

NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN

You'd think that John Giumelli would know all about milking routines, since he's the WA co-ordinator for the CowTime project and milks his 130-cow herd every day.

But he's living proof that there's always something new to learn, having put into practice simple ideas he picked up at WA's CowTime Shed Shake-up, and cutting 25% off each milking time. That's a pretty good achievement in a 14-unit swing-over herringbone which is truly a one-milker operation.

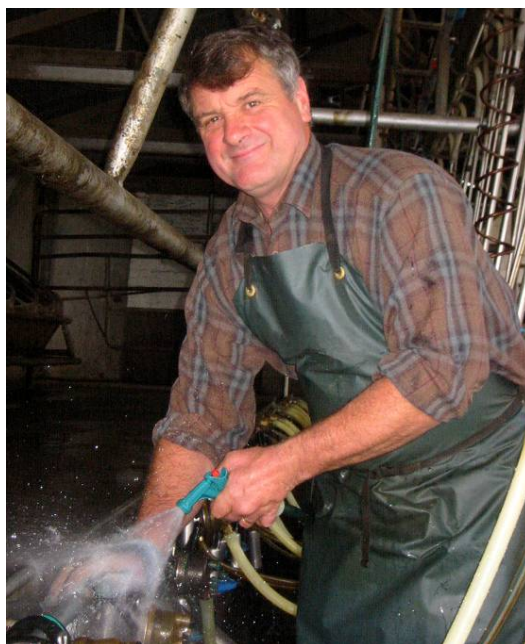
But what John is really pleased about is the wear and tear he's saving on his body. John is very clear about his milking goal. "I want to milk the herd efficiently, but without being fatigued at the end of the day," he said.

The number of cows milked per hour is not John's focus. "I'm not interested in a fast throughput at any price," said John.

After the Shed Shake-up, John stopped going out to the yard to chase the next row of cows into the shed. Instead, he left them to come into the dairy in their established pecking order. "It took about a week for the cows to learn to use their initiative but now they come in without me having to wait; they are relaxed and ready for milk let down."

This means John no longer climbs up and down the steps to trudge around the yard, instead spending the whole milking in the pit which has rubber matting on the floor.

John said the major benefit was noticeable at the end of the day. "I've got a bit more spring left in my step when get home."



John Giumelli

He believes this is because he no longer spends about 30% of his time out on the concrete yard, bringing in each side of cows.

By simply not doing something John was previously doing, milking time dropped from an hour and 20 minutes to an hour; cutting milking time by 25%. According to CowTime's Milking Monitor Report, John has made a 17% improvement in the labour efficiency (litres/operator/hour) of his milking system. And he's achieved that without spending a cent!

CowTime's Shed Shake-ups were brought to the WA region by Western Dairy and the Department of Agriculture, WA.

For more information phone CowTime on 03 5624 2221. CowTime is proudly supported by Dairy Australia and DPI Vic. Your Dairy Services levy making milking easier.

