



DAIRY INFO

W-S Feed & Supplies, Ltd.
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Taking service to another level!

COPING WITH SUMMER!

Heat stress occurs when a dairy cow's heat load is greater than her capacity to dissipate the heat. Cows exhibit signs of heat stress in several ways, such as increased respiratory rates, water intake and sweating, decreased dry matter intake and slower rate of feed passage, decreased milk production and reduced reproductive performance. Ultimately, these can have an economic impact on any dairy. The severity of heat stress is measured by using a temperature humidity index (THI), which uses both temperature and humidity to calculate the theoretical level of stress to the animal. Signs of heat stress can be seen when the THI exceeds 68 (for example, 24° C with 30% relative humidity = 72 THI).

It is critical that cows "cool off" when the weather is hot and humidity is high! This will help reduce the negative effects of heat stress. While we cannot control weather-related factors, we can provide ways to alleviate the impact of heat and humidity on livestock, such as:

1. Sprinklers and fan cooling systems
 2. Continuously available fresh, clean water
 3. Shade
 4. Appropriate rations for times of heat stress
- Areas that require special attention may include:

- ◆ Holding pen – often a place where cows are crowded and heat gets trapped around the animals with little relief. Ensure adequate shade and ventilation, and examine ways to reduce the amount of time they spend in this area!
- ◆ Exit lane cooling – an excellent place to use sprinklers as cows leave the parlor; works best as a supplement to good holding pen heat abatement.
- ◆ Freestalls and feeding areas – cows spend most of their time here. These areas need to provide adequate ventilation and a continual source of fresh water. Additional cooling may be obtained with fans, shade or sprinklers, etc. It is important to ensure that bedding does not become wet.

Last, but also of importance, is the cows' diet. Changes in ration formulations and summer feeding procedures can help to reduce the effects of heat stress on dairy cows. Any changes should be made slowly and preferably prior to the onset of hot weather. One of the goals is to ensure the cows maintain dry matter intake. Rations should safely accommodate the need for additional energy and possibly undergo an increase in DCAD (dietary cation-anion difference). "Cool off" your cows this summer. I can help you to implement or improve your summer program for maximum results. Call today and be proactive before hot weather arrives!

(edited from *Dairy Management Strategies to Control Heat Stress*, Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension)

When it comes to heat... don't forget calves!

Heat stress can negatively impact calf performance, causing rapid dehydration and reduced immune system function. Researchers have determined that heat-stressed calves often have reduced circulating immunoglobulin concentrations and increased stress hormone concentrations. Elevated body temperatures can result in very sick calves with reduced growth rates, lower feed intakes, and higher maintenance energy requirements. When ambient temperatures exceed 27° C, calves must burn more energy in order to dissipate heat from the body by sweating and increasing their respiratory rate. In this case, less of the nutrients consumed are devoted to growth and average daily gains suffer. Efforts should be made to identify and avoid heat stress in calves. Increased respiratory rates, open-mouth breathing, decreased appetite and a reluctance to move are symptoms that your calves may be suffering from heat stress. This summer, consider the following tips to assure proper calf health and growth is maintained: reduce sun exposure; improve air flow in calf-housing areas; use sand bedding, which does not insulate like straw or hay; **provide fresh, clean water free-choice**; and avoid additional, unnecessary stressful situations like moving and vaccinating during times of heat and humidity!

(Edited from an article by Dr. A. Holloway)



Interested in discussing topics in this newsletter, or want to do a better job feeding and managing your cows Call W-S Feed & Supplies! Our goal is to help you. That's the W-S commitment!

VOLUME 3 – Number 6 – June 2013
SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESS

Celebrating... Dairy Month!

"THANK YOU"... for all your efforts to provide high quality milk and dairy products, helping to feed our nation and the world! June has been designated to honor your efforts and recognize the outstanding job you do. W-S Feed and Renaissance Nutrition join me in saying thank you... for a job well done! We are here to provide you with "Solutions for Success".



The impact of quality inputs

The digestive system of a cow is truly a remarkable thing. Cows consume forages and feeds that help maintain a population of rumen 'bugs'. In turn, these bugs aid the breakdown and utilization of ingredients, and also contribute to the nutrient value of the ration when they die and are digested by the cow. This entire process serves to maintain the cow's body condition, the rumen's microbial population and make milk!

But can a cow function just as well on poor quality inputs? Can she produce milk up to her genetic potential on 'whatever we feed her'? No. While the cow will make the best use of whatever feeds and forages are given to her, there is a point at which her system will start to decline. This will begin impacting her conditioning, health, reproduction and production. Quality forages, feeds and nutrient supplements will help her to meet necessary body and production demands. It is important to feed her good quality forages and feeds all the time.

Make sure you feed cows the best ~ an investment in your bottom line.



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CHECK IT OUT!

