Over the last 10 years, increasing numbers of Australian dairy stock have been exported to overseas markets, many of which are in South and East Asia. The rationale of such countries seeking genetically superior, but poorly adapted, dairy stock has frequently been questioned.

Unfortunately, there are increasing instances where such exercises have led to unacceptably high mortalities rates and poor performance once these imported stock have entered the milking herds, particularly those of small farmers. The major oversight by both the importers – whether private investors or government organisations – and the farmers for whom these stock are destined, is not ‘preparing the environment’ for the imported stock.

In collaboration with the importing country, the Australian Government has instigated strict animal selection and quarantine procedures prior to transport, while the exporting agencies are developing post-arrival protocols to reduce stresses on the newly arrived stock. The success of such programs depends largely on the awareness and ability of new owners of these stock to improve their feeding and general herd management. Unfortunately, such programs appear to be very ad hoc, with very variable success.

To improve the awareness, and hence the ongoing herd and farm management practices of traditional farmers in these countries, a more structured education program should be considered. Each importing country would have their specific problems facing newly arrived exotic dairy stock. Rather than producing a post-arrival protocol for each country, it is desirable to develop a generic one highlighting the common key issues. This manual highlights the important dairy herd management practices required to reduce undue stress on high genetic merit, but unadapted, dairy heifers once they arrive at their new destination.

Following the successful publication of my book *Tropical Dairy Farming* in December 2005, CSIRO Publishing asked me to write a second manual in 2009, *Business Management for Tropical Dairy Farmers*. As with my first two books, my gratitude goes out to ATSE Crawford Fund, who provided generous financial support, and to Ted Hamilton and the CSIRO Publishing team who very professionally converted my laptop computer writings to both a ‘hard copy’ book and a collection of PDF files for an eBook.

The commission to develop the management packages for tropical dairy production technology originated from Meat and Livestock Australia and I am very grateful for their support. I also acknowledge the team that helped produce a glossy brochure on small holder dairy farming in Indonesia: those both in Java (Tetra Pak, De Laval and the
Indonesian Association of Dairy Cooperatives) and Australia (Victorian and Queensland governments). Finally, this book was written in part while I was working full time as a dairy adviser at DPIV Dairy Extension Centre, and I thank the management team for supporting my endeavours.

Dr John Moran
Director, Profitable Dairy Systems,
24 Wilson St, Kyabram, Victoria 3620, Australia
Telephone: +61 418 379 652 (mobile phone)
Email: jbm95@hotmail.com