

DAIRY TIPS

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Five Sure-Fire Ways to Reduce Milk Production

With all the talk of milk surpluses and low milk prices, it seems that there are some dairy producers who have volunteered to help reduce the supply of milk. Some of the techniques I have seen them use are:

1. Limiting the amount of total mixed ration (TMR) offered to cows. The cows are forced to eat the last milligram of feed in the bunk before more is offered.
2. Limiting access to water. One waterer for 100 cows will limit milk production. Dirty water tanks also is a common way to limit milk production.
3. Ignoring cow comfort. Making cows stand, rather than having a comfortable place to lie; having no fans in the barn; and having no shade over the feed bunks are all common ways to ignore cow comfort.
4. Raising small first-lactation heifers. Up to one-third of the milking herd is first-lactation animals, and if they calve at a light weight (less than 1200

lbs. after calving) they won't milk up to their potential. Later they can go through a second-lactation (sophomore) slump, which further limits herd milk production.

5. Feeding low energy grain mixes to high producing cows. Cows won't peak to their potential, thus reducing their total lactation milk yield by 220 lbs. for each 1 pound peak milk loss. Body condition also suffers, thereby reducing breeding efficiency and increasing herd days-in-milk.

Luckily, there aren't too many producers willing to volunteer for this type of program!

Attention to details will help AVOID these types of situations, and will allow your herd to maximize efficiency of production, thereby reducing the unit cost of producing a hundred-weight of milk. Ask your Purina Mills representative for information and ideas that will help you achieve maximum efficiency of milk production for your herd.

Contact your Purina representative for further evaluation of your situation.

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