Influence of feeding an A. oryzae culture during hot weather on performance of lactating dairy cows

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Twenty-four lactating Holstein cows in mid-lactation were allotted to two groups balanced for pre-treatment milk yields and fed for 80 days (7/6 to 9/24/85) the normal herd ration of concentrate (14 CP) at a 1:3 ratio of pre-treatment milk yields and alfalfa hay, ad libitum; with (A) and without (C) addition of 3 g daily of an A. oryzae culture (Amaferm). Cows on C produced slightly less milk (22.6 vs 23.6 kg/day), consumed slightly less dry matter (19.01 vs 19.9 kg/day) and drank less water (108.6 vs 118.9 l/d) than A. Percent milk fat, protein and SNF were not different, but lactose was higher ($P<.15$) on A. Changes in body weight and somatic cell counts were similar. Rectal temperatures and respiration rates determined weekly were higher ($P<.25$) for cows in group C than A (40.28 vs 40.14°C; 66.9 vs 62.6 counts/min). On some days, temperature differences were significant ($P<.05$). The increased water intake might be associated with the reduction in body heat of cows fed Amaferm. Partially supported by BioZyme Corporation, St. Joseph, MO.