FEED WASTAGE - CASE STUDY

McInnes Partnership, Harrisville Queensland

The McInnes Partnership farm at Harrisville in south-east Queensland. The farm milk 550 cows producing 4.2 million litres annually, with a rolling herd average of 7,600 litres.

The McInnes' have invested in some key infrastructure that minimises feed wastage.

Commodity Shed

The McInnes' feed a number of byproducts and meals. These include brewers grains, canola meal and whole cottonseed.

Early in 2016 they invested in a commodity storage shed to minimise wastage due to soil contamination of feedstuffs, spoilage due to rainfall, and heating from sunlight.

The shed cost approximately $75,000 ex GST, with an expected lifespan of 25 years.

Moving from their previous on-ground storage to the new shed has meant a reduction of feed wastage from an estimated 5% to less than 1%. Given that they feed approximately $300,000 ex GST a year in byproducts, this represents a saving of $12,000, with a payback of around six years.

Feedpad

In 2003, the business built a shaded feedpad and introduced a PMR to their feeding programme.

A unique aspect of this feedpad was the dimension and height of the troughs. These troughs are approximately 1.2 m (internal) across and allow cow access from both sides. There is an electric wire that runs down the middle of the trough to manage cow behaviour.

In terms of feed wastage, the trough design has advantages in terms of limiting cows dropping feed onto the feedpad floor while chewing, with spillage remaining in the trough.

The troughs are also built at a height of 35cm above ground level. This leads to an ease of feeding and saliva flow.