

BREEDING COWS TO BE MILKED BY ROBOTS

Dairyfarmers considering automatic milking systems (AMS) frequently ask what percentage of their herd will need to be culled as having udders that are unsuitable for robotic cup attachment.

FutureDairy and Australian experience shows that very few cows have udders that are unsuitable for robotic cup attachment.

However, when making breeding decisions, AMS herd managers may place more emphasis on some traits that influence the robot's ability to attach cups and the cow's ability to walk voluntarily around the farm, for example cow size and conformation of udder, legs and rump.

Peter Williams, from the Australian Dairy Herd Improvement Scheme, will explain how automatic milking may influence breeding decisions at this year's Dairy Research Foundation annual symposium, to be held at Kiama on 4-5 July.

"I would encourage farmers with AMS to pay more attention to teat placement," said Mr Williams.

"Over many years there has been an industry-wide trend to bring the rear teats closer together, resulting in the potential for rear teats to angle and cross over. This would make robotic cup attachment difficult."

"AMS farmers who want to widen the distance between rear teats should select bulls from *The Good Bulls Guide* with a Rear Teat Placement ABV of less than 100," he said.

To hear more about breeding cows for automatic milking, register for the Dairy Research Foundation Symposium visit www.drfsymposium.com.au or contact Esther Price Promotions, esther@estherprice.com.au or 1800 177 636.



Photo: Click here to receive a high res image by automatic email: fd-AMS-cup-attachment@monkscom.com.au

FutureDairy experience shows that very few cows have udders that are unsuitable for automatic milking but good teat placement improves the efficiency of robotic cup attachment, allowing more cows to be milked per hour.

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 NSW DPI and the University of Sydney. Project leader: Dr Kendra Kerrisk 0428 101 372 E kendra.kerrisk@sydney.edu.au

Media contact: This media has been released by Monks Communication on behalf of the FutureDairy project.
Lee-Ann Monks ph 07 5450 0946 or 0419 349 244 email: media_releases@monkscom.com.au.