

BRAVE NEW WORLD OF DAIRY APPS

The techno world has reached the dairy industry, with a range of applications that add convenience and power to the business of producing milk, without costing the earth.

FutureDairy post-graduate students, Nicolas Lyons and René Kolbach, held the audience at the recent Australian Dairy Conference entranced, with their presentation that gave an insight into some of the 'apps' now available to Australian dairy farmers.

Applications which gave the ability to log onto the farm remotely held the greatest appeal.

Nicolas outlined the first remote access application: the use of cameras installed at critical places on the farm, that can be viewed through a home computer, lap top or smart phone.

"The cameras are not expensive; they are the type commonly installed for security purposes," Nicolas said.

For example, a dairy farm in South Australia has a camera installed at the calving shed which is accessed frequently to monitor calving progress.

"You could get on with other jobs, say down the paddock, while keeping a check on progress of a calving cow," Nicolas said.

FutureDairy's robotic milking shed at Camden has five cameras, which staff use when they receive an alert from the automatic milking system (AMS).

"When we get an alert we can view the cameras and decide on the best follow up action. For example there's a camera over the entry gates so we can see if a cow is blocking access for other cows. It is really handy if we are away from the dairy or when the alert is received out-of-hours."

Remote log in

The second application allows the farm computer to be accessed remotely, using remote log in software. The software allows a computer – say in the dairy office – to be accessed from a smart phone, laptop or computer located elsewhere.

Remote log in software has been commercially available for a number of years, with a wide range of applications. What's new is its application in the dairy situation.

"For instance, you may be down in the paddock and notice a sick cow. Remote access would allow you to use your smart phone to look up the cow's health records on the farm computer in the office."

"I know of dairy farmers in across Australia and New Zealand who are use remote log in regularly. It gives them easier access to important computer records, without having to be physically in front of the farm computer," Nicolas said.

For more information:

Cameras for viewing areas of the farm via smart phone or computer: contact a local supplier of security systems and cameras.

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Photo: click here to receive a high res image by automatic email:

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Caption: Remote access: Security cameras can be installed at various places around a dairy farm then viewed through a remote computer or smart phone.

Information for media

FutureDairy is a national research project for the Australian dairy industry, aimed at addressing the challenges likely to occur in the next 20 years. FutureDairy's major sponsors are Dairy Australia, DeLaval and DPI NSW and the University of Sydney. Project leader: Dr Kendra Kerrisk 0428 101 372 E kendra.kerrisk@sydney.edu.au

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