



FACT SHEET #7

Holstein-Friesian Cattle

Australian Holstein-Friesian cattle are considered to be the best dairy cattle in the world. They are extremely popular with Australia's 9,256 dairy farmers.

In 1886, one bull and six female animals arrived in Australia from Holland; there are now 1,800,000 Holsteins in Australia.

Holstein animals are found in all parts of Australia. The ability to adapt to a variety of environmental conditions, produce high milk yields and good quality meat make Australian Holsteins the best dairy breed available.

Holstein Australia was started in 1914, when dairy farmers, interested in breeding pure-bred animals, decided to start the Association to protect the Holstein breed's purity and assist them in adding value to their animals.

Registered Pure-Bred Holsteins produce more milk than their grade counterparts. In Australia, this production difference amounts to 1,000 litres of milk per lactation.

In total, 83 percent of Australian dairy cows are Holsteins. The average annual production for registered Australian Holsteins is 7,536 litres milk, 288 kg (3.82%) fat and 242 kg (3.21%) protein. Average lactation period is 305 days.

Geographical location and low prices paid for milk, dictates that the Australian production system is predominantly pasture-based. The Australian pasture-based system is a low input, low-cost production system which relies on grass, and improved pastures as the primary food source.

Through selective breeding, and using tools such as classification, the Australian herds continue to develop positive traits desirable in a dairy cow, specifically, more milk, longevity and calving ease.