



Case study

Andrew and Paul Wilson, Subtropics

A few cows hold up the whole milking

Andrew and Paul Wilson have discovered it only takes a few slow cows to hold up the whole milking. CowTime's Shorter Milking Secrets helped them cut up to 20 minutes off each milking while maintaining milk production, quality and a calm working environment.

The brothers dairy near Lismore, NSW, milking about 260 cows year round. Their 20 unit swingover dairy can be handled by a single operator, although there's usually a second person around the dairy to help with drafting, AI etc.

Andrew says they have quite different milking styles. "I'd rather have a leisurely breakfast than stand around waiting so I focus on cow flow, operating efficiently and getting out of the dairy as quickly as possible," said Andrew.

Paul preferred to take a little extra time to make sure cows were milked out completely and to maintain a calm, relaxed milking atmosphere.

CowTime gave the brothers common ground to review their milking practices. "We've both got science backgrounds so valued the fact that CowTime's Shorter Milking Secrets were based on extensive research," said Andrew.

The principle's very simple: it's not worth holding up a whole row for a slow milker. CowTime calculated that the Maximum Milk Out Time (MMOT) for the Wilson's herd was 6½ minutes.

"This means that if a cow is still milking after 6½ minutes we take the cups off anyway," he said. The herd's MMOT takes into account the high producing and fresh cows.

"We only have to take the cups off early from about six cows each milking; the others are finished by then anyway," said Andrew.

Initially the brothers used a CowTime timer to identify the slow cows. Each of the six slow cows held up its row by about three minutes - which added almost 20 minutes to every milking. "The slow cows were all average producers in mid lactation, not fresh, high producers that we might be more flexible with," Andrew said.

Andrew and Paul have each saved up to 20 minutes a milking without changing their individual milking styles and there's been no affect on milk production and quality. CowTime's Darold Klindworth says the Wilson brothers' experience demonstrates that everyone can benefit from Shorter Milking Secrets, regardless of their milking style.

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 (MMOT).

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

