



AIM: TO PROVIDE IDEAS FOR A SMALLHOLDER DAIRY UNIT

1. How can I manage my herd efficiently?

- ❖ Efficient dairy farmers maximise the use of their time, whilst ensuring cows can concentrate on producing milk.
- ❖ One way to do this is to have facilities which allow easy movement of dairy animals and ensure that cows have:
 - 24/7 supply of fresh, clean water;
 - Feed which is matched to their stage of production (*see fact sheets F06 and F06A*);
 - A clean, dry, comfortable, shady place to lie down;
 - Sufficient space to move around.

2. Key points for building a 'low cost' smallholder dairy unit?

- ❖ Use **locally available resources**, e.g. wooden poles for supports and thatch for a roof;
- ❖ Use an appropriate design – *see next page for an example.*
- ❖ Remember to check that there are no sharp places, e.g. nails where cows can injure themselves.
- ❖ Ensure the building provides protection from the weather (rain, sun, dust).
- ❖ Ensure the building is well ventilated – this helps reduce the chance of cows developing respiratory disease.



Floor: use a **hard, flat surface** which is **easy to clean** and **durable**, e.g. cement or concrete on top of a base of stones.

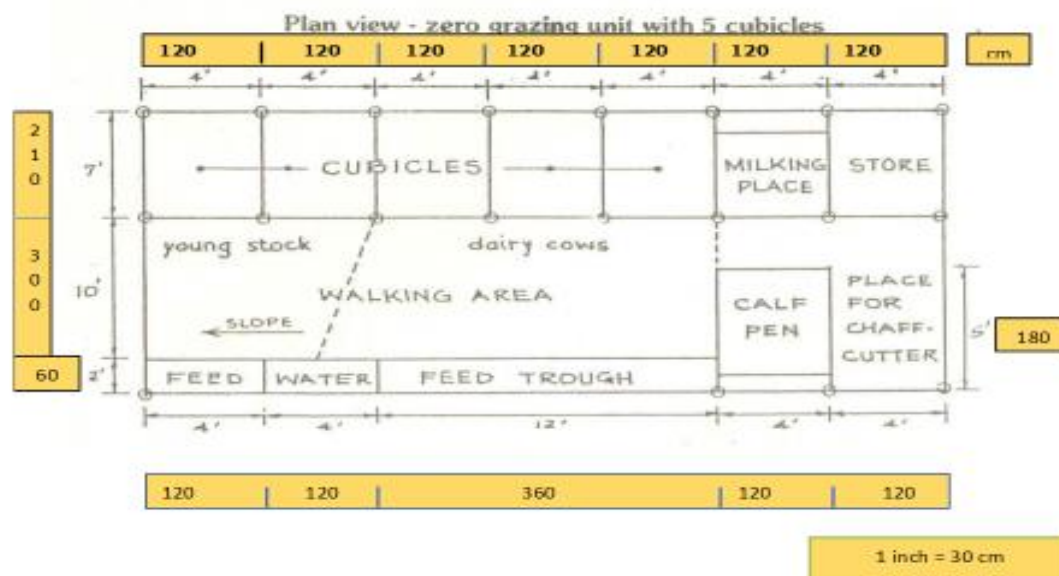
- Prevent the floor becoming waterlogged and help rainwater and water used for cleaning to drain away by:
 - Being 10 – 15 cm above ground level;
 - Making a drain line away to lower areas, e.g. a kitchen garden

This also helps the surroundings to dry up quicker.

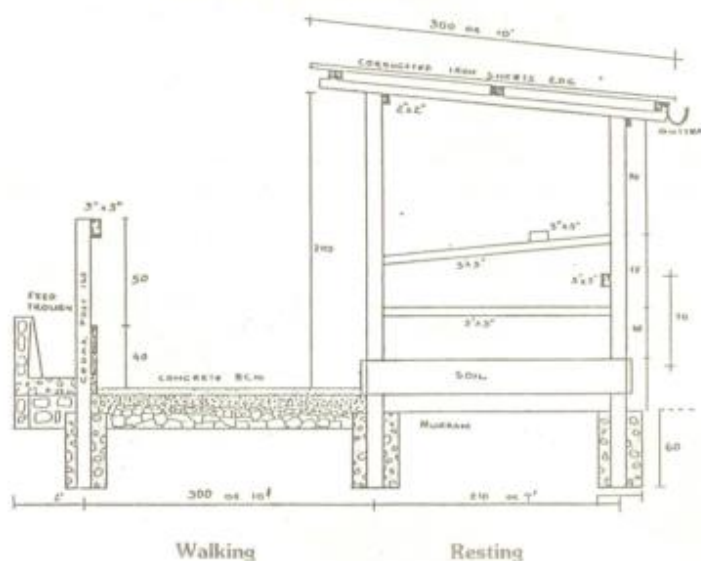
Roof: Thatch or a hard roof. Ideally slightly sloping so water runs off and does not settle.

SMALLHOLDER SEMI-ZERO GRAZING UNIT

If you have 5 cows, you only need one milking parlour.



Side view - zero grazing unit



- ✓ Sloping roof;
- ✓ Raised floor;
- ✓ Sloping floor for drainage;
- ✓ Local materials;
- ✓ Feed trough

Remember to:

- Reduce feed wastage by providing feed in a trough (*see fact sheet F03*).
- Clean facilities regularly to reduce the risk of disease.
- Contact your local **Extension Officer** for further information.

The ZDTP is focused on supporting dairy farmers to improve their productivity, milk quality and linkages to urban markets. The views expressed in this publication are those of the implementers of the programme and do not necessarily reflect those of the New Zealand Government. For further information, please contact ZDTP Country Manager Tania Thomson on tania@primeconsultants.net or +260 96 456 4206