

(Continued from Page 30)

flow can be controlled manually with a globe valve hooked to the farm water supply but this will consume large amounts of water. A solenoid valve, timer and thermostat provides automatic operation. Cycling the water on and off will conserve water and promote alternate wetting and drying. Alternate wetting and drying may actually increase the cooling affect. Typical cycles range from 5 minutes on and 5 minutes off to 1.5 minutes on and 13.5 minutes off. Sprinklers need only operate long enough to get cows wet. Thermostats should be set to turn the system on at about 78° F.

Sprinkling in free stall alleys is not recommended. Wet bedding during hot weather will promote unhealthy conditions. Also, cows should be encouraged to go to the feed bunk and eat. In California, cows will come out into the hot sun to stand under sprinklers at feeding areas.

The following three important points must be considered when sprinkling cows for heat stress relief.

- Operate the system to minimize wet, sloppy udders.

- Provide for good air flow over the cows to promote evaporation.

- Be sure to provide good air exchange to remove wet air from the sprinkler area.

CALF AND HEIFER HOUSING

The future of any dairy herd is its young stock. These animals represent the highest genetic potential for milk production on a well managed dairy farm. Therefore, the care given in raising these animals should be consistent with their high value. However, the young stock on many dairy farms are often the most overlooked animals. They are housed last, fed last and given health care last. How many

times does the veterinarian leave the farm without having gotten around to the calves compared with not having gotten around to the cows?

A good calf and heifer housing facility should help provide well grown replacement animals ready to enter the milking herd at 24 months of age. To achieve this goal the facility must: 1) Produce replacement heifers that are ready to breed at 13 to 15 months of age; 2) Provide a comfortable, healthy environment for calves and heifers; and 3) Provide a convenient working environment for the operator.

Various components of the calf and heifer housing system can affect animal comfort, health, and productivity (Graves and Heinrichs, 1984). The most common problems are: poor ventilation, housing younger animals with older young stock or mature cows, too many calves in a group, and too large an age or size span among calves in a group.

TIE STALL HOUSING

Tie stall or stanchion barns are the traditional method for housing milking dairy cows in the Northeast. They continue to be a popular and effective housing method, especially in smaller herds. The Northeast Dairy Practices Council (NDPC, 1981) provides the following definition of a stall barn. "The stall barn is a dairy housing unit where animals are restrained in parallel rows of stalls for efficient individual care and control.

To save time and steps, workers proceed along one row of animals and return along a parallel row. Chores include handling silage, hay, concentrates, water and bedding, milk and manure and animal care (moving, inspecting, checking, treating, and breeding)."

(Turn to Page 33)

AMERICAN SHELTERS

A Common Sense Approach

✓ Economical ✓ Versatile

Ideal Free Stall Barn

with the "TRUSS RAFTER SYSTEM"

Shelters are available from
20 ft. to 100 ft. widths.

Covered with tightly woven
Polythelyne Fiber for long life.

*The Uses of American Shelters
are Unlimited!*

Available at:

HUBER'S ANIMAL HEALTH SUPPLIES

810 Tulpehocken Road, Myerstown, PA 17067

717-866-2246

Mon. 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thurs. & Fri. 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Tues. & Wed. 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sat. 7:30 a.m. to Noon

