Checklist for Dairy Animal Welfare on Farms

The following are requirements of the Code of Practice and farmers are expected to adhere to these practices. This checklist is intended for farmers to use in evaluating their practices and the environment they provide their calves and cows.

The numbers for each requirement links back to the section of the Code of Practice where the requirements and best practices are outlined.

*You can choose N/A when a situation does not apply to your particular farm (no bull on farm, no branding, etc...)*

### CALVES

#### CALF BARN

1.1.1 Calves have a bed that provides comfort, insulation, warmth, dryness and traction: bare concrete is not acceptable as a resting surface.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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Housing allows calves to easily stand up, lie down, turn around and adopt normal resting postures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
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Calves have visual contact with other calves.

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<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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The bedded area for group-housed calves is large enough to allow all calves to rest comfortably at the same time.

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<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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### CALF HANDLING

#### 4.3 Disbudding and Dehorning

Pain control is used when dehorning or disbudding. *(It is recommended to disbudd before calf is 3 weeks of age.)*

Bleeding control is used when dehorning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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#### 4.4 Identification

All cattle are identified using an approved ear tag as stipulated by regulations.

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<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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Pain control is used if branding is necessary. Face branding is prohibited.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>YES</th>
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<th>N/A</th>
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</table>
4.5 Castration
Pain control is used if castrating calf.

4.6 Tail Docking
Dairy cattle are not tail-docked (unless medically necessary).

4.7 Extra Teat Removal
Teat removal is performed by trained personnel.

4.1 Moving Animals
Electric prods are not used on calves that can be moved manually.

Animal handlers are familiar with cattle behaviour and quiet handling techniques either through training, experience or mentorship.

### CALF FEEDING

2.2.1
Calves receive at least four litres of good quality colostrum within 12 hours of birth, with the first meal occurring as soon as possible and no more than six hours after birth.

Calves receive a volume and quality of milk or milk replacer to maintain health, growth and vigour.

(It is recommended to give Holstein calves eight litres of milk during the first four weeks of life when ability to digest solid feed is limited)

Calves’ milk intake is increased during cold stress.

5.1.2 Preparing for Transport
Calves received adequate colostrum before being transported.

(recommended at least ½ day ration of milk)

Dairy animals are fed and watered within five hours before being loaded, if the expected duration of the animal’s confinement is longer than 24 hours from the time of loading.
**ADULT DAIRY CATTLE**  
(including heifers, dry cows and bulls)

**Section A - FREE STALL BARN**

*Fill this section if you have a free stall barn for cows  
( go to section B – on next page - if you have tie stall), then continue on p. 5

1.1.2 Housing
Housing allows cattle to easily stand up, lie down, adopt normal resting postures, and have visual contact with other cattle.  

| YES | NO |

1.1.2 & 1.6 Bedding
Cattle have a bed that provides comfort, insulation, warmth, dryness and traction: bare concrete or hard rubber mats without bedding are unacceptable surfaces for humane housing of cows.

| YES | NO |

1.4 Stall Design
Stalls are built to minimize hock and knee injuries and to allow cows to rise and lie down with ease.

| YES | NO |

1.5 Space Allowance
Stocking density does not exceed 1.2 cows per stall in a free stall system.

| YES | NO |

Adequate linear feed bunk space is provided to meet the animals' nutritional needs.  
*(recommended 24 in/60 cm per cow)*

| YES | NO | N/A |

Resting areas provide 120ft² (11m²) per mature cow in bedded-pack pens.

| YES | NO | N/A |

3.10 Cleanliness
Manure is removed regularly from alleys and beds to keep cows clean.

| YES | NO |

Daily removal of cow patties and use of generous amounts of bedding assures cleanliness of cows kept in bedded-pack pens.

| YES | NO | N/A |

1.11 Breeding Bulls
Housing allows bulls to easily stand up, lie down, adopt normal resting postures, and mount safely.

| YES | NO | N/A |

Bulls have a bed that provides comfort, insulation, warmth, dryness and traction.

| YES | NO | N/A |
### Section B - TIE STALL BARNs

*Fill this section if you have a tie stall barn for cows, then continue on p.5*

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1.2 Housing</strong></td>
<td>Housing allows cattle to easily stand up, lie down, adopt normal resting postures, and have visual contact with other cattle.</td>
<td><strong>YES</strong></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1.2 &amp; 1.6 Bedding</strong></td>
<td>Cattle have a bed that provides comfort, insulation, warmth, dryness and traction: bare concrete or hard rubber mats without bedding are not acceptable resting surfaces.</td>
<td><strong>YES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.4 Stall Design</strong></td>
<td>Stall design minimizes hock and knee injuries and allows cows to rise and lie down with ease.</td>
<td><strong>YES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.10 Cleanliness</strong></td>
<td>Manure is removed from alleys and beds to keep cows clean.</td>
<td><strong>YES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.14 Electric Trainers</strong></td>
<td>Energizers for electric trainers do not exceed 2500 volts.</td>
<td><strong>YES</strong></td>
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<td>Electric trainers have a height adjustment.</td>
<td><strong>YES</strong></td>
<td><strong>NO</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Electric trainers are located over the chine when the cow is standing with her hind feet near the gutter curb.</td>
<td><strong>YES</strong></td>
<td><strong>NO</strong></td>
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<td>Bulls have a bed that provides comfort, insulation, warmth, dryness and traction.</td>
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COW HANDLING
(Calving and Special Needs)

3.7 Calving
The calving area is kept clean prior to, and after, delivery of the calf to minimize the risk of disease or bacterial challenges to the calf’s immune system.

1.2 Special Needs
Special needs facilities provide comfort, insulation, warmth, dryness and traction: bare concrete is not acceptable as a resting surface.

1.2.3 Sick And Injured Animals
Areas are provided to segregate and treat sick and injured cattle.

1.10 Handling Facilities
Handling facilities are equipped for the safe restraint and handling of dairy animals.

4.4 Identification
All cattle are identified using an approved ear tag as stipulated by applicable regulations.

Pain control is used if branding is necessary. Face branding is prohibited.

4.6 Tail Docking
Dairy cattle are not tail-docked unless medically necessary.

4.7 Extra Teat Removal
Teat removal is performed by trained personnel.

4.9 Hoof Trimming
Hoof and claws are inspected and trimmed as required to minimize lameness.

5.1.2 Preparing for Transport
Dairy animals are fed and watered within five hours before being loaded, if the expected duration of the animal’s confinement is longer than 24 hours from the time of loading.
5.2 Loading and Receiving
The requirements for loading and unloading procedures and equipment as described in the Health of Animals Regulations are complied with. Cattle that are incompatible are segregated.

4.1 Moving Animals
Electric cattle prods are used only in extreme situations, such as when animal or human safety is at risk. Prods are never used on the face, anus or reproductive organs of dairy cattle.
Animal handlers are familiar with cattle behaviour and quiet handling techniques either through training, experience or mentorship.

MILKING EQUIPMENT

1.8 Equipment is inspected by a qualified person a minimum of every twelve months.

COW FEEDING

2.2 Nutrition and Feed Management
Cows receive a ration that is adequate for maintaining health and vigour.
(i.e. rations are balanced, of good quality and reflect production level, reproductive stage, body size and weather conditions)

2.2.2 Heifers
Heifers receive a ration that is adequate for maintaining health, growth and vigour.

2.2.3 Dry Cows
Dry cows receive a ration that is adequate for maintaining health and vigour.

2.2.4 Transition Cows
Transition cows receive a diet that is adequate for maintaining health and vigour.
(Meeting increased nutrient demands of cows transitioning from gestation to lactation)

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1 * The Health of Animals Regulations prohibit loading or unloading an animal in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering. The Regulations also require that ramps, chutes and other equipment used for loading and unloading animals:
- be maintained and used so as not to cause injury or undue suffering to animals,
- have sides of sufficient strength and height to prevent animals from falling off the ramp or other equipment, and
- have no unprotected gap between the ramp and the vehicle.
2.3 Water
Cattle have access to palatable and clean water in quantities to meet their needs.

#### COW HEALTH

3.4 Veterinary Care and Herd Health Management
A working relationship with a practicing veterinarian has been established.

2.1 Body Condition Scoring (BCS)
Corrective action is taken for animals at a BCS of 2 or lower.

5.1.1 Fitness for Transport
Every animal is assessed before being transported. *(See Appendices G and H for details)*

Non-ambulatory animals, animals with a body condition score indicating emaciation or weakness, or animals with severe lameness are not transported, except for veterinary treatment or diagnosis.

Animals that are likely to give birth during the intended journey are not transported.

Cattle that require hobbling in order to walk are not transported.

#### CULLING DECISIONS

3.5 Lameness
Lame cows are diagnosed early and either treated, culled or euthanized. *(See Appendix F and G for more details.)*

3.9 Culling Animals
Cattle that are sick, injured, in pain or suffering are provided prompt medical care or euthanized.

Appropriate authorities are advised of any suspect or confirmed cases of reportable disease.

If animals are culled, drug withdrawal times are observed.

Apparatus to lift and support recumbent animals are used with care and according to manufacturer's specifications. Animals are able to breathe freely and not suffer unnecessary discomfort.
6.1 On-Farm Euthanasia Protocols
Cattle with untreatable conditions, not responding to treatment, or not fit for transport are euthanized promptly.

YES  
NO

6.2 Methods
An acceptable method for euthanizing cattle is used. The method to euthanize cattle is quick and causes the least possible pain and distress.
(see Code p. 43 for acceptable methods on farms: free bullet; captive bolt; injection with barbiturates by veterinarian)

YES  
NO

6.3 Evidence of Death
Death is confirmed immediately and before moving or leaving the animal.

YES  
NO

Evaluation: Give yourself a path on the back for every “YES” or “N/A”. Then work to address any issues for which you have responded “NO” to see practical enhancement of animal care on your farm.

For more details on the above requirements and other practical tips to enhance animal care on your farm, consult the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle, which you have received. It is also available on Dairy Farmers of Canada’s website (www.dairyfarmers.ca).