

Overcrowding May Decrease Cud Chewing



By Donna M. Amaral-Phillips

Dairy cows spend almost 8 hours daily chewing their cud for a total of almost 30,000 chews. When cows chew their cud or ruminate, they secrete saliva. This saliva contains a natural antacid which helps buffer the contents of the rumen or first compartment of the stomach. Proper buffering of the rumen allows a cow to digest forages better and to eat more feed which helps her produce more milk.

In a study at Cornell University, the scientists found that cows ruminated less when they were overcrowded at the feed bunk and freestalls by 30%. Overcrowded cows spent on average 28% of their time ruminating, whereas the uncrowded cows averaged 37% over a 24-hr time period.

**Cooperative
Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.

Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.