

SAND OR SAVINGS ? YOU DECIDE WITH BIORET AGRI.

By Dale Gordon – Director of Sales and Marketing – North America

Sand, sand or sand. Those are your 3 best bedding options. Which one do you prefer ?

I've heard this for years and it's time to come to grips with this fallacy. I've seen a lot of dairies in a lot of countries in my 40+ years of professional experience. I'll never argue that you can't get good hock conditioning with sand but that also isn't the problem with sand. Many would have you believe that sand bedding is the only way to get performance **and** cow comfort. ***That is complete nonsense.*** Bioret Agri wants you to know that there really is a better way and you can discover it at World Dairy Expo by stopping by the booth in the Exhibition Hall.

Let's look at some hard but very real facts.

1. By committing to sand bedding, you condemn yourself to a massive monthly addition to operating costs. The pro-sand people are spending **your** money. \$\$\$

2. Sand is expensive and huge quantities have to be restored in the stalls regularly. \$\$\$

3. Sand has to be groomed regularly to keep it clean and level. It also has to be removed from the alleys. If it is going to a lagoon, the lagoon will have to be cleaned out some day at an outrageous cost. \$\$\$

4. Deep bedding allows excre-

ment to remain in the stall with the cow (urine in particular). That can generate harmful bacteria that you don't need in your herd. \$\$\$

5. Sand, as many dairymen know all too well, grinds up equipment at an alarming rate causing breakdowns and frequent and costly interventions and replacement of things like manure pumps. \$\$\$

6. If you are recycling or considering recycling sand, ask yourself a key question. At what cost? In many cases, it takes a dedicated building, recycling equipment, payloaders, au-

gers, a costly electrical service plus a significant electricity bill every month not to mention the labor. \$\$\$

7. Sand and robots are not good friends. Dairymen are seeing increased maintenance costs to the tune of +30% to +40% in 3 years or less. \$\$\$

8. It's incredibly painful to be opening and closing gates on a robot facility to clean, groom and bring in more sand and it upsets the cow's routine. Ideally, we want increased lying times. Increased activity in the facility makes cows move around more frequently and burn valuable nutrients just by excess displacement not to mention that it will reduce ruminating time culminating

SAND BEDDING		VS	AQUASTAR MATTRESS	
Initial Sand Installation 1 Ton of Sand: \$20.50 500 stalls with 1 ton of sand/stall	\$2,050/yr	Initial Installation	\$35,000/yr*	*Price of Mattress: \$350/stall Price for 500 Stalls: \$175,000 Yearly cost of mattresses over 5 years
Sand Loss 55# per day for 500 stalls adds up to \$102,884/yr in replacement sand cost @ \$20.50	55LB/ Stall/Day	Bedding	0.6#/ Stall/Day	Bedding Needs \$5,350/yr Yearly Cost
Hours of labor per day* 3 Hrs - \$19,710/yr *Labor wages are estimated at \$18.00/hr.	Labor	Labor	Hours of labor per day* 1 Hr - \$6,570/yr *Labor wages are estimated at \$18.00/hr.	
Sand Separator Retail: \$105,900 Loan Term: 5 Yrs Interest Rate 2%	Added Cost \$1790/Month	Added Cost	Bedding Spreader Retail: \$9,360 Loan Term: 5 Yrs Interest Rate 2%	\$159/Month
Total Yearly price of sand bedding For 500 stalls \$146,124	Total Annual Cost		\$48,828	Total Yearly price of Aquastar Mattress For 500 stalls
Aquastar mattress installations have shown increased milk production from 1 to 4 lbs. / cow / day. An extra 1 lb. of milk / cow / day is nearly \$30,000 annually with \$16 milk on a 500-cow dairy.				

in reduced milk production and less resting (healing time). \$\$\$

9. Sand traps heat under the cow which can only escape if she gets up.

There really is a better way and Bioret Agri wants to tell you about it. They have a variety of mattress products but the Aquastar or Aquaclim waterbeds equipped with the Aquaboard water filled kneeboard have given outstanding results

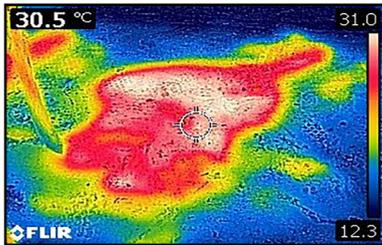


Image of heat trapped under a cow when she leaves a mat, mattress or sand.

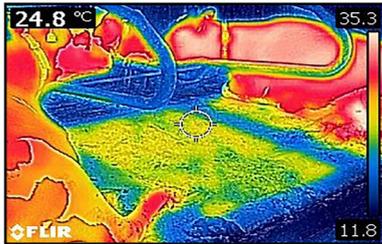


Image of a waterbed (same farm, same day) that is 10°F cooler.

around the world, reduce or eliminate many of the above problems and can do it at **a far lower cost.**

Look at the Bioret Agri water-bed hard but very real facts.

1. Bioret Agri (founded in 1993), has been building single chamber waterbeds for nearly 20 years. One of the many key advantages of the single chamber is that the cow is on an even support surface that always returns to its natural state when the cow gets up to feed, drink or be milked.

2. Our bedding is in seamless rolls for virtually any section size. There are no seems, openings or splices that could allow foreign matter to get under the bed and compromise the integrity of the product over time.

3. 6 years ago, the company made a key strategic decision to

address cow comfort **and** animal well-being. The Aquastar was born from this idea. We added a latex foam underlay to the waterbed design for additional support and comfort of all pressure points. The underlay is top quality latex with no filler (polyurethane) so that it lasts for years without deformation. The density of the foam can be adapted to the application. Additionally, it doesn't 'bottom out' when a cow steps on it.

4. The grooved top cover design allows sure footing and quick drainage of liquids (milk or urine for example).

5. The smooth 'Peach Skin' finish is far less abrasive than virtually any other bedding product and assures excellent hock conditioning and even healing of lesions and hair loss. Equally as important is that it requires a very small amount of bedding added a couple of times a week allowing substantial long term savings on both bedding and labor.

6. The rubber is reinforced with a double woven textile inlay for super strength north and south as well as east and west. There is no weakness anywhere.

7. The rubber itself is virgin rubber (absolutely no filler or recycled rubber) for long term durability.

8. The rubber is fastened to the concrete all the way around including at the rear to avoid the entrance of bedding, excrement or other undesirable matter underneath the bed itself.

9. The fasteners are covered by rubber so that cows are never standing on steel and risking hoof damage.

10. The water pouch is designed and filled to a point that allows the cow to literally float. This is critical as the waterbed, with its single pouch

design, is made large enough to surpass the girth of the cow when she is lying down and allows her to float. Heat from the cow's body is absorbed by the water in the pouch and can be released to the atmosphere. Our thermal image testing shows a 10°F cooler waterbed compared to standard mats, mattresses and sand (see



images to the left in this article). This on-going heat exchange helps reduce heat stress (the animal well-being strategy mentioned previously) and keeps her lying longer, ruminating longer and making more milk.

11. Bioret Agri also adds a very clever product called the Aquaboard. This water filled kneeboard is the first and only of its kind anywhere in the world. While serving as a kneeboard, it also serves as a great 'auto regulator'. It's positioned for the average size cow but when filled, careful attention is given to keeping it soft and pliable. This helps those larger cows gain a little extra lying space as the Aquaboard 'gives' much like a pillow. It also has a non-abrasive surface and cows can put their knees right on it or stretch legs out over it without risk of tissue damage. It can also be retrofitted to certain types of existing installations.

We can show you how the Aquastar/Aquaboard combination can allow you to bed your cows for about 1/3rd of the cost of a sand bedded facility.

Last but not least, the Aquastar comes with a **15 year pro-rated warranty** which nobody else in the world offers on any bedding product.

Come and see the difference for yourself at World Dairy Expo. We have references available in the U.S. and Canada not to mention many other parts of the world. ■

