1

Introduction

This chapter presents an outline of the manual, which highlights the basic components of successful small holder dairy farming in tropical climates.

The main points in this chapter

- This is the third book I have written on tropical dairy farming, with the previous two concentrating on feeding management and on-farm business management of small holder farms.
- This book deals specifically with overcoming the many problems of poor adaptation of exotic high grade dairy stock to the stresses of tropical climates and small holder herd management.
- Small holder dairy farmers (with herds up to 20 milking cows plus replacement heifers) are generally competitive and sustainable.
- Dairy development is associated with technical changes to improve milk yield per cow.
- Most countries have development programs involving importing high genetic merit dairy stock, usually Friesians.
- Dairy production technology can be broken down to nine links in a supply chain on any dairy farm, no matter its size or location.

This book is a companion to two previous books I have written on small holder dairy (SHD) farming in the tropics. The first book, *Tropical Dairy Farming* (Moran 2005), details the production technology of SHD farming, with emphasis on nutrition and feeding management. The second book, *Business Management for Tropical Dairy Farmers* (Moran 2009a), discusses the farm business management (FBM) skills required to ensure such systems can remain financially sustainable. This third book, *Managing High Grade Dairy Cows in the Tropics*, deals specifically with a major problem encountered by many tropical dairy farmers: namely the poor performance of exotic, high grade (that is, high genetic merit) dairy cows when exported from their country of origin to a new, more stressful environment.