

We have some hot weather upon us in the next few days – 28 degrees yesterday, hotter today, and looking like perhaps mid-thirties for tomorrow and over the weekend:

1. We need to manage the cows slightly differently
2. Water provision and shade will be essential
3. We need to check bulk tanks, compressors etc. to ensure milk cools effectively

Management Strategies for Cows

- If you have fans, blow the dust off, blow the motors out with an airline and check the belts (if appropriate)
- Set the fans to keep going from around 15 degrees temp if you have controllers – it's important to keep the air moving all through the day, the aim is to prevent the cows from getting hot and uncomfortable
- Fly controls important – cows can be hot, but when they are hot and bothered by flies – that's a different ball game
- Move to the shadiest fields you have with the best hedgerow shelters, this may change in the afternoon due to the orientation of the sun
- Clean out your water troughs! (They should already be clean!)
- Provide extra water troughs or have water in IBC's as back up if water supplies don't keep up with demand
- Keep the cows closest to home and give them free access to shaded housing if possible
- When moving cows don't rush them – allow extra time
- A fan and mister in the parlour collecting yard can work wonders to improve evaporative cooling

Health & Behaviour Notes

- ***You may see housed cows bunching in the shed – this will generally be in the darker areas – they are essentially seeking shade – but it doesn't help themselves in this respect – if the lights are on in the shed – turn them OFF! – this may help***
- ***If you have temp/breathing rate sensors in the cow's ears/collars (Cow Manager/Sensehub) – please be aware that these may not be as sensitive – they compare the individual cow to the herd average – so will not be as sensitive to ailments such as Ecoli mastitis etc as the whole herd will be hot. You will need to be vigilant in this respect, so look out for any cows that look poorly, are very heavy breathing or recumbent or have a big unexpected milk drop***
- ***If you have transition cows at grass and you are putting magnesium chloride in the water troughs – you must only put in the daily dose – DO NOT PUT A WHOLE BAG IN – as cows may drink the trough much more quickly than normal – magnesium poisoning is a real risk*** (NB: Our advice is not to put a whole bag in any way! – but we know people do!)
- DO NOT FORGET THE CALVES AND YOUNGSTOCK – ESPECIALLY IN HUTCHES – A WELL POSITIONED TRAILER CAN PROVIDE MORE SHADE!

Management Strategies for Cooling Milk

- Gently blow out the compressors with an airline / very soft brush
- I have seen people rig up a hose pipe with a spray nozzle to mist cool water into the veins of the compressor to again improve evaporative cooling

More information is also available in our Technical Note [here](#).

For further discussion or to help with any questions that you may have, please contact Consultant Support on consultantsupport@kiteconsulting.com or 01902 851007

