



Case study

Chris, Jenny and Paul Eggert, NSW

Cut a third off milking time

Wauchope dairy farmer, Chris Eggert, has cut his milking time by a third without spending a cent! He simply follows CowTime's Shorter Milking Secrets. The result: an hour more a day to spend as he likes.

Chris farms in partnership with his parents, Jenny and Paul Eggert at their organic property Redbank, milking 170 cows year round. At the peak of season, milking in their 10 aside double-up dairy takes about 1:50 in the morning and about 1:40 in the evening.

Both Chris and Paul milk, and admit they were sceptical when CowTime invited them to test Shorter Milking Secrets. "We weren't convinced it would be possible to save much time, and we were a little concerned about the effect on milk quality," Chris said.

But the clock was the clincher. CowTime calculated the Maximum Milk Out Time was about 6½ minutes for the Eggert's herd. That means the cups could be taken off all cows after 6½ minutes without affecting production or quality.

When the Eggerts used the CowTime timer they discovered most of the herd was milked within the 6½ minutes but about 10 took much longer.

"That really convinced us to give it a go," said Chris. Knowing a few cows were holding up milking prompted the Eggerts to completely re-think their milking routine.

"We used to have a row-by-row approach. Now we are more flexible, and much more aware of cow flow," he said.

These days Chris and Paul open the gates before all the cups are off, allowing the cows to exit at their own pace. They also enter at their own pace, while the cups up the other row. The cups are put on the slower milking cows as a priority. When the rest of the row is finished, most of the slow cows will have their cups removed, even if milk is still flowing.

"We know from the timer that the cups have been on longer than 6½ minutes by then," he said. The Eggert's approach is not rigid. Fresh cows and those prone to mastitis get some leeway.

Since introducing this approach, Chris has consistently saved half an hour on every milking, and Paul saves 20 minutes a milking. There's been no impact on production or milk quality. "An added bonus has been the cows are much more relaxed in the dairy," said Chris.

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 with 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)

