

MEDIA RELEASE

NZ's Dairy Solutionz launches heat-tolerant genetics in USA

New Zealand's Dairy Solutionz has launched its Kiwipole™ cattle genetics at the Tulare World Ag Expo event in California, in partnership with STGenetics.

Slick Pathos, Slick Eros and his half-brother Slick Himeros are believed to be the world's first homozygous slick dairy type bulls available for export semen sales. The bulls will transmit the heat tolerance associated with the "slick gene" to all of their daughters. This slick gene allows Taurus cattle to perform in hot and humid conditions.

Pathos, Eros and Himeros, named after the Greek gods of love and sexual desire, are set to become the fathers of a new generation of dairy cows bred to produce high volumes of milk in tropical climates and make a significant difference to the world's estimated 270 million tropical dairy cow population. The genetics were launched on Valentine's Day in the US.

The 'slick gene' the Kiwipole™ bulls have are passed on to their daughters to better regulate body temperature while maintaining milk yield under heat stress. University of Florida research shows the cows can generate up to four litres more milk a day (Dikmen 2014) with a calving interval improvement of almost two months University of Puerto Rico (Ortiz 2015).

Dairy Solutionz Chief Executive Derek Fairweather says while the genetics have been designed for tropical conditions overseas, it could become sought-after in New Zealand to help farmers remain productive in hot and humid summers.

"We can breed the heat tolerance into pretty much pure-bred animals. So, we are fast approaching being able to provide leading, high-genetic index bulls that also have the heat tolerance, to the New Zealand market."

The Kiwipole™ genetics are being made available in the USA through STGenetics. STGenetics is one of America's most progressive and technology focused genetics companies. STGenetics R&D Manager Dr Vish Vishwanath, who has worked with Dairy Solutionz on the Kiwipole™ breed, over almost a decade, is excited about what this means for farmers in tropical climates.

"The daughters of these bulls and the extensive breeding programme behind them, will have greater heat tolerance mixed with the best pasture and feedlot genetics in the world, thanks to Dairy Solutionz introgressing the slick locus."

Mr Fairweather says business, based in Waikato Innovation Park, has its eye on South America, Africa, India and Pakistan where he thinks the Kiwipole™ breed can make a big impact for farmers in these markets.

Philippines supplier Dave Hayman says he has confidence in the new breed. Mr Hayman has exported New Zealand dairy cows to the Philippines and has used the Kiwipole™ bull semen, with calving taking place soon.

"In the Philippines, it's a tough climate for dairy production, and these genetics will make the progeny of the New Zealand live heifers that we imported, more robust and productive."

Hayman says the slick gene, when bred into New Zealand and American proven dairy cows, produces a lot of upside in hot, humid conditions, and that's coupled with sound milk production of more than 7000 litres for the current cross-breeds.

The new bulls are the next generation from Kiwipole Slick Grazer, whose semen became available in 2014. "Two of the bulls are his sons and are superior because they are homozygous," Mr Fairweather says.

For more information please visit www.dairysolutionz.co.nz.

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Photo option "Eros doing his work at the ABS New Zealand Bull Centre."

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