

# PURINA® HERDSMART® MANAGEMENT TIP



## Are you ready for the warm weather ahead?

Hot weather is just around the corner, if it's not already starting to rear its ugly head in your part of the country. As we head into this time of year, the biggest mistake you can make is to be unprepared, says Martha Baker, dairy nutrition specialist with Purina Animal Nutrition.

"This past fall when you turned the sprinklers and fans off, everything probably worked just fine. But that doesn't mean everything will work fine when you need it," she says. Baker shares the following tips to be prepared and proactive:

- **CLEAN AND SERVICE THE FANS.** Take time to make sure the fans turn on and off at the correct times and/or temperatures.
- **LOOK AT THE NOZZLES AND SOAKERS.** Ensure that nozzles and soakers turn on when you want them to; also make sure enough water comes through when and where you want it too. Double check that you don't have any broken water lines.
- **CONSIDER DOING A PRACTICE RUN WITH BOTH YOUR SPRINKLERS AND FANS.** Make sure everything is in working order and you don't have any surprises.
- **START THINKING ABOUT AND DISCUSSING CHANGING FEEDING TIMES.** Instead of dropping the majority of feed in the morning, consider dropping it in the afternoon. Baker notes that a cow's body temperature will peak in the early morning hours, therefore cows won't eat as much in the morning when feed is typically dropped. Shifting the time when feed is made available to the cow can help maintain feed intakes.
- **EVALUATE WHETHER A TOTAL MIXED RATION (TMR) STABILIZER IS NEEDED.** TMR stabilizers can help in reducing secondary fermentation of the feed.
- **BE DILIGENT ABOUT BUNK MANAGEMENT.** Do not pull more feed off the pile than needed.
- **EXPAND THE AMOUNT OF WATER TROUGH SPACE AVAILABLE TO THE COWS.** If possible, adding temporary water storage can be an option to increase water availability; water cannot be a limiting factor.

Each of these suggestions seem very basic, but people tend to forget the basics and look for more technical answers to beat the heat, explains Baker. "Getting the basics right can go a long way in preventing heat stress."

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Located in Gray Summit, MO, the Purina Animal Nutrition Center operates a 600-head herd of registered Holstein cows, heifers and calves. The research objective at the dairy research facility is to deliver innovative technology, products and programs that will enhance performance and income for dairy producers for all stages of life. To learn more about the Purina Animal Nutrition Center, visit [Purinamills.com](http://Purinamills.com).



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