



Case study

Phil Ayres, South West Victoria

Short shrift for slow cows

After hearing CowTime's Shorter Milking Secrets, Phil Ayres introduced a simple policy in his dairy: 'don't wait for slow cows'. It cut 15-20 minutes off every milking, which means an earlier breakfast and dinner plus time to read the paper.

Phil and his wife Jenny milk 360 cows in a 27-unit swingover dairy near Timboon in South West Victoria. Any changes in routine need to be easy to follow as they have help milking from their four daughters and a number of staff.

CowTime's Milking Monitor Report showed the dairy was already one of the most efficient in the business before the Ayres agreed to try out CowTime's Shorter Milking Secrets.

"Our dairy is efficient but I'm not interested in efficiency at any cost. I'd rather have two operators than go home stressed every night from trying to milk on my own," said Phil.

The CowTime team calculated that at the peak of season, the Maximum Milk Out Time for the Ayres herd was about 10 minutes.

"That means almost all of the herd will be milked out within 10 minutes at peak of season, and earlier the rest of the season" said Phil.

The Ayres identified slow cows and used a timer to see how long it took before the automatic cup removers came off these cows.

"I was amazed to discover those slow cows were taking up to 15 minutes! They were holding up a whole row of cows for 50% more time than needed," he said.

That's when Phil decided on his 'don't wait for slow cows' policy. Once the cups have come off the rest of the row, we remove the cups from slow cows rather than stand around twiddling our thumbs waiting for them to finish.

"We instantly saved 15-20 minutes a milking with no effect on cell count or milk production. And the beauty of it is that it's so simple," said Phil.

Jenny sums it up nicely: 'Are you home already?!'

The secret's out

Find out the secret to saving time in your dairy. Attend *Shorter Milking Secrets*, CowTime's 2007 Shed Shake-up, coming to your region soon.

Shorter Milking Secrets involve little or no cost but challenge current milking routines and practices.

Everyone will go home ideas to put into practice at the next milking, their herd's maximum milk out time and a timer to get started.

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.

→ Shorter Milking Secrets

- Cups on accounts for about 80% of the time a cow spends in the dairy so the trick is to maximise cluster throughput
- Removing the cups early from slow milking cows cuts milking time without compromising production or milk quality; The trick is to know your herd's Maximum Milk Out Time.

(based on research conducted by the National Milk Harvesting Centre, Ellinbank)

