



Heat Detection in Far North Queensland

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On the 23rd May, farmers and service providers gathered in Malanda for our Heat Detective workshop. There were eight farmers and four service providers in attendance at the session which was held at the James Cook University seminar room adjacent to Tableland Veterinary Services in Malanda. Bill Tranter facilitated the session which involved a morning theory session followed by some practical work at the yards where participants were asked to identify cows that were on heat. Some of the key take home messages from the day are listed in the following dot points:

- When a cow is fully on heat, she will do a lot of standing. She will mount the day before and the day after.
- Farmers and their workers should focus on standing heat as the primary sign of impending ovulation.
- Choose a heat detection aid and learn to use it correctly through perseverance.
- Focus on identifying the correct timing for insemination.
- Measure heat detection efficiency to assess performance.
- If changes are required, realise that small steps can make big gains. An increased heat detection efficiency of 1-2% may not seem like much, but the cumulative effects can make a big difference to your bottom line.

The importance of managing the 'people' factor when it comes to heat detection cannot be under-estimated. While farmers need to make sure that their animals are identified correctly, have the right body condition, and are drafted out prior to milking, there are some key aspects relating to the 'people' factor that have a huge impact on the

efficiency of heat detection on farm. Effective communication amongst staff and owners, correct training, correct observation, patience and passion for the job are all extremely important.

For those farmers or employees who would like more information about Heat Detection, you can order the latest edition of Dairy Australia's InCalf book by clicking on the following link www.dairyaustralia.com.au/incalfbooks



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