



Heat Stress

It has been the most fantastic few weeks for hay making and whilst this was great for the harvest it is now impacting on grass growth and it is decidedly unpleasant to be a cow, a sheep, a farmer or a farm vet. Wearing waterproofs is seriously unpleasant but it does give us a good appreciation for how much our livestock are struggling.

Every year we experience short spells of very hot weather that our buildings and daily routine are not really suited to. Those of you with newer cattle sheds with little or no sides will notice how much more tolerant the cows are than in older less ventilated sheds. This is where we have mimicked our European and Global counterparts that have extended periods of hot temperatures and have devoted time and resources to managing its impact on performance such as sprinkler systems and temperature triggered fans.

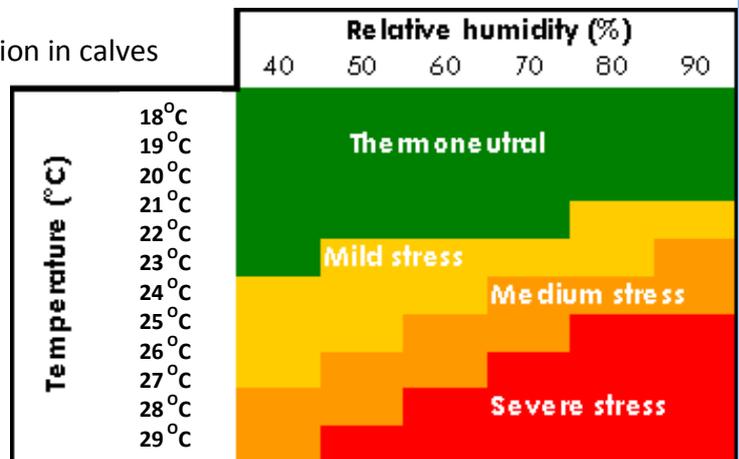
A cow's comfort zone is between 5 and 23°C with moderate humidity, but they are very happy below 5°C.

Calf sheds are often the worst affected and dehydration in calves will occur very rapidly especially in those with scour or pneumonia.

Cows in late pregnancy and early lactation are most at risk due to the additional heat from the metabolic processes of production – makes these groups a priority.

Short periods of high heat and humidity impacts cow performance because they will:

- pant with tongues out and sweat using up to 20% more energy
- increase standing times over lying down
- increase ration sorting and reduce dry matter intake and negatively affect yields by 10% to 30%
- depressed/no signs of oestrus and lower conception rate – egg quality will be poor and these are ovulated over the following 100 days and so impacts fertility performance well after the temperature has dropped. This is true for beef and dairy cattle alike
- mastitis rises due to crowding under shaded areas in fields



What can we do?:

- Get **fans** on and increase ventilation by opening solid doors and lift blinds
- Ensure cattle have adequate **shade** and **fly repellent** especially when at grazing
- Reduce stocking density of sheds and **limit handling** during the heat of the day
- Split into smaller groups for milking so the collecting yard is never full and don't use the backing gate
- Consider grazing cows at night if shade isn't adequate outdoors
- Ensure **water troughs** are:
 1. **Clean** with fresh water supply – tip over troughs are not used to their full potential – tip them over and give them a scrub weekly to avoid it becoming a big job
 2. Constantly **full/filling** – water should always be available so adjust pressure accordingly
 3. **Enough troughs** to avoid competition/dominance – **ask us about how to measure requirements.**



- Mix rations just before feeding out and feed twice a day to avoid spoilage/heating
- Feed 60% of rations overnight when intakes will be at their highest
- Cows will sort out the long fibre trying to reduce heat from rumen fermentation so make sure if sorting happens that the ration is adjusted to be more nutrient and energy dense to compensate
- Observe cows for bulling in the early morning and evening to increase chance of seeing cows
- Transport cattle in the coolest part of the day to avoid extreme heat stress

With the forecast looking very similar for the rest of the month it is vital that we adjust management to reduce the significant impact of the weather. Put a thermometer that also indicates humidity in the sheds and parlour to trigger management changes before we see long term impacts on health and production.

Reminder - On Farm Medicine Disposal

In order to comply with Red Tractor and crucially DEFRA guidelines **ALL LIVESTOCK PREMISES MUST HAVE A YELLOW SHARPS BIN AND GRIFF BIN** to dispose of needles and medicine bottles. These have always been available from the practice and the cost of purchase includes returning the container to us for licensed disposal. It couldn't be easier! To help get everyone compliant with the rules we are running our summer offer again:

Throughout JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST

Buy a 27 Kg Bottle Bin and a 2 Litre sharps bin for just £60 +VAT

This is a saving of nearly £20 and for a lot of you these two containers will last a very long time.

Remember that these rules apply to all medicines administered on livestock premises.

Ring the Office today to order your summer deal!

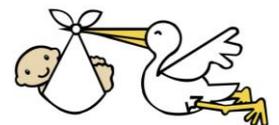


FLIES...

A reminder that extreme fly burdens and maggots pose a real welfare issue to all livestock. The levels have rocketed in this hot weather and are becoming a real nuisance and causing frequent **eye problems** as well as **fly strike**. Please ensure that all age groups are treated regularly with a product that gives repellent cover. **Being indoors does not negate the need for fly repellent – in fact it is often worse inside.**

A new arrival

Cristian Barat and his wife have welcomed a little girl, Imogen on 15th June. Mother and daughter are now home and doing well. We wish them all the best with being new parents together.



Reminders

KILO club meeting

Suckler Calf Weaning

Wednesday 18TH July
2.30pm -5pm in Bredon
Invites to follow
Refreshments provided

Meetings

Dairy KPI Meeting

Transition – Measuring Outcomes and Effecting Change

Wednesday 25th July 2018
11-2pm at Quedgeley
Lunch will be provided