



Writer & editor: Louise Thomas 0418 443 433 louise@lthomaswriter.com

TAKING PRIDE IN MILK QUALITY

Suppliers Trevor and Carolyn Beasley and their children James, Sarah and Rebecca, farm at Port Fairy. They have worked hard for many years to ensure their autumn-calving herd of 260 cows produces good quality milk with a low bulk milk cell count.

Their efforts have been rewarded with a long string of Australian milk quality award plaques received since they began sharefarming at the property 16 years ago.

In 2008 their goal of buying their own farm came to fruition when they bought the Port Fairy property from the previous owners, Tom and Judy Scriven, who had also featured prominently in the national milk quality awards for many years. Between the Scrivens and the Beasleys, Trevor estimates that over the years 25 Australian milk quality award plaques have been won at the farm.

'You used to get a bit of plastic to say you were in the top 100', he says. 'The last three years we got a gold plaque – that's something you can take pride in.' He adds that they learned a lot about milk quality from Tom.

Aside from a few key practices and a rigorous culling policy, Trevor says they don't do anything special to keep the BMCC down.

'Not everyone does things the way we do', he says. 'But it's not rocket science. When we first moved here we started herd testing. The cell count was a little high at 180,000 to 200,000 and we weren't happy with that. There were seven cows on the back page of the herd test. I thought: what will happen if I sell these? So I rounded them up and put them on a truck and the next day the cell count went back to 70,000. Since then, we've continued on the same path.'

They set a cell count limit of 600,000, and any cow that comes in over that is sold. 'I don't care if it is the best cow or the worst cow – she's gone', Trevor says. 'After doing that for a few years, we hardly have to sell any cows now.'

Carolyn adds that if a cow shows up with high BMCC in a herd test, they double-check the reading with the factory to confirm, and in the dairy they check milk using a mastitis paddle.

They also installed automatic cup removers about 12 to 13 years ago. 'From then on we've stayed in premium', Trevor says.

The herd is around 70% Friesian with the remainder Jerseys and crossbreds.



Port Fairy suppliers Trevor and Carolyn Beasley with two of the 15 Australian milk quality award plaques they have won over the years.

Every year 70 to 75 heifers are brought into the herd, and there are few old cows thanks to the strict culling policy.

Rubberware in the 16 swingover herringbone dairy is changed every six to twelve months and the plant is checked once a year. Cows are not over-milked, and teat spray is used afterwards.

At calving, any cows with mastitis are treated, but if they get mastitis twice, they are sold. The Beasleys have noticed that the 'easy milking' cows tend to get mastitis. Dry cow therapy and Teatseal are used selectively based on herd test results, but any cow with a bulk milk cell count under 100,000 that has never had mastitis is not treated.

Trevor says he has had good reports from other farmers about Teatseal and is considering expanding their use of it, including on heifers. 'When it first came

out we tried it on a herd with 65 cows that previously had had mastitis. Only four or so came in with mastitis the next year.'

Trevor and Carolyn do nearly all the milking themselves and are very familiar with the cows and shed processes. They feel this is important to the milk quality result. They have a close connection with their cows, which are very quiet. 'You can walk through and pat them and they don't get too fussed about it', Trevor says.

The Beasleys came across to supply WCB in 2016, and they have been impressed with the good BMCC results of those that feature in the Top 25 in the Supplier News each month.

Aside from excellent milk quality, another key feature of the farm is the high in-calf rate for heifers and the tight calving pattern. Generally they achieve 55 to 60 heifers calving within three weeks. They feel that feeding the cows well and using lead-feeding are responsible for their fertility results. The key to tightening up the calving pattern has been to sell the late calvers (e.g. after five to six weeks, once they have enough cows in). This then helps increase the success of the subsequent AI, as cows will have finished calving a month beforehand and are cycling.

They are members of the Koroit-Toolong dairy discussion group, which they find is a good social outlet and an opportunity to bounce ideas off members and find out what works for other farmers.

BULK MILK CELL COUNTS

Top 25 December 2016

The Top 25 recognises the efforts of suppliers in keeping their average monthly BMCC to low levels.

1	Hans & Susanne Vogel	43,000
2	Howard Partnership	44,000
3	Ian & Jenny Rhode	46,000
4	Powell Dairy Farms	47,000
5	Gerard & Jo McNamara (Nathan)	50,000
6	Tim Taylor	51,000
7	Glenmead Pty Ltd (I, V & N Smith)	52,000
8	Matthew Ross	54,000
9	Craig & Andrea Duro	55,000
10	The Claine Farm Trust	56,000
11	Tyson & Vanessa Sinclair	58,000
12	Des, Belinda & Simon Roche	59,000
13	Triple T Farms	60,000
14	Boshier Farms	63,000
15	Lyndon & Joyce Cleggett	64,000
16	Shane & Raina Bushell	65,000
17	John & Janelle Andreoli	66,000
18	Peter & Joy O'Keefe	67,000
18	Cyril & Marjo Nijskens	67,000
19	David, Nareda & Owen Simpson	68,000
19	Rohan & Jayde Smith	68,000
19	Ted, Doreen & Andrew Delaney	68,000
19	Trevor & Carolyn Beasley	68,000
19	TR & KM Foote	68,000
20	Les & Vicky Farrer	69,000
20	Lyn Logan	69,000
21	Will & Pauline Whiteley	70,000
21	T M Dodd Nominees Pty Ltd	70,000
22	Kevin & Wendy McManus	72,000
23	D C Johnson Pty Ltd	73,000
24	Mark & Karen Ryan	74,000
24	Doug & Karren Hunter	74,000
25	Craig & Annette Smart	75,000

Factory Average BMCC December: 172,000

QUALITY MATTERS

By Anne Prince, Farm QA Manager

While the hay and silage seasons were delayed this year by the wet conditions, they also ensured bumper crops for many suppliers. Nutritional value can vary dramatically and there can be risks in feeding out fodder made under damp conditions. If not properly fermented, silage can contain live harmful pathogens such as Salmonella, Listeria and Clostridia. Both hay and silage can also harbour moulds. Pathogenic moulds can produce spores which, when inhaled, produce serious lung disease in both humans and animals. Moulds can also produce mycotoxins that can result in calf abortions and other serious medical conditions. So it pays to check your hay or silage before feeding out.

As we move into a new year it is a good time to check all the veterinary medicines on the farm. Any medicines past their use-by date should be discarded appropriately or returned to your vet. This will make it easier to update your drug register and evaluate the need for extra stock to be kept on hand. All drugs should always be stored in a secure cabinet or container so that they are not accessible to children or subject to damage or loss.

At this time of year some farms may be switching to alternative sources of water in the dairy. Take advantage of our free water testing service before switching over so you can be sure of the quality. Remember, if the new water source is harder or more saline, you might have to change your wash procedure, chemicals or their concentrations. Talk to your chemical company representative or Field Officer to obtain further information.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:

TAKING PRIDE IN MILK QUALITY

Earlier in their dairying careers, Trevor and Carolyn were the first farmers to manage DemoDAIRY at Terang.

'It was a sheep farm when we took it over', Trevor explains. 'It was very run down. We were pretty green when we started, even though we are both from dairy farms. It was a good learning curve and interesting. We have good memories from there.'

He adds that they got to meet a lot of great farmers, board members, agency staff and industry advisors during their time and learned a great deal. In particular, they greatly appreciated the help from John Harlock, who was an advisor to DemoDAIRY. 'He was brilliant to talk to', Trevor says.

Trevor recalls that their time at the farm opened up a lot of doors. 'Sharefarming jobs came our way because of that job. I'd recommend to any young people if they get an opportunity like that to embrace it and work hard and learn.'

Trevor and Carolyn's daughter Sarah recently took the opportunity to attend the Western District Youth Camp at Noorat, learning to lead calves and show them. 'She loved it and they learned a lot', Carolyn says. 'She came home and asked a lot of questions. It was a great learning experience for her, beyond what we do on the farm. We'd encourage other young people who are interested in farming to attend such camps and enjoy the experience.'

'We think the outlook is looking brighter for the dairy industry', she adds.



BEST PRACTICES IN ANIMAL CARE

WCB is committed to ensuring that the milk we source is produced using the best practices in animal care – those which comply with Saputo's Global Animal Welfare policy, WCB's 2016/17 Milk Supply Handbook and the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Cattle (2016)¹, referred to here as the Australian Standards. The Australian Standards were endorsed by all member states in July 2016 and are likely to be adopted into legislation during the course of 2017/18 in both Victoria and South Australia.

We know our farmers take pride in the close connection they have with all of their animals and that they care deeply for their welfare. They appreciate that it is in everyone's interest to have best animal care practices in place. The health and wellbeing of cows is also directly connected to farm productivity and the quality of milk produced. High quality milk from well cared for cows enables the production of high quality dairy products that we can all be proud of.

A range of best practices in animal care have been developed and improved in recent years and it is essential to make yourself aware of the company's policy and current industry standards.

Below are some of the key areas of Saputo's Animal Welfare policy:

- zero tolerance for any act of animal cruelty
- elimination of the practice of tail docking cattle
- use of pain control when dehorning or disbudding cattle must become a minimum industry standard
- suppliers need to have an appropriate training program in place to support animal care and handling skills.

This policy endorses the Australian Standards and the Australian Dairy Industry Council policy regarding the phase-out of routine calving induction.

The Australian Standards also contain sections on responsibilities; feed and water; risk management of extreme weather, natural disasters, disease, injury and predation; dairy management; handling and management; facilities and equipment; breeding management; calf-rearing systems; beef

feedlots; castration, dehorning and spaying; and humane killing.

Some key steps to ensure you are addressing all areas:

1. Re-read the Saputo welfare policy in your QA manual and the Australian Standards.
2. If necessary, write a list of areas where you may need to update your strategies or review practices. Discuss with your Field Officer and vet how to identify and implement best practices.
3. Think about the level of awareness and skill of your staff. Do they need to undergo training or additional supervision in any aspect of animal care?
4. Have a walk along the front of your farm and try to imagine how it looks from the point of view of a tourist from the city driving past, bearing in mind that they may have little or no awareness of standard dairy farming practices. What impression of the industry would a passer-by gain from the road? Does the view from the road reflect your best practices in animal care?

Having the best welfare practices in place is the right thing to do for your animals, as well as being essential in maintaining the reputation of our whole industry.

In the coming months we will have a series of technical articles in Supplier News addressing best practices in animal husbandry. We will also explore the many additional productivity benefits that farmers have gained from adhering to these practices. Some upcoming courses on animal welfare are shown overleaf.

If you have any questions about Saputo's Animal Welfare policy or the Australian Standards, please contact your Field Officer or Farm QA Manager, Anne Prince.

¹Animal Health Australia (AHA) 2014, *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Cattle*. Edition 1, Version: 1.0, January 2016 Endorsed, available on the internet at www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au

FROM 'I CAN'T' TO 'I CAN'

Mepunga supplier Lisa Boyle is a facilitator for the Warrnambool and Surrounds Autism Support Group and is keen to share information about a regional program known as I CAN. I CAN provides mentoring support to young people on the Autism Spectrum.

This ground-breaking program involves a camp and 15 mentoring sessions at South West TAFE throughout the year, with students coming from a range of local secondary schools. Lisa says the program's purpose is to prove what people with Autism can do, and she notes that it has had a very positive impact on participants and their families. She hopes that participating students will develop the self-belief to follow their dreams and strive for what they want, including going to university or finding employment.

'We want them to change "I can't" to "I CAN"', she says.

In 2015, Lisa and her husband Anthony were inspired to research, instigate and support a regional pilot of this program after seeing a TED Talk by I CAN program founder Chris Varney. Lisa says a subsequent pilot in 2016 involving 20 students from five Warrnambool schools was deemed a great success, with participating students making friends and gaining self-confidence and self-acceptance.

The program will be expanding into the Camperdown area in 2017. Parents can find out more about the 2017 program by attending upcoming information sessions in Warrnambool (6–8 pm, 16 February, Logan's Café Restaurant) and Camperdown (6–8 pm, 15 February, Commercial Hotel). Expressions of interest are also now open for this year's camp, which will be held 24–26 March at Kangarooobie. The cost of the mentoring sessions (15 per year, over 4 terms) is \$150 per child per term or \$600 for a full year. The camp costs \$250 per child. To find out more, please contact I CAN network leader Fabian Storer at southwest@icannetwork.com.au or visit the website icannetwork.com.au/southwest. Lisa can also be contacted on 0418 393 128.

CLASSIFIEDS

TO PLACE OR CHANGE AN AD IN THE CLASSIFIEDS:

Please email your ad to jamesm@wcbf.com.au or contact your Field Officer before the 24th of the month to place an advertisement.

SHAREFARMING & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

We have a number of dairy farm suppliers looking for staff for the following positions: second-in-charge farm management positions, milkers, calf rearers, calf rearing supervisors, mechanic/handyperson. Ph Nadine 0428 582 728.

Experienced farm business manager/sharefarmer with 300-350 cows required for independent 50:50 sharefarming opportunity. Farm is 600 acres, 10 km from Warrnambool, SW Victoria. 200 acre leased outpaddock also available. Property features 26-unit S/O HB, 3BR home, new calf shed & effluent ponds and renovated pastures. Position to start March/April 2017. Ph Joy Coulson 0408 529 908.

A relief milker to work every second weekend in the Naringal area. Must be able to milk independently, feed calves and livestock and check stock located in a nearby outpaddock. Four weeks full time work is available to cover annual leave. Other neighbouring farms also have ad-hoc relief milking available to supplement work hours. Ph Nadine on 0428 582 728.

Experienced couple seeking 50/50 share farm or lease arrangement. Have own herd and machinery. All areas considered; however, Mt Gambier area preferred. Ph 0427 188 623.

FOR SALE:

Good quality pasture hay, rye/clover. \$44 per roll inc GST. Ph 0427 938 228.

Herringbone dairy plant: Waikato milking plant with DeLaval cup removers. Complete 32 swingover Hi Line dairy. Some items can be sold separately such as cup removers, hot water service and teat spray unit. For details Ph Jos 0428 606 290.

Dairy plant: best offer for a 20 swingover & feed system. Heywood area. Ph. 0439 652 551.

500+ tonnes red wheat for sale ex-farm. Peshurst area. Ph Keri 0400 062 054.

Due to retirement, an entire milking system for a 12-a-side swingover herringbone dairy with 18-month-old DeLaval ACRs and milk room equipment is available for \$25,000 + GST ONO. Milking system includes 2-inch milk line, receival can, wash system, Colwell Feeding System, vacuum pump (excellent condition), plate cooler, milk pump, two vats (3,800 L and 1,650 L) etc. The ACRs can be purchased as a single item for \$12,000 + GST ONO. Ph Lou 0419 041 178.

Herringbone dairy plant: complete 30-unit DeLaval milk plant (no filter or plate cooler), automatic cup removers including swing arms, 3" loop milk line, electronic pulsators, harmony plus clusters, wash jettors, vacuum pump, milk pump. \$17,000 + GST. Ph Phil 0428 988 134.

Hay: vetch, oats and barley/vetch mix. Squares and rolls. Feed test available. POA. Horsham. Can arrange freight. Ph Anthony 0427 056 886.

Cereal hay for sale from Nth Vic, feed tested at 9.3 MJ 7.2% CP & 47% NDF, \$ negotiable. Ph Trevor 0402 054 774.

Contracting: Power harrowing with air seeder & rippers for autumn pasture renovations. Timboon/Brucknell area. Ph Colin 0429 206 180.

Old and new season vetch, oats & vetch mix, and straight oaten hay available with feed tests, sourced from Nhill area, also feed barley available. POA. Ph Mont 0428 861 159 or Syd 0428 504 487.

Heifer growing operations near Peshurst and Camperdown seeking clients. Professional and experienced operators. Ph James Whale, Meridian Ag, 0428 374 046.

Dairy effluent spreading & pasture renovation, over 20 years experience. Ph Dominic Gorringer 0418 581 262.

FREE: Quantity of PVC pipe. 6 mm thick walls 2 m lengths & 6 m lengths/150 mm diameter. Some are filled with sand & some are filled with concrete & some are hollow. Could be used for holding down tarps on hay stacks or silage pits or used as culverts. Please contact your Field Officer.

Vat, Frigrite 4800 L \$6500 + GST. 26-a-side Coweld feed system, 40 kg bins, 610 mm, with roller mill. \$4500+GST. Ph 0438 376 433.

Feed testing services for hay, grain, pasture, silage, total mixed rations & feed pellets. \$60 per test. Free sample postage bags available. Ph Feed Central 1300 669 429.

WANTED:

Calf pellet silo. Ph 0400 419 838.

UPCOMING ANIMAL WELFARE COURSES

Several courses in the area of animal welfare are coming up that may be of interest to suppliers. Contact WestVic Dairy on (03) 5557 1000 for more information on any of the following programs:

- Euthanasia of livestock course, NCDE Terang 29 March, Allansford 19 April.
- Calf disbudding demonstration and calf rearing/welfare day 12 April and 3 May. Locations to be confirmed.
- Animal Welfare Standards Update 4 July. Location to be confirmed.

DAIRY COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Dairy Community Support Worker at Colac Area Health can provide counselling and support to dairy farmers, parenting and relationship support, make referrals to specialist services and assist in obtaining grants. Colac Area Health is also organising monthly coffee and chat sessions for dairy farming women. For more information phone Ann-Marie on (03) 5232 5244 or 0447 321 599.



Proudly working together to bring you
FRESH
LOCALLY PRODUCED MILK

