

## Feed and Cows

Adapted form  
Dr. Mary-Beth Hall

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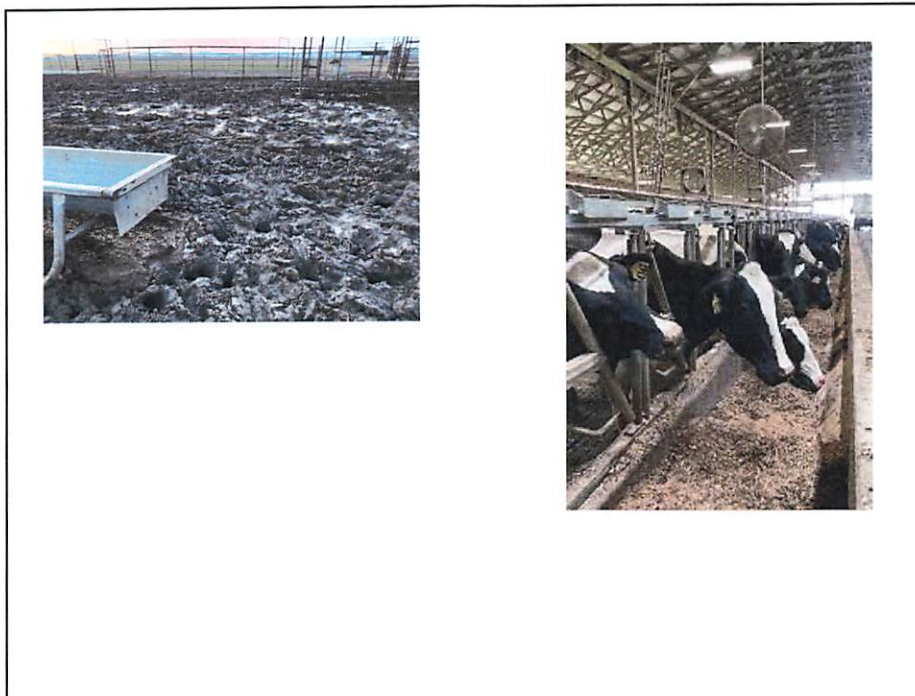
## Barn and Freestalls Laneways

- Do the cows appear to have comfortable, non-skid footing?
- ◆ Are there many rocks or holes in the laneways? How deep is the mud?
- ◆ How far do the cows have to walk from the parlor to their barn/corral?
- ◆ Is ventilation in the barn good? **Are the fans and misters working?**
- ◆ Are the cows using the stalls comfortably?
- ◆ Is the barn comfortable / are fans and cooling systems working?
- ◆ How many hours a day are the cows in the barn?

**How many hours away from the bunk?**

**Not more than 2 hr at any given time**

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## Barn and Freestalls Laneways


- Increase the cow comfort
- Minimize walking distances (to waterers, from parlor to pens)
  - Waterers near the parlor exit, clean, full
- Ventilation and air movement
  - Heat stress can contribute to acidosis
  - Cows eat less forage and more grain

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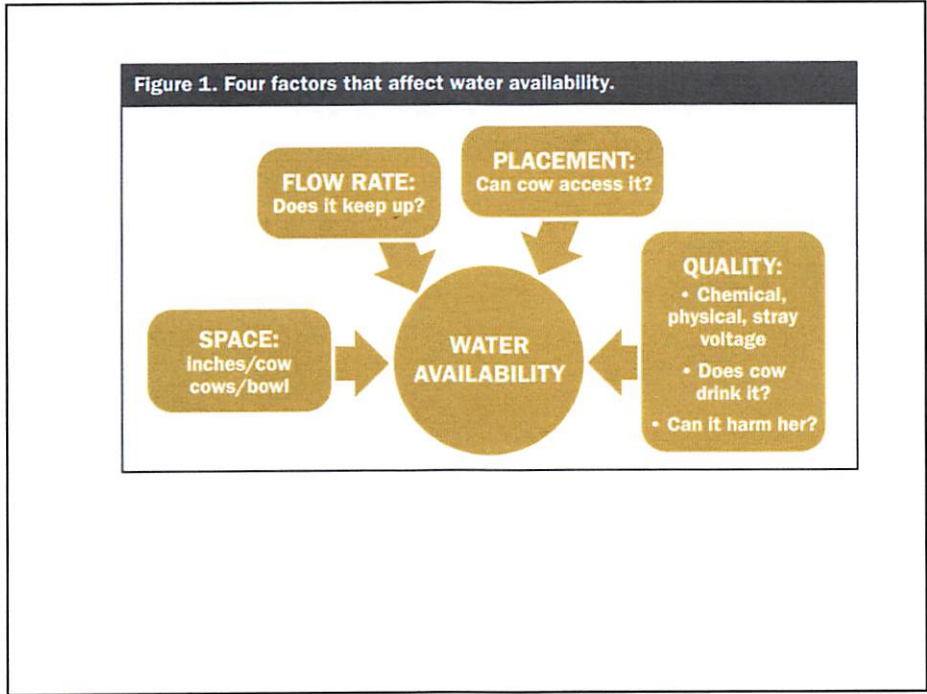


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Barn: 4 inches of linear waterer space per cow in every group



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## Feed Bunk

- **Available feed at all times**, well mixed, proper size particle
- Must not be warm/heated and musty, with no odor and spoilage
  - If YES, check the individual feed in the silo
- **Bunk space must be adequate**
  - use any available space, adjust cow# per pen
- **Push ups frequently**
- **Feed not too wet, not too dry (use hand- squeeze technique)**

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## The Cows

- ◆ Out of every 10 cows, how many are ruminating? **> 50%**
- ◆ Do the cows appear to be sorting their feed? What are they sorting for?
- ◆ Are cows eating dirt? Eagerly eating buffer or salt?
- ◆ Do the animals look dull, or bright and healthy?
- ◆ Are the cows nervous or calm?
- ◆ Is the average body condition score acceptable for the group? Is there much variation in condition score within a group?
- ◆ Are there many lame cows?

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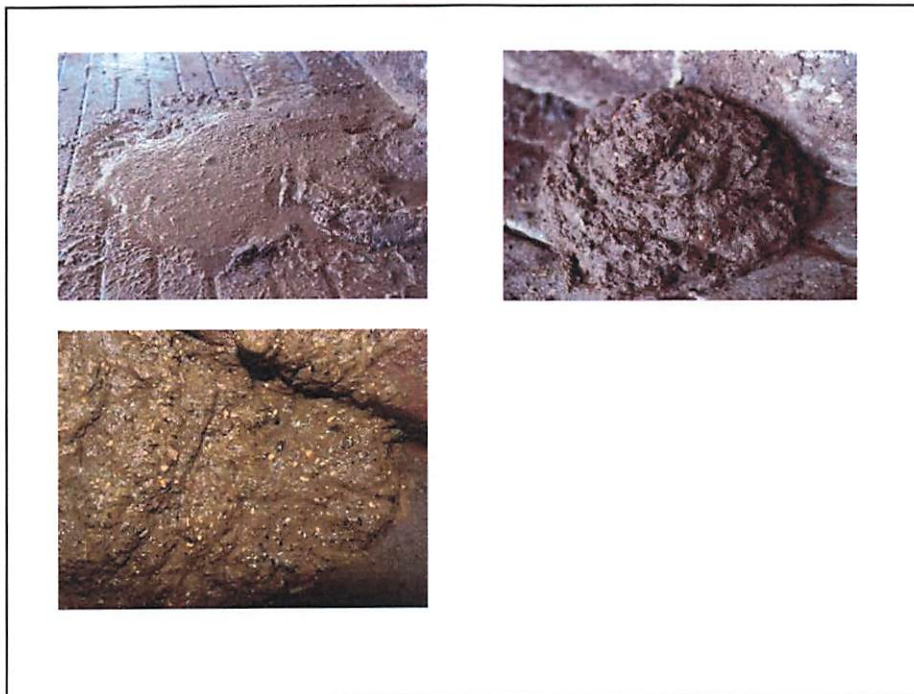
## The Cows

- **Sorting**
  - Potential variability in the manure appearance within the pen
  - Potential variable feed intake
  - Particle sizes in the manure
- **Eating too much buffer or eating dirt**
  - SARA, heat stress
- **Variable BCS**
  - Cow grouping problem, variable intake/sorting

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## Lameness

- Problem:
  - Acidosis
  - Bad surface
  - Too much standing on concrete
  - Bad hoof trimming
- Lameness Scoring System
  - Scale 1-5

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## Manure Evaluation

In the barn or lot:

- ◆ Is the manure foamy with many trapped air bubbles?
- ◆ Is the manure very loose (diarrhea)?
- ◆ Is there much variation in manure consistency within a feeding group?

Acidosis: too much feed fermentation in the hind guts

Diarrhea: feed spoilage

Manure inconsistency: sorting

- ◆ Are there pieces of “mucous” in the manure?
- ◆ Is whole or ground grain apparent in the manure?

Mucous: Acidosis

Grain: Feed digestibility

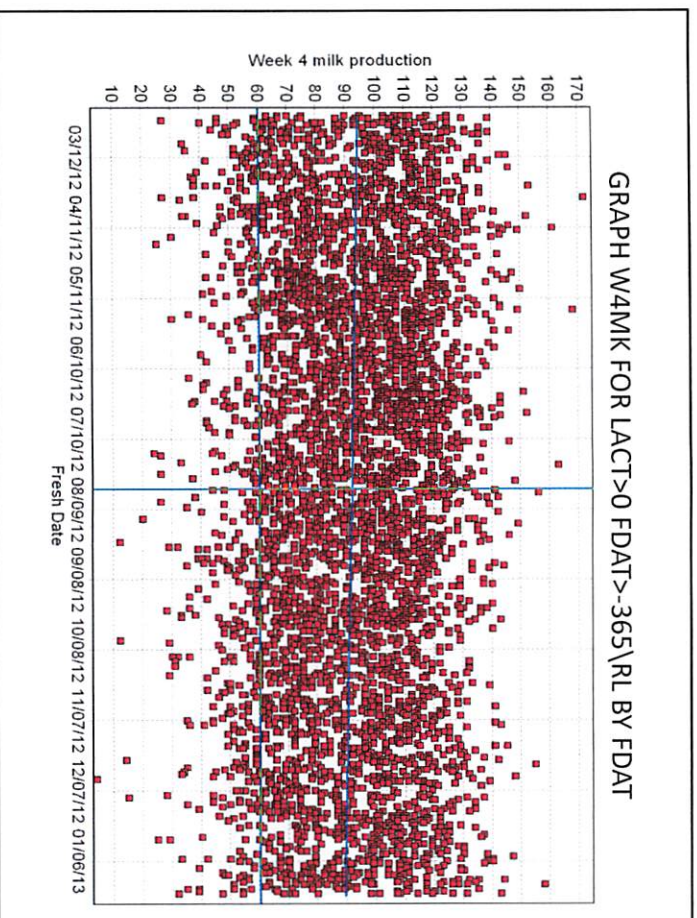
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## Evaluate fresh cow performance with DairyComp 305

- evaluate the effectiveness of the transition period
- demonstrate trends and variation in fresh cow performance, which the herd management team can then use to determine the causes for any performance changes.

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## Potential Areas of Investigation

- Ration changes
- Seasonal impact
  - Summer heat
- Cow comfort
  - Overcrowding of freshpen, too cow much movement, overcrowding
- General transition health
- Heifer development and condition

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