

Breeding cows to beat the heat

Dairy farmers: Lorebeck Partnership

Region: South Australia

Topic: Heat Tolerance ABV

Shane Gardiner, from the Lorebeck Partnership in Mt Gambier, SA, is looking forward to being able to breed cows a little better suited to his farming environment with DataGene's release of the Heat Tolerance Australian Breeding Value (ABV) in December 2017.

"Heat Tolerance is something we can breed in our cows for free so why not? Like all genetic traits, it will be permanent and cumulative."

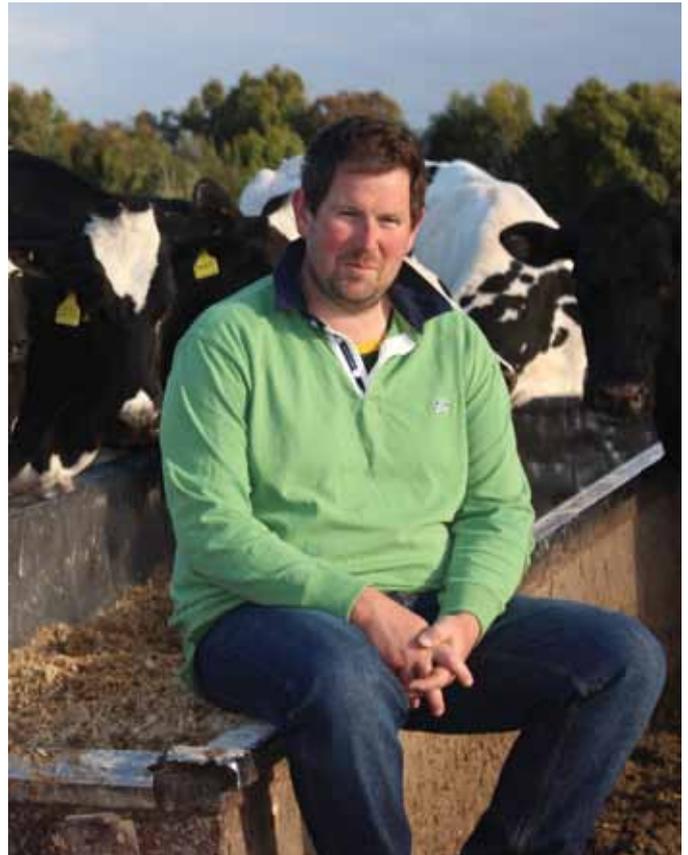
Although the farm isn't in an area traditionally considered a hot dairying area, Mr Gardiner values the opportunity to breed for heat tolerance.

"It's an issue for everyone – we hit 30 degrees in November this year and we are in the South East of South Australia.

"We have centre pivot irrigation and have some micro climates on our farm where we increase the humidity and this affects our cows' ability to deal with rising temperatures."

Shane has reviewed the Heat Tolerance ABVs on genomic tested animals in the herd. They sit with an average Heat Tolerance ABV of 101, which is slightly above breed average. He will also be interested in the Heat Tolerance of bulls.

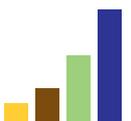
"Now that there is a Heat Tolerance ABV available, companies supplying genetics to the dairy industry will be scrutinising bulls to make sure they avoid bulls which perform poorly in hot, humid conditions. "The end result will be that everyone will benefit."



Shane Gardiner is looking forward to being able to breed cows better suited to his farming environment using the new Heat Tolerance Australian Breeding Value (ABV).

To breed for improved heat tolerance, look for bulls that combine a high Balanced Performance Index (BPI) with a Heat Tolerance ABV of greater than 100.

The Heat Tolerance ABV was developed by Dairy Bio, a joint initiative between the Victorian Government and Dairy Australia, with funding from the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.



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