

## ● Feed Pads, Loafing Pads and Farm Races

Feed pads and loafing pads are used to help protect pasture during extended wet periods and to supply cows supplementary feed. As a management option these are being more commonly used in the Bay of Plenty.

Feed pads are used to supply cows supplement feed. They are used for shorter periods during the day (1-2 hours) and usually consist of a hard surface pad such as concrete.

Loafing pads are used with the objective of keeping cows off pasture during wet periods (up to 20 hours) and commonly consist of a bed of woodwaste.

Significant quantities of effluent and stormwater can be generated from these pads. Effluent will need to be controlled to prevent contamination to surface water bodies.

Effluent from feed pads, if added to normal farm dairy effluent system, may cause treatment



Loafing pad (Photo courtesy of Dexcel)

ponds to become overloaded. This reduces their ability to provide the required treatment of the surface water discharges. Where a pasture irrigation system is operating, it may be necessary to use larger areas of pasture to spread the effluent.

Farm races can have a herd of cows walking over them at least twice daily, so they require good drainage to carry effluent. Ideally, straight to a soakage area. If this is not possible the channel should be cleaned out regularly and the effluent spread on to pasture.

Before constructing loafing/feed pads, farmers should check with field staff at Environment Bay of Plenty. This ensures that the current effluent treatment and disposal system will be capable of handling the extra loading of the effluent. At the design stage consideration



Feed pad

needs to be given to how effluent and water runoff from feed/loafing pads will be collected and treated. It is important that these areas are sited to allow for effluent treatment and disposal and that discharge to drains and streams is avoided. Siting is also important in designing farm races to ensure the channels collecting the effluent do not run into drains and streams.

In some cases a separate resource consent may be necessary to authorise the treatment and disposal of effluent.

For further information and advice, contact Environment Bay of Plenty:

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Farm dairy information is also available at:  
[www.dexcel.co.nz](http://www.dexcel.co.nz)

*This fact sheet was last updated October 2003*