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Thank you very much from your KRAIBURG research & development

INSUFFICIENTLY MAINTAINED DEEP-LITTER BOXES

Problem:

Cubicles are frequently insufficiently maintained on farms. The question is whether this causes shorter lying times and affects well-being. Dairy cows are supposed to lie **12 to 14 hours** per day in their cubicles. A study of the Bavarian Research Centre for Agriculture shows the effects of bedding maintenance on the lying times of the cows.

Methods:

This study aimed to comparing different levels of straw bedding (good: straw bedding 20 cm; bad: bedding 5 cm, around 3600 cm² without bedding) to soft lying mats (KRAIBURG KEW Plus) regarding lying behaviour and preferences. Data were collected in a dairy house with 60 cows (Bavarian Fleckvieh) and a robotic milking system.

Results:

- The occupancy of the deep-litter boxes declined by more than half.
- The lying times per cow and day decreased more than 2 hours.

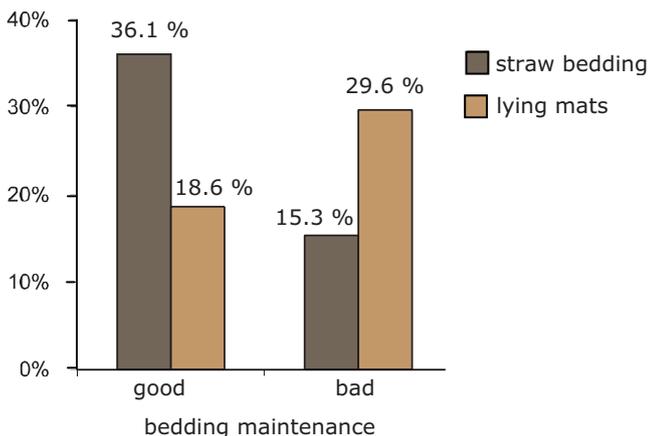


good straw bedding maintenance

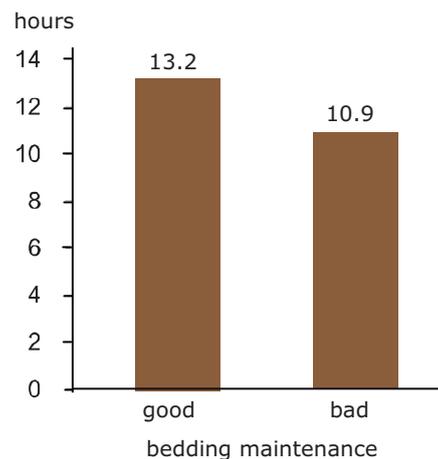


bad straw bedding maintenance

Preferences of straw bedding levels and lying mats



Lying time (h) depending on different straw bedding level



Conclusion:

In conclusion reduced bedding levels affects the cows lying behaviour and lying position. High straw bedding quality is important for a good welfare in dairy cattle. If farmers have not enough time for cleaning and littering the straw beddings they should use soft rubber mats.

Source: Reiter, K., Freiberger, F., Abriel, M., "Straw bedding maintenance: Effects on lying behaviour and preferences of dairy cattle", LfL Grub, 2006