

## Dairy Cows Don't Mind Cold

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Washington Co.  
Extension Agent

As we prepare for another winter season, dairymen who own stanchion or comfort-stall barns should have a suitable paddock or lot adjacent to the barn where their cows can exercise every day.

Regular exercise is just as important to a cow as it is to a dog, horse, human or any other animal.

In fact, it is more important to the cow because it provides the best way to detect heat. The problem of heat detection in a herd that is confined all day--every day becomes a guessing game. As a result, breeding efficiency almost invariably suffers.

Dairymen who are really concerned about their cow's health and herd breeding efficiency will turn out their cows at least once every day. They won't let cold weather, rain, wind or snow interfere with this routine. However, they may shorten the turn-out to 15-20 minutes in extremely bad weather.

Cows should be observed closely for standing heat during the first 10-15 minutes of each exercise period.

### Cluster Flies

Here we are in cold weather and many homes have flies at this time of the year.

Cluster flies look like houseflies, but are a little larger. They can easily be distinguished from houseflies by the numerous fine yellow hairs on top of the back (where the wings are attached).

Where houseflies breed in garbage, the eggs of cluster flies are

deposited on the soil. The larvae (maggots) which hatch are parasitic on earthworms. Therefore, cluster flies cannot be controlled by the sanitary measures used to control houseflies.

Maggots feed inside of the earthworms for about 2-3 weeks, then leave the worms and pupate in the soil. Adult flies emerge in about two more weeks. Their life cycle (from egg to adult fly) requires about 4-6 weeks. They have several generations each year.

In the fall, cluster flies look for warmer quarters and begin entering buildings. They can often be seen on the sunny side of the building prior to entering through small openings.

Once inside a building, they tend to cluster, often in attics. Here they spend the winter except on warm days, they become active and may fly to other parts of the building.

### Control:

Because cluster flies can enter buildings through very small openings, it is almost impossible to keep them out. However, by locating their entrance ways and closing up as many of these openings as possible, you can cut down the number of flies you will have in the buildings.

Once they are in the house, you can kill them with a household insecticide, or you can pick them up with a vacuum cleaner.

Dead flies should be removed because accumulations of these insects attract larder and carpet beetles.

## How Does Your Herd Compare?

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.)—This data is pulled from Pennsylvania DHIA's mainframe computer each week. It is a one-week summary representing approximately one-fourth of the herds on test, as they are tested monthly.

These data are valuable from a business management standpoint and can be used for comparing your operations to the averages from almost 1,400 herds across the state.

DHIA Averages for all herds processed between 12/24/90 and 12/31/90	
Number of Herds Processed	989
Number of Cows Processed	59,298
Number of Cows Per Herd	59.9
Milk Per Cow (Lbs)	17,081
%-Fat	3.66
Fat Per Cow (Lbs)	626
%-Protein	3.18
Protein Per Cow (Lbs)	544
Average Days in Milk Per Cow	315
*Value for CWT Milk(\$)	14.59
*Value for CWT Grain(\$)	7.76
*Value for CWT Hay(\$)	4.40

*Value for CWT Silage(\$)	1.53
*Value for Pasture Per Day(\$)	.30
*Value for Milk Per Cow Per Year(\$)	2,493
*Feed Consumed Per Cow Per Year(Lbs)	
A: Grain	7,087
B: Hay	2,493
C: Silage	14,491
D: Day Pasture	65
*Feed Cost Per Cow Per Year(\$)	
A: Grain	550
B: Hay	108
C: Silage	221
D: Pasture	19
*Total Feed Cost Per Cow Per Year(\$)	900
*Income Over Feed Costs Per Year(\$)	1,592
*Grain to Milk Ratio	1:2.4
*Feed Cost Per CWT Milk(\$)	5.27
Avg Level For 823 SCC Herds	341,756
*Member generated figures	

## Average Farm Feed Costs For Handy Reference

To help farmers across the state to have handy reference of commodity input costs in their feeding operations for DHIA record sheets or to develop livestock feed cost data, here's this week's average costs of various ingredients as compiled from regional reports across the state of Pennsylvania. Remember these are averages so you will need to adjust your figures up or down according to your location and the quality of your crop.

Corn, No. 2y - 2.44 BU.	4.37 CWT.
Wheat, No. 2 - 2.67 BU.	4.46 CWT.
Barley, No. 3 - 1.99 BU.	4.26 CWT.
Oats, No. 2 - 1.41 BU.	4.40 CWT.

## Dry Cow Management

**A.J. HEINRICHS**

Extension Dairy Specialist

The main portion of the dry period follows the initial drying-off period. This is a time when the body condition of cows should dictate the energy level of the diet being fed.

While it has been well documented that restoring or decreasing the body condition of a dairy cow is most efficiently done during late lactation, condition can

still be influenced during the dry period.

Assuming a body condition score of 3+ to 4- at drying off, feeding a moderate energy concentrate throughout the dry period will permit a modest positive energy balance.

Some vaccinations, parasite controls, vitamin-mineral injections, and hoof trimming are also appropriately done during this main portion of the dry period.

Routine checking of cows will alert you to any early calving cows or others that may need special attention.

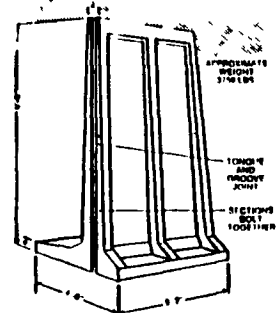
Soybeans, No. 1 - 5.51 BU.	9.20 CWT.
New Ear Corn - 58.45 BU.	2.92 CWT.
Alfalfa Hay - 110.50 BU.	5.53 CWT.
Mixed Hay - 91.00 BU.	4.55 CWT.
Timothy Hay - 101.00 BU.	5.05 CWT.

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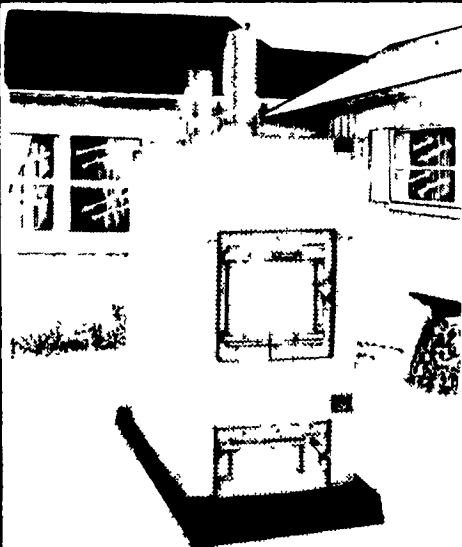


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