investment. After the initial up-front cost of installation, there's no running costs. Shade from trees, portable structures or buildings don't require electricity or water to run.

The *Cool Cows* booklet and website cover a range of options for planting trees, using portable shade structures or establishing permanent shade in yards and sheds.

If you are caught short on shade this summer, *Cool Cows* also includes easy-to-implement ideas to cope with the hot weather. And if you want to avoid getting caught out next season, *Cool Cows* has an interactive tool to help you plan ahead for a solution that will suit your situation.

*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](http://www.coolcows.com.au) or [www.dairyaustralia.com.au](http://www.dairyaustralia.com.au)

ENDS



**photo:** cows standing under shade from trees;  
Click on the following link to receive high res images by  
automatic email: [grains2milk\\_shade@monkscom.com.au](mailto:grains2milk_shade@monkscom.com.au)  
**Caption:** Shade is king when it comes to keeping cows cool.  
The best time to plant trees was 20 years ago. The next best  
time is now!

## 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:

Lee-Ann Monks ph (07) 5450 0946 mob 0419 349 244 email: [mediareleases@monkscom.com.au](mailto:mediareleases@monkscom.com.au)

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