

August Questions

Hello Neil,

I have this farmer who is building a new shed. He asked me about it. Would you have a look and tell me your opinion?

Saludos,
Gonzalo

Below are some of his questions with answers:

Slope of yards

1. The inclination of the floor says 2% but it is more economic to leave them 1% as the floors that were there before. Is it convenient?

1% is enough. I have a farmer that has 1% and it works well. The only problem with 1% is that it is difficult to pour accurately (when you are making the concrete) - the contractors often get low spots that collect water and our regulations are tough here - they don't want pools of water.

2. What width you suggest for the exit from the milking shed?

In front of the bails where the cows walk out they need 4 metres. After that the wider the race, the faster they exit. If it is too narrow one cow can hold everyone up. So it should not be less than 2 metres- unless to put them over weighing scales or automatic teat sprayers.

3. What do you suggest for surface of the floor? what about inside the shed, would it be smooth or harsh? what about in the yard? smooth?

The surface of the floor in the yard and inside the shed should be non slip. Never smooth or slippery. For this reason we run a hard broom over the concrete before it dries. The latest idea is to roll the wet surface with a fine triangular mesh roller that leaves fine triangular shapes in the surface. I suppose you would say the surface is harsh. If cows were forced in the yard it would damage their feet. If you just allow the cows to flow it is good because they flow better on a non- slip surface and no foot damage results.

Lots more information about shed design and faults can be found in the booklet "Lameness in Dairy Herds"