

Topic of the Month

Heat Stress

It certainly has been a wet summer. With August already here, it will be fair week, then back to school, and the snow will be flying before we know it.

That being said, we may have a little more heat to contend with before we start following school buses and plow trucks down the road. So I'd like to share an observation from a sort of pet project I've been working on.

White Oak recently purchased a handheld weather meter that measures temperature, windspeed, and relative humidity. After hearing multiple people talk about the humidity during mid-July, I decided to investigate in some dairy barns.

It seems like an obvious conclusion that there are dead spots in dairy barns. We can feel when the air is heavy and stagnant. We can feel when the air is breezy and cool. But many different people have stated that if you can't measure it, you can't monitor it. True enough. So I set out to put some numbers to it.

Here are my findings in a nutshell. Depending on the location in the barn, temperature might vary by as much as 10 degrees or more. Windspeed clearly varies by distance from the fan, type of barn, and so on, but seems to be frequently inadequate to provide the ventilation we want. Finally, on the same day, in the same barn, relative humidity varies by 20% or more.

Another finding: we often put fans in alleys and areas where we are and think we are doing a good job but the areas that suffer are the cow beds where (we hope) the cows are spending the majority of their time laying down and making milk. And there is a tremendous difference between 60% and 85% relative humidity when it's 85 degrees.

Practice News

- White Oak Veterinary Clinic is excited to announce that we will be adding a member to our team. Dr. John McCormack will be joining us later this summer. Dr. McCormack's background includes veterinary school in Ireland, with several years of intensive clinical experience there following his graduation.
- Dr. Sarah Pickett will be leaving White Oak effective September 1. We wish her the best in her next adventure.
- With these changes in place, we will provide the same quality service we pride ourselves on while making a smooth transition.

In The News

- Fighting for Dairy: A recent article at Bloomberg.com highlighted the efforts of Dairy Management Inc. This marketing group was involved in the introduction of Pizza Hut's stuffed-crust pizza, as well as the "got milk?" campaign. They are currently developing a cheese heavy item at Taco Bell called a Quesalupa. They note that if US pizza makers increased their cheese per pizza by one ounce, that would increase cheese sales by 250 million pounds per year, but also that the industry's development likely lies mostly in foreign markets, such as Asia, Latin America, northern Africa, and the Middle East.
- Hilmar Cheese, a large company with production facilities in California and Texas, has become the latest player in the dairy industry to announce that they will no longer use milk from cows treated with rBST. In a statement, Hilmar said that while research, government agencies, and global health organizations have firmly stated the safety of rBST in milk production, consumer confusion dictates that the company must transition to rBST free milk.

Commodity Futures

Prices

As of July 31, 2017

Corn	\$3.70/bu
Soybean Meal	\$318.60/ton
Milk (August)	\$16.56/cwt
Beef (Live cattle)	\$112/cwt

Upcoming Events

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- Southwest 4H/FFA District Dairy Show is August 3&4 in Martinsburg.
- Central PA Champion Holstein Show is August 12 in Huntingdon.
- Westmoreland County Fair is August 18-26.
- The 117th Annual Somerset County Fair is August 19-26.