



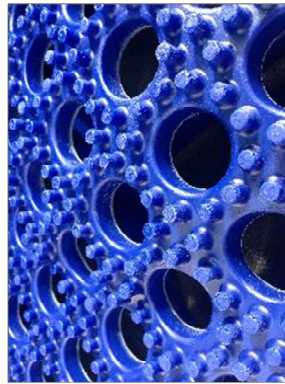
**CowPlan**

## Care for Cows Brush

**Welfare, only for humans?** The massage brush, '*Care for Cows*', was developed through extensive research on the living environments of dairy cows. The focus was on studying the environment that cows live in, in order to understand cow behaviour and how cows perceive things through their senses – how they see, hear and feel.

The 'Care for Cows' brushes have been sold in Scandinavian countries and a few other European countries since 2012. They originally won a 'red dot' design award for innovation and are an alternative to motorised brushes. They were developed with animal welfare in mind, in conjunction with industrial designer Andreij Nylander.

- Short, rough but soft, texture to allow maximum cow satisfaction
- Durable and strong
- Easy to mount – multiple mounting options
- No running costs, electricity or moving parts
- Cow safe and high welfare to improve cow rubbing and herd health
- Allow cows to exhibit natural behaviour
- Thick and strong corners for precision – this shape makes it possible for the cows to scrub at specific points.
- Made from elastomer based on polyurethane for long life.
- Easy to clean



### CONDITIONS:

- Not suitable for horned cows
- Maximum of 25 cows per brush (depending if there is an electric brush or not)
- SIZE: 500mm x 630mm x 86mm WEIGHT: 5.2kg (including straps)

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**reddot**  
design award

### Benefits to the cow:

University of Kentucky Extension dairy scientist Jeffrey Bewley said “Brushes have become increasingly popular on U.S. dairies over the past five years or so,” he said. “It is believed they allow cows to express their natural behaviour and fulfil their biological needs.”

A cow’s needs include grooming themselves to alleviate stress. In confinement systems, grooming tools may not be as easily accessible as they would be in pasture settings. More relaxed animals also tend to be less preoccupied with social hierarchy, resulting in fewer problems with “boss” cows and subordinate animals.



The brushes also help remove external parasites. And, by providing cows with tools intended for grooming, less wear and tear is placed on equipment that cows might otherwise choose by default, such as gates, walls, water troughs and fence posts.

### Research emerging:

Researchers are beginning to take note of cow brushes as well. Though just a limited number of studies on the devices and their use have been published, the results so far have been positive:

- A German study showed that, when provided access to a brush, 85 to 100 percent of cows in a herd used it daily.
- A trial at the University of British Columbia showed that the availability of brushes caused cows to increase their total time scratching by six times, and increase their frequency of scratching events three-fold.
- A Cornell University trial conducted at a 1,800-cow New York dairy showed that second-lactation cows with access to brushes produced an additional 2.2 pounds [1 litre] of milk per day. In the same study, second-lactation and higher cows showed a significant decrease in clinical mastitis incidence after brushes were installed. The difference increased with increase in cow age.

The Cornell researchers hypothesised that the improved milk production as a result of brush availability may be linked to greater cow activity. Active cows utilize ketones more effectively, and may be more likely to increase visits to the feed bunk. They also suggested that the decrease in mastitis incidence could be due to improved animal cleanliness, and/or less time spent lying in stalls, where their mammary-system exposure to mastitis-causing organisms would be greater.



The University of Kentucky is currently researching how the brushes affect heart rate. Research has shown that when cows groom each other, their heart rate is lowered, indicative of a calming effect.

