Sleep and Effective Farming Meeting Kit

Though **“Normal Sleep”** is different for everyone, it usually goes through different sleep stages that allow your body to perform different functions.

Sleep disorders include sleep deprivation, circadian rhythm disorder, insomnia, and sleep apnea. Sleep disorders can have consequences that may seem unrelated, but can affect brain development, anxiety, and depression, growth, and muscle development. Sleep disorders can also cause slow metabolism and weight gain. Furthermore, the immune system is also anchored in good deep sleep, so there is a higher risk of infections in people with sleep disorders.

SLEEP PROBLEMS FOR FARMERS

The issue isn’t typically due to an inadequate sleep routine. Instead, there is often the issue of stressors related to farm life. When a farmer is up in the middle of the night with cows giving birth, dealing with a broken fence, or thinking about farm-related issues, it can prevent the farmer from getting enough quality sleep.

WORK LIFE BALANCE

Farmers must get sleep just like everyone else, and in fact, their work routine helps them fall asleep on a schedule. This can make all the difference in improving one’s quality of sleep because it sets their internal clock. For anyone trying to improve their sleeping habits, sleeping when the sun is down is one of the best ways to do this.

GENERAL TIPS TO IMPROVE SLEEP

- Get up at the same time every day and try to keep your sleep schedule as regular as possible.
- Create mental triggers before bedtime such as reading a book, taking a shower, putting on pajamas and creating a to-do list for the next day, so your head is clear before bed.
- Set your nighttime room temperature at 60 t0 68 degrees. When skin cools down, it signals the brain it is time to sleep.
- However, cold feet can interfere with your ability to fall asleep. Place a hot water bottle or heating pad under the covers if socks don’t warm them enough.
- Focus on sleep position – spine aligned, arms and legs not bent much, no leg-stacking. Sleep on your back, if possible, unless you have sleep apnea.
- Change pillow or mattress plushness to have better support. You don’t want pillows to be too plush or flat.
- Talk to your physician about a blood test to determine your iron level or discuss any current medications that may affect sleep. Sometimes taking medicine at a different time of day helps.
- Get direct sunlight after you wake, and dim lights indoors in the evening.
- Eat healthily and drink water throughout the day. Also, watch your caffeine intake.

FINAL WORD

Farm work often involves long hours, physical labour, and concentration. During busy times like calving, seeding and harvest good quality sleep can become scarce. It’s important on the farm to get enough good quality rest so you can work effectively and safely.