

## Keep Cows

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coolest, most fly-free spot on the farm. Turn cows out at night; that is when they do most of their grazing.

For maximum cross ventilation, open the windows and sides of barns. For additional air

movement, use fans if necessary. Fans will not lower temperatures very much, but they do help to move air across the backs of cows; this is especially important in holding areas, in poorly-ventilated barns and in stables with low ceilings. To accomplish this it may be necessary to use extra fans in addition to barn fans already installed. In pole barns,

you can permit the heat to escape from the peak by providing ridge vents and by opening up the sides, light-colored roofing materials will also help to reflect the heat.

### Water

Water is your cheapest feed, and it makes milk—use it! Cows drink more water if it is clean, cool and convenient to them.

Water in ponds and streams may be warm and stagnant. Therefore, it may be necessary to install extra water lines to the pasture or feed-lot, or to tap into tile drainage lines and springs for fresh water.

### Supplemental Feeding

Some cows, even when they have free access to lush pastures or an abundant supply of greenchop, are actually underfed. Lush pasture grass and greenchop are high in moisture, some cows simply get full and cannot eat enough roughage to get the dry matter and feed nutrients they need for top production or for rapid growth in the case of heifers. Also, many permanent pastures dry up in the summer time and do not yield enough feed nutrients. This can be corrected by feeding extra hay-in racks or by feeding haylage, silage, or grain. Contrary to what many people think, grain is a "cool" feed; do not hesitate to feed it at recommended levels.

For maximum feed intake, locate the feeding area near to shade and water; the barn is a good place if you keep cows in during the day time. Summer annuals such as Piper sudan grass can also be planted to provide additional summer grazing. Salt and minerals should also be provided both in the grain mix and free choice to cattle the year round.

## Pecking Order In Dairy Cows

Everyone's heard of the "pecking order," right? Sure you have...it's the social system by which chickens feed. Well, almost, but it's also the way cows in a dairy herd decide who eats first.

And according to Joe Taylor, Extension dairy specialist at Penn State, it's a well-established system, from the "boss cow" that no other cow in the herd would dare challenge, all the way down to the meek cow that runs from all the others in the herd.

This social system in dairy herds shouldn't present any problem as long as enough feeding space and stalls are provided for all cows in the herd.

However, research shows that this pecking order is upset when one cow in the herd is in heat. No matter what her social status is with the rest of the herd, a cow in heat upsets the whole herd because she disturbs the pecking order. As a result, the entire herd becomes restless and a loss in milk production is often the result.

Taylor reminds all dairymen that there is really only one way to prevent this problem. As soon as a cow comes into heat, she should immediately be isolated from the rest of the herd. In this way, the rest of the herd won't be affected, and neither will your milk production.

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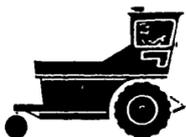
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