



Case study

Bruce and Karen Slape, South Australia

Swapping milking time for family time

Bruce Slape has converted some of his milking time into family time by following CowTime's Shorter Milking Secrets. And it didn't cost him a cent!

Bruce and his wife Karen dairy at their property, Treven Vale, about 100km north of Adelaide. They milk year round in a single operator 20 aside swing-over herringbone with automatic cup removers (ACRs).

The herd averages 9000L/lactation with 240 cows going through the dairy at the peak. CowTime's Milking Monitor Report shows the dairy is one of the most efficient in the business.

Bruce was sceptical when he was invited to test-run CowTime's Shorter Milking Secrets. "I'm always keen to improve efficiency but it is important to us to maintain a calm, comfortable environment in the dairy," said Bruce.

Bruce decided to give it a try because CowTime's recommendations are based on several year's research conducted Ellinbank, Victoria and Elliott, Tasmania.

CowTime calculated that the herd has a Maximum Milk Out Time of nine minutes. That means the cups can be removed from all cows after nine minutes without affecting milk production or mastitis.

When the Slapes timed their cows, many were taking much longer than nine minutes.

→ 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)

Bruce made a simple change to routine: once the ACRs have removed the cups from most of the cows, the rest are removed even if milk is still flowing. Bruce makes an exception for fresh cows and those prone to mastitis. These receive priority at cups on, and he'll give them longer to finish milking.

The result: Milking time takes 10 minutes less. "That's an extra 20 minutes a day I can spend with the family or improving other farm efficiencies," said Bruce.

CowTime's Darold Klindworth said the Maximum Milk Out Time is based on the highest producing cows in the herd, so Bruce could cut milking time even further by taking the cups off the fresh cows after nine minutes rather than waiting.

"But what is important is that Bruce has saved time using a system that works for him. He's prepared to take a few extra minutes in the dairy to monitor herd health and welfare," said Darold.

Bruce is happy with the outcome. "I've saved time without affecting production or mastitis and the atmosphere in the dairy remains calm," said Bruce.

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.

