

Seasonal Update:

Silage yields have been variable for most farmers this season, but with reasonable quality reported. While hay yields have been down in some regions, and quality is also variable. It's recommended to get your hay and silage tested so you can design summer rations early, ensuring the highest quality feed is going to the class of stock that need it most.

Summer Feeding:

Have you considered your summer rations? Are they balanced? Have you ordered any extra feed you need?

Remember you can download the Rumen8 Nutritional Program for free, and design your own rations. Rumen8 has a lot of good features, the ability to add your own tested feeds is one, giving you the ability to create accurate diets. Group training is available for those wanting to use Rumen8, in a bring-your-own-laptop-and-feed-tests format. *We currently have a few interested in this, with the intention to have a half day in January, let us know if you'd like to be on that list.* The new update to Rumen8 in 2018 will see some great new features, one being the addition of a heifer diet calculator, and another for transition cows.

As cows are transitioned off grass based diets over summer, ensure you have additional sources of protein in rations if required. Protein content of silage, particularly maize silage, is much lower than spring grass. The addition of a supplement, such as canola meal, may be of benefit. Aim for the following protein percentages in classes of milkers:

- ✓ Fresh cows (first 4 weeks after calving): 16% – 19%
- ✓ Mid to Late Lactation cows: 14% – 16%
- ✓ Far off dry cows (more than 4 weeks pre-calving): >12%
- ✓ Transition Cows (last 4 weeks pre-calving): 14 – 16%

Heifers are an important class of livestock to monitor particularly over summer. There is strong evidence that well grown heifers at mating and calving have higher lifelong fertility and milk production. Research has also shown that age doesn't correlate with a heifer beginning to cycle, but there is a strong link between heifer weight and beginning to cycle. Skeletal growth for heifers will take place in the first 12 months of life, the next 12 months are when heifers will put weight onto their frame. Take advantage of the higher feed conversion efficiency in young animals, as this decreases with age. Dairy Australia has a heifer diet calculator that's a great tool: <https://www.dairyaustralia.com.au/heifer-diet-calculator>.

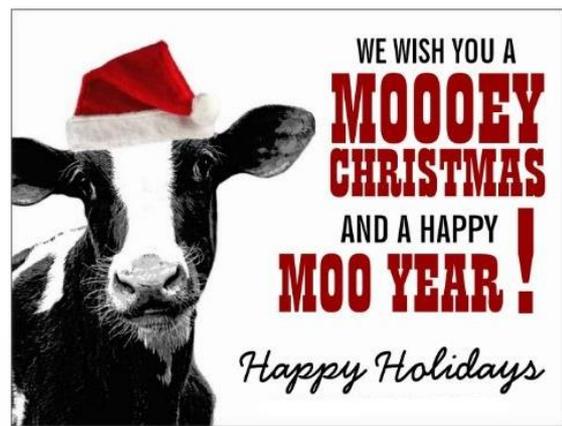
A note on Water Allocation:

Current season allocations for 2017/2018 (1st Oct – 30th Sept)
Harvey/Waroona Region – 60%
Collie – 100%

Western Dairy Office Christmas Closure:

The Western Dairy Office will be closed from the 22nd of December until the 2nd of January.

From the team at Western Dairy we would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, we hope you are all able to have some time off farm over the Christmas period to spend with friends and family.



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