

# SUMMERtips

FROM PENN VET'S NEW BOLTON CENTER



## 10 TIPS TO KEEP DAIRY COWS HEALTHY THIS SUMMER

1

**Plenty of water:** A 1,500-pound dairy cow producing 80 pounds of milk per day will drink 21 gallons at 70°F, but will increase to 32 gallons of water daily at 95°F.

2

**Provide shade:** Cows stay cooler if shaded from radiant sunlight (trees, shelters, shade-cloth). Studies have shown a 10-20% increase in milk production for cows offered shade on pasture.

3

**Fans:** Place fans over the stall rows to help remove heat from cows. Choose 48-54 inch fans, place 8 feet high, and space 10x the fan diameter. Tilt fans 10-20° downward to direct air flow to resting cows.

4

**Sprinklers:** Sprinklers and fans over the feed alley provide the best heat removal by using evaporation to help cool cows. Sprinklers soak cows and fans run continuously, repeating the wetting cycle every 5-15 minutes.

5

**Misters:** Misters are attached to fan systems and provide a fine spray of water for evaporative cooling of the barn air. Misters and fans are positioned over the cow beds, and are designed to evaporate before reaching the beds.

6

**Focus on the holding pen:** Bring up smaller groups of cows to the holding pen to avoid crowding and heat accumulation. Provide fans and sprinklers, and allow access to water after exiting the milking parlor.

7

**Ventilation:** Warm, moist air is replaced with fresh, dry air using natural or tunnel ventilation. An effective way for some farms is a combination of cooling pads with tunnel ventilation, decreasing barn temperature up to 10°F.

8

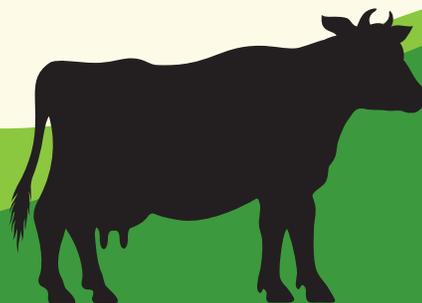
**Dietary changes:** Adding fats can increase the energy density of the diet as summer heat drops feed intake. Fats lower the heat increment of fermentation, but avoid high fiber and excessive protein, which raise heat increment.

9

**Remember dry cows and heifers:** Fans and cooling for dry cows and heifers provide relief before calving and can reduce the incidence of metritis, mastitis, and ketosis after calving, improving feed intake and milk production.

10

**Don't add to the stress:** Avoid working with cattle (moving, sorting, transporting, using headlocks) or giving vaccinations on very hot days. Move cows slowly to the milking parlor to avoid excitement and heat production.



## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

New Bolton Center's Emergency Service is open 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Call 610-444-5800 or visit New Bolton Center at 382 West Street Road, Kennett Square, PA 19348.