

Management Guidelines

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Management on the Track

Allow the herd to drift to the shed by keeping outside the flight/fight distance of the herd. It doesn't matter if you are walking or on a bike, the rules are the same. Be careful with bigger vehicles (utes and tractors) – the distance behind the herd should be extended. Talk, sing or even shout at the cows to keep them moving, but don't frighten them. If a dog is used it is alright for it to bark but it must never frighten the cows.

Management in the Shed

The herd enters the shed with a minimum of 1.3 square metres for Jersey cows and 1.4 to 1.5 square metres for Friesian cows (depending on their size and the design of the shed).

The backing gate is not moved until at least two rows are milked (15 minutes minimum) – this allows cows to rearrange into a milking order. If the gate is moved too early cows have to force their way between their herd mates to find their milking position – foot damage results.

The backing gate is regulated to move no more than five seconds in any one movement by a timer on the switch.

The gate is regulated to move at 12 metres per minute in round yards and 6 metres per minute in rectangular yards.

The top-gate is regulated to move no more than two seconds in each forward movement with a button switch control.

The top gate moves forward at a maximum speed of 12 metres per minute in round yards and 6 metres per minute in rectangular yards.

7. Install a bell on the gate so that the cows know when it is moving.

Because cows are creatures of habit they will get used to the predictable movement of the gate. The gentle movement of the gate will with time cause a ripple effect as cows gently

move forward towards the bails. Foot damage will be minimal and lameness reduced.