

Heat wave getting to N.C. cows

The Associated Press

It's so hot cows are losing interest in making milk — or babies.

"They're getting pretty listless out there," said George McAuley, an Iredell County dairy farmer.

"They just stand around in the shade. They're not eating much, which cuts milk production. And their reproductive cycle is off. They've just shut down and quit," he said.

McCauley's 50 cows are producing 200 to 300 pounds less milk a day than they usually do.

It's hard to blame them. Temperatures throughout North Carolina were in the 90s last week. The only relief was provided by brief but often severe afternoon thunderstorms in many areas.

Saturday, the temperature climbed to over 100 at Pope Air Force Base, Fort Bragg, Rocky Mount and Goldsboro. The National Weather Service issued a heat advisory for all areas except the Outer Banks and the mountains, meaning the temperature and humidity would make it feel as if it was at least 105.

The weather service expects the hot, humid days to continue at least through the first few days this week.

The heat and fast-moving thunderstorms have touched off at least two-dozen forest fires in Eastern North Carolina in the past week.