

Foreword

It gives me great honour and pleasure to write this Foreword to the latest of John Moran's books, namely *Blueprints for Tropical Dairy Farming*. I have known John for many years, when he was a dairy researcher and adviser for the Victorian government in Australia and following his retirement in 2011, as a tropical dairy consultant through his business Profitable Dairy Systems.

As a result of writing five reference texts on tropical dairy farming over the last 10 years, Dr John Moran has become 'the guru' for dairy advisers, policymakers, farmers and other dairy stakeholders throughout South and East Asia. This, his sixth book, follows on with his tradition of thoroughly reading, researching and networking his topics before putting 'pen to paper' (or its modern day equivalent: putting 'finger to keyboard'). There has been much recognition of his skills and credibility such as his recent three-year term as the Coordinator of the Asia Dairy Network, an FAO body facilitating the commercial developments of smallholder dairy farming throughout Asia. In addition, when you Google 'dairy farming in the humid tropics' you will invariably come across many of John's writings and webinars within the first few lines of the printout.

He has called his sixth book *Blueprints for Tropical Dairy Farming* because, in collaborating with his colleague, Dr Phillip Chamberlain, another Australian tropical livestock guru, John wants to cover all aspects of producing milk in the tropics, namely by including detailed discussions on large-scale intensive dairy feedlotting as well as the more traditional smallholder dairy systems. This relatively new approach in the tropics is being seen by many as the best and most appropriate way to address the ever-increasing gap between demand and supply of raw milk leading to decreasing self-sufficiencies of milk and dairy products in far too many tropical Asian countries.

Other very new innovations in John's kitbag are several smallholder dairy farmer extension packages, specifically developed to address one of the biggest problems in tropical dairy farming, namely 'getting the message across' from dairy researchers to teachers and trainers and eventually to the farmers themselves. In this book, John and Philip discuss two of these, namely 'The Golden Rules of tropical dairy farming' and the 'Dairy Smallholder Innovative Program (or DSIP)'. Their key objectives are to develop individual farmer skills, primarily in dairy production technology, to improve the productivity of their milking herds to stimulate farm performance and bring about profitable, hence long-term, sustainability.

It is not easy to write a book about tropical dairy farming in which every fact is relevant to every reader. However, John and Phillip have done an admirable job which will greatly add to our collective knowledge by developing the improved farm management practices that are essential to overcome many traditions in smallholder dairy farming.

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 tropical dairy farming. I thoroughly recommend this book to all.

Professor Metha Wanapat
Director, Tropical Feed Resources Research and Development Centre (TROFREC)
Faculty of Agriculture, Khon Kaen University
Khon Kaen, Thailand
Email: metha@kk.ac.th