

SPEAKING FOR JERSEYS AROUND THE WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

Some may question the relevance of this project title. It was chosen on the premise that we in the U.S. and other countries located in the cooler climates have developed the technology of high performance in the Jersey breed. A very pertinent question at this time is, can our technology effectively be transferred to the warmer climates and for the most part the lesser developed areas of the world?

Generally, we think of the hot climate areas (tropics) of the world as those countries lying in part or wholly between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. However, the "high stress" zone is larger, approximately the North-South 30° latitudes. This zone passes through the U.S. along the line Jacksonville, Florida, New Orleans and San Antonio, Texas, then West

through Southern China, New Delhi, India, and Cairo, Egypt. The southern limit in South America is the northern border of Uruguay, then to the upper half of South Africa and the upper two-thirds of Australia. We term this area the "Warm Climate Zone" (WCZ).

In the WCZ, the main grasses used for grazing differ from cooler climates. They grow rapidly in response to rain and mature early therefore it is more difficult to maintain high quality feed supplies. For most of the WCZ, rainfall is either low or excessive with wet and dry seasons. Maximum daily temperatures usually do not rise any higher than in North Carolina or Missouri but persist for more hours of the day and months of the year. Collectively, this means the WCZ presents challenges that differ in several respects to achieve milk yields from our "high technology cows".

For well over 100 years, improved dairy breeds have been shipped to countries in the WCZ. The prevailing philosophy of the receivers of the imports was all that was needed to get higher milk output was to "change the breed" giving no recognition for need to create appropriate feeding and management practices. The shippers of the cattle were just as remiss in thinking that "new cows" would automatically lead to locals changing their practices without being given guidance. During the same period, governments wished to improve their image among farmers by giving them "new cows"; hence governments, either directly or through foreign donor agencies mainly financed the importations. In combination, the philosophies and policies led principally to failures.

Fortunately, situations are changing in countries of the WCZ. Governments are under high pressure to rapidly increase domestic milk supplies for satisfying the needs of rapidly expanding urban centers. In much of the WCZ, milk production is now rising by 4 to 7% per year, using mainly crosses of dairy breeds with local type cattle and high grade or pure dairy breeds. The growing of corn is the most rapid expanding agriculture crop in the WCZ; much