

2 Technotes

The *Countdown Downunder Technotes for Mastitis Control* gives the scientific rationale for each of the Farm Guideline recommendations and describes the robustness of the recommendation in the Australian dairy industry. It is a principal resource of the Countdown Downunder Adviser Short Course (Figure 11).

The initial plan for the Technotes was a typed set of notes produced essentially 'in-house' that gave a 1-2 page review with references to support each Farm Guideline. The design evolved into a 'working' resource that could be used by advisers to investigate mastitis and milk quality issues. This was achieved by including new tools for mastitis investigations such as charts for objectively assessing teat condition, giving clear guides to help interpret findings, and being explicit about which guidelines would benefit from further research.

Clear and practical guides on the interpretation and relevance of materials often required lengthy consideration and debate of issues by the editorial committee, Pauline Brightling, Graeme Mein, Anne Hope, Jakob Malmo and Diane Ryan. The 30 mastitis and milk quality experts who contributed their technical expertise also deserve special thanks, with major inputs from Jeff Andrews, Rod Dyson, Alison Gunn, Ian Hubble, Bill Morgan, John Ryan and Richard Shephard.

The Technote kit consists of 221 pages of technical information, a copy of the *Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control*, a professional index and bookmark, a booklet *Farm Presentation Kit Notes for Presenters*, and a compact disk with electronic versions of the Farm Guidelines, Technotes and Farm Presentation Kit.

SUBStitution Pty Ltd designed the contents in a style matching the Farm Guidelines and the compact disk label and bookmark, Watson Design developed the folder cover, Master Indexing produced a scientific index to maximise its utility, and the kit was printed by DPA. A decision was made to double the print run of 1,000 specified in the Project Brief based on stakeholder interest and the high cost of reprinting.

Information in the Technotes can 'grow' as new information and issues emerge. This is catered for in the design by having loose-leaf pages with a publication date in the bottom right hand corner (e.g. 'Jan 2000'). Updates will be posted on the Countdown Downunder website.

Following the launch of the Technotes in April 2000, every adviser on the Countdown contact list was posted a special introductory offer and their availability was also advertised in the Australian Association of Cattle Veterinarians magazine and the Australian Milking Machine Trade Association newsletter.

The retail price of the Technotes since 1 July 2000 (on introduction of the Goods and Services Tax) is \$86.35 including postage and packaging by Matrae for orders made within Australia.

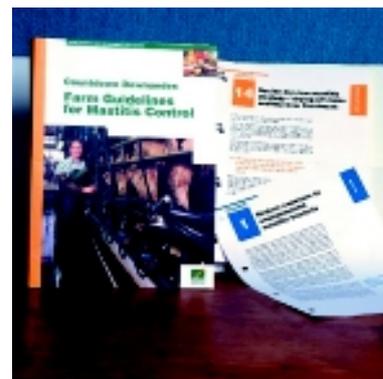


Figure 11: The Countdown Downunder Technotes gave the scientific rationale behind each Farm Guideline recommendation

The Countdown Downunder Technote kit was launched in April 2000

42% of Australian advisers who have a business interest in mastitis and milk quality have purchased the Technotes

Five hundred kits have been sold to date, either by direct order, through the Adviser Short Course or bulk sales to Universities. This represents 42% of the 1,200 dairy advisers on the Countdown contact list or 66% of those advisers who are actively involved with the project. About 35 complimentary copies have been circulated to contributors, the state-based Regional Dairy Programs, other dairy projects and a legal deposit in the State Library of Victoria.

Advisers who became familiar with the Technotes during the Adviser Short Course made unsolicited comments during feedback sessions such as:

“The Technotes are absolutely outstanding, a world class resource material.”

– Dairy adviser at Warragul course, Gippsland

“I’m impressed by the Technotes – they’re easy to access, very detailed, and well linked with guidelines.”

– Dairy adviser at Elliott course, Tasmania

“I will continue to use the Technotes as a resource and to update information.”

– Veterinarian at Glenormiston course, Western Victoria

The Technotes are the principal reference for the Countdown Adviser Short Course

Although the professionally produced kit was costly from the project’s point of view in terms of dollars and production time, its high quality and relevance to advisers has justified the effort.