**HEAT STRESS CONTROL IN SUMMER**

**Shade**

Research at the University of Florida showed 15-22 percent more milk from the milking herd which had shade compared to unshaded animals. A minimum of 65 square feet per cow is recommended. Shade over dirt floor should either be moved or cleaned out regularly to control mud. The long axis of shade cloth should extend north-south to provide maximum shade movement during the day to hold control mud. The long axis of buildings should extend east-west to minimize shade movement and keep animals under the roof.

**Loose Housing**

Loose housing can provide shade as well as feed areas. Loose barns should be at least 12 feet high, have ridge vents and cleaned regularly to control mud. They work better where sand is available at reasonable cost. The recommended floor area per cow in loose housing is 80 square feet per cow to minimize walking on utters.

**Freestalls**

Freestalls can also provide shade as well as feed areas. Those buildings should be at least 12 feet high for air movement and have ridge vents. Feed alleys should be a minimum of 12 feet wide with cow alleys 10 feet wide. Stall size, curb height, brisket boards and neck rail locations are all important to keep stalls clean.

**Body Cooling**

Research in Florida shows wetting the backs of lactating cows for 1-1/2 minutes every 15 minutes and blowing air at a rate of 450 cfm/cow gave an increase in milk yield. The increase was an average of 11 percent when this body cooling was provided in the feed alley adjacent to freestalls. The animals ate more feed, had lower body temperature, lower respiration rates and improved conception.