

# Foreword

It gives me great honour and pleasure to write this Foreword for the book *Rearing Young Stock on Tropical Dairy Farms in Asia*, authored by Dr John Moran from Victoria in Australia.

Dairy farmers on small holder farms in the tropics are continually being faced with decreasing profit margins, arising from increasing costs of milk production and milk prices that do not reflect these costs. They should always be reassessing their farm practices to determine which farm costs can be reduced and which aspect of their farm management can be improved to increase milk yields hence on-farm cash flows.

Rearing young stock is probably one of the least well understood and practiced aspects of herd and feeding management on dairy farms throughout the world, particularly on small holder dairy farms in the tropics, for a variety of reasons:

- Replacement heifers do not generate any income for 2 or 3 years.
- Mortality rates of milk-fed and weaned heifer replacements in the tropics are frequently double those on temperate farms.
- Poorly reared heifers are more susceptible to diseases, so frequently have a shorter lifespan in the milking herd.
- Small heifers are less productive both in terms of daily milk yields and the number of calves produced during their lifetime.

To overcome these problems, rearing replacement heifers must be considered as an investment in the farm's future rather than a farm cost.

For many years, Dr John Moran has been considered as an expert in tropical dairy farm production, particularly in South and East Asia. Over the last 10 years, he has conducted over 90 workshops and written several books specifically directed to the tropical small holder dairy farmer. John wrote his first calf- and heifer-rearing book 20 years ago and this book is an updated version but with the emphasis on the specific problems dairy farmers must address when rearing their replacement stock in the harsh tropical climate. Together with the valuable sources of information he cites in this manual, this book also serves as a training manual.

Not only will this book be of great interest to dairy farmers and advisers throughout the tropics, but university and college students, dairy scientists and extension personnel

will also find it a valuable reference text on young stock management. I therefore highly recommend this book to all.

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