

Five-star accommodation and cow comfort – from top to toe

# What's new in cow housing?

We round up some of the new products and technology on the market that could help you to create the perfect 'home' for the most important ladies in your life – from top (a light ridge) to bottom (a slurry scraper). See if you could make some changes during the summer.

text Rachael Porter

## Let there be light...

A roof ridge system has been launched that the manufacturer claims will improve ventilation and natural light when fitted to new or existing buildings. Galebreakers' light ridge is made in Britain using strong PVC roof panels that are available in one-, two- or three-metre widths, providing a 600-mm 'air exhaust' to suit a range of roof pitches. There are no fans or moving parts.

Once fitted, the light ridge requires no adjustment or maintenance. The 'active' wind guide plates, which run the length of each side, enable the system to 'exhaust' hot gases and fumes in almost any weather conditions.

Fitting the light ridge to a livestock building will improve natural ventilation, as well as natural light, and the construction is waterproof and snow-load tested.



## No-nonsense slurry scraper

A simple, user-friendly, low-maintenance slurry scraper, which is fully galvanised, has been launched by Dutch company Joz.

The Rope Scraper is the newest addition to its range of slurry scrapers and this system eradicates the need for tensioning and can be used directly on a concrete or slatted floor.

The company claims that it is also extremely cow friendly.

It comprises two drive stations and one polyester wear-proof 18mm or 22mm Dynacord.

As one of the drive stations reels the rope in, the second reels it out. One or more slurry scrapers can then be

installed between the drive stations, depending on cubicle shed lay out.

The system can be operated manually or automatically (at pre-programmed times) via a control panel.

And a cow protection system allows the installation to operate independently, without supervision.

The biggest advantage of the system is its low maintenance requirements.

The system of two drive stations makes it unnecessary to tension the installation. And it can be easily installed in existing housing.

The company also claims that using an animal-friendly rope means that there's no damage to a single cow claw.

## Automatic treatment of cow hooves

Hoof cleaning and disinfection can now be fully integrated, with the launch of Joz's Claw Clean System (CCS).

This product was developed in collaboration with the Dutch engineering firm Heemskerk and the manufacturer claims that it's cow friendly and suitable for all types of housing.

It consists of a central control unit and one or two spray units and is designed to replace the process of foot bathing, which is both time-consuming and unpleasant for cattle, says the company. Footbaths become rapidly soiled by manure introduced on the animal's hooves and, as a result of this, the disinfectant has only a short effective life and can indeed even have negative effects on cows' feet.

Footbathing is also a time-consuming and difficult process, particularly on larger farms, and it often has to be carried out during milking or just as cows leave the parlour.

CCS cleans and disinfects the claws hygienically and fully automatically and offers a continuous, preventive approach, according to the company. It also claims

that, as a result, claw problems remain under control, savings are achieved in both time and money, and cows maintain milk production levels and live longer.

The central unit is connected to the mains water and electricity supply. A dosing unit guarantees the correct mix of disinfectant and water and a high-pressure pump carries the solution to the spray nozzles.

Following assembly, it is simply a question of placing a section of hose in a barrel of disinfectant, and activating the system by turning a knob.

From that time on, CCS will treat the claws of every cow detected by the sensor. The spray units are positioned in the return passageway from the milking parlour or at the exit of the milking robot.



## Machine 'manages' cubicles



A self-propelled and self-loading machine offers easier day-to-day management of the cubicle shed. The job of cleaning and bedding up to 500 cubicles can be completed in a matter of minutes by the Agricom Cubicle Manager and its main features include a hydraulically driven front wheel drive unit, a self-loading bin, that is driven by a separate gear pump, the ability to turn on a 1.3m wheelbase and the ability to handle sawdust, straw or powder disinfectants, as well as numerous other bedding materials including paper.

Driven by a Kubota three-cylinder water-cooled engine, the latest model also has a heavy duty feed belt, a sealed hydraulic drive system, a galvanized chassis and a powder-coated hopper with capacity to bed 300 cubicles.

Additional options include a large 600-cubicle hopper, a hydraulic slat scraper and a hopper mixer paddle.

It is the only machine on the market that does not work on a 'blower' system, so it can handle all bedding materials except sand.