

Animal Care



Quick Tips

Topic	What to do?
Animal Care (AC) 1. Housing for unweaned calves (Demerits) AC2. Housing for weaned heifers (Demerits)	<p>Check housing to ensure it allows calves and heifers to easily stand up, lie down, adopt normal resting postures, and have visual contact with other cattle. If group housing, the bedded area needs to be large enough to allow all calves and heifers to rest comfortably at the same time. Unweaned calves need to be able to turn around (180°).</p> <p>Establish a routine to ensure housing has bedding to keep animals clean and dry. Bedding is required even when mats are used (rubber or pasture mats).</p>
AC3. Housing for bulls (Demerits)	<p>If bulls are on your farm, housing must have bedding and allow them to easily stand up, lie down, adopt normal resting postures, and mount safely.</p>
AC18. Housing for dry cattle	<p>Dry cattle housing must have bedding and allow cattle to easily stand up, lie down, and adopt normal resting postures.</p>
AC4. Stocking density for dry cattle and lactating cattle (Demerits)	<p>Calculate your stocking density to ensure it meets the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free-stall: does not exceed 1.2 mature cows per usable stall. • Bedded-pack pens: provide 11 m² (120 ft²) per mature Holstein cow. You can include the feed/scrape alley in the square footage calculation. Smaller breeds (e.g. Jerseys) require 8.8 m² (96 ft²) per mature cow.
AC19 (FS). Cleanliness of lactating cattle (Demerits)	<p>Ensure lactating cattle's udders, legs and flanks are clean. Ideally all cattle in your herd score 1 or 2 on the Cow Cleanliness Assessment chart. More than 20% of the herd scoring 3 or 4 is unacceptable.</p> <p><i>* This requirement enhances the Food Safety requirement for clean udders on lactating cattle.</i></p>
AC5. Calving area (Demerits)	<p>Keep calving area clean and bedded. The area should meet the stocking density requirements. Cattle may be kept in tie-stalls to calve as long as the gutter is covered.</p>
AC6. "Hospital" pen or area (Demerits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated area for segregation and treatment of sick and injured cattle. • Must be clean and bedded, and provide cattle with easy access to feed and water. • The area should meet the stocking density requirements.
AC7. Tie-stall barns: electric trainers (Demerits)	<p>Check that the voltage written on the electrical box does not exceed 2,500 volts. If not available, safely have the device checked to ensure it does not exceed 2,500 volts.</p> <p>Ensure electric trainers have a height adjustment and are located over the chine when the animal is standing with her hind feet near the gutter curb.</p>
AC9. Feed for heifers (Demerits)	<p>Provide feed to heifers that meets their nutritional, developmental and growth requirements; and maintains health, growth and vigour.</p>
AC10. Clean water source to all cattle (Demerits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide good quality water to calves over 10 days of age, heifers, bulls, dry cattle, and lactating cattle. • In winter, offer water at least 2x/day to calves in the process of being weaned or weaned calves.

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AC12. Medical care for cattle (Demerits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide care for cattle that are sick, injured, too thin (Body Condition Score (BCS) ≤ 2), severely lame, in pain, or suffering, which may mean euthanize animals that are beyond recovery or not fit to transport. • Have equipment or method to safely restrain or handle cattle.
AC14. Animal-based measures: BCS; hock, knee and neck scores; and mobility score (Major/minor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a qualified assessor evaluate a sample of the milking herd every two years for BCS, hock, knee and neck scores, and mobility score. If your herd's results are low, the frequency will increase to every 12 months. • If one or more results fall in the Red or Dark Red zones, document a corrective action plan in consultation with a dairy professional and implement the plan to improve and move out of those zones. <p><i>*See Reference Manual for complete protocols.</i></p>
AC15. Tails: no tail docking (Major/minor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the tails of the cattle on your farm are not routinely docked, either by you or by a third party (e.g. heifer raiser). • Tail docking is only permitted if it is medically necessary for an individual animal, and then you must keep a record of every instance along with the rationale.
AC16. Electric cattle prods (Demerits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move cattle in a calm manner and be familiar with quiet handling techniques. • Electric prods should only be used in extreme situations, (e.g. animal's safety is at risk). • Never use electric prods on the face, anus or reproductive organs of dairy cattle or on calves that you can move manually.
AC17. Train all animal handlers (Demerits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train all farm personnel in cattle behaviour and quiet handling techniques, so that they understand how to handle and move cattle quietly and with low stress. • Handling should never lead to injuries such as on the tail, hips or back.
AC8. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for colostrum management and calf feeding (Demerits)	<p>Purpose: ensure calves are fed enough to maintain their health, growth and vigour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed newborn calves at least 4 litres (for a 45 kg calf) of good quality colostrum within 12 hours of birth, with the first meal occurring as soon as possible, and no more than 6 hours after birth. • Feed calves a volume and quality of milk or milk replacer to maintain health, growth and vigour. Feed calves milk at least 2 times per day or free choice, with the total daily intake equal to 20% of the calves' body weight for the first month (about 8L per day for a Holstein calf). <p><i>*See Reference Manual for all required elements.</i></p>
AC11. SOP for animal health practices and branding (Major/minor)	<p>Purpose: ensure staff can perform the procedures while minimizing animal discomfort</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include disbudding/dehorning, castration, supernumerary teat removal and branding, as applicable to your farm, and describe methods used. • Describe pain control methods used for disbudding/dehorning, castration and branding. • Disbudding/dehorning must include, at minimum, an anesthetic and analgesic. • Using high-tension rubber bands for routine dehorning or removing teats is not acceptable. <p><i>*See Reference Manual for all required elements.</i></p>
AC20. SOP for managing down cattle	<p>Purpose: to ensure that down cattle are properly cared for, and, if needed, moved as gently as possible minimizing stress and trauma.</p> <p>Include all aspects of down cattle management, such as diagnosis, treatment / euthanasia, careful movement of the animal, proper use of specialised equipment, and recovery care.</p> <p><i>*See Reference Manual for all required elements.</i></p>

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<p>AC13. SOP for euthanasia (Major/minor)</p>	<p>Purpose: ensure staff can act promptly, and ensure cattle are euthanized by qualified persons in a manner that is quick, and causes the least possible pain and distress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the method used for euthanasia on your farm (must use an acceptable method). • Promptly euthanize cattle with untreatable conditions, not responding to treatment, or not fit for transport. • Confirm death immediately and prior to moving or leaving the animal. <p><i>*See Reference Manual for all required elements.</i></p>
<p>FS40 (AC). SOP for shipping cattle (Major/minor)</p>	<p>Purpose: ensure animals are fit for transport, identified, well prepared for the journey and handled properly for their welfare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess every animal prior to loading and only transport those fit for travel. • Feed newborn calves colostrum prior to loading. Feed and water cattle within 5 hours of loading if trip is expected to be longer than 24 hours from time of loading. • Ensure only experienced and trained handlers load cattle and avoid use of electric prods. • Segregate cattle that are incompatible by nature. <p><i>*See Reference Manual for all required elements.</i></p>
<p>Quick Guide to Implementation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend a training session. 2. Develop your SOPs and corrective action plans. 3. Train your farm workers. 4. Start keeping records and implement the rest of the requirements. 5. Have an assessor evaluate your herd; document and implement a corrective action plan if improvement is required. 6. Contact your Provincial Producer Association for help. 7. Undergo a validation. 8. Maintain registration status and program requirements – work towards continuous improvement.