

# Dairy Cow Welfare Strategy

August 2010

Developed for industry by



in conjunction with



**DairyCo**

**holstein UK**  
holstein & british friesland



**CHAWG**  
Cattle Health and  
Welfare Group



# Contents

Introduction .....	2
Why do we need a strategy for dairy cow welfare? .....	3
A Vision for Dairy Cow Welfare .....	4
The British Dairy Industry .....	5
Current Standards of Animal Welfare.....	7
Current Performance .....	9
Working on Welfare: Drivers of Improvement .....	11
Working on Welfare: On Farm .....	12
Working on Welfare: Working in Partnership .....	15
Putting the Strategy Into Practice .....	20
Dairy Cow Welfare Action Plan: Top 10 Priorities .....	21
Appendix 1 Current Standards of Dairy Cow Welfare.....	25
Appendix 2 FAWC Opinion on the Welfare of the Dairy Cow 2009 .....	27
Appendix 3 Working on Welfare: Industry Initiatives .....	28
Bibliography .....	30
Glossary.....	31

# Introduction

***“Welfare principally concerns both the physical and psychological wellbeing of an animal, which is largely determined by the standard of stockmanship, the system of husbandry and the suitability of the animal for the environment.”<sup>1</sup>***

The welfare of the dairy cow<sup>2</sup> is of fundamental importance on all British dairy farms. In its simplest form, the ability to produce high quality, nutritious milk 365 days a year relies on two essential things:

1. Healthy and content dairy cows that are able to get in calf and give birth to healthy calves.
2. Skilled farmers and stockmen who ensure that animal welfare, milk quality and hygiene are of the highest standard.

To achieve this dairy farmers must ensure that their herd’s requirements – both physical and psychological – are accommodated at all times. It is this diligent and consistent level of care that makes dairy farming one of the most knowledgeable and conscientious sectors in animal welfare.

British dairy farmers already operate to world leading animal welfare standards, but there is always room for improvement. Dairy cow welfare is a top priority for dairy farmers and health, with its direct impact on welfare, is intrinsically linked to this.

While the responsibility for dairy cow welfare fundamentally rests with dairy farmers, the whole supply chain benefits from good welfare standards on farm. This strategy acknowledges current welfare performance, promotes industry achievements, examines the drivers for improvement and, importantly, identifies where the potential and responsibility for further improvement exists throughout the dairy supply chain.

1 Definition adapted from Farm Animal Welfare Council: Farm Animal Welfare in GB: Past, present and future. October 2009

2 Where appropriate in this strategy, this refers to dairy cows and youngstock.

# Why do we need a strategy for dairy cow welfare?

In 2009 the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) published its Opinion on the Welfare of the Dairy Cow<sup>3</sup>. While the report acknowledged that there had been positive welfare developments, despite the many pressures facing dairy farmers, it also made some useful and sensible recommendations to further improve welfare standards. We believe that it is important that the dairy industry is well positioned to act on these recommendations.

The welfare of the dairy cow has also been the focus of media and consumer attention in recent years, and it is fair to say that the dairy industry has not always had the evidence base it needs to be able to defend itself robustly against any negative allegations. A welfare strategy will allow the dairy sector to co-ordinate industry activity, identify gaps in current knowledge and take action to address them.

Furthermore, the dairy industry can learn from the good practice adopted in other livestock sectors, including the poultry and pig industries, where welfare strategies are being successfully implemented to the benefit of animals, farmers and the whole supply chain.

Against this backdrop, we believe there are five important objectives that the dairy industry should seek to achieve by developing and supporting a welfare strategy of its own:

1. To raise the standard of welfare for all dairy cows and reduce the welfare impacts of endemic diseases.
2. To establish an industry agreed set of welfare priorities to guide future policy development, research and on-farm improvement initiatives.
3. To set welfare goals and identify industry responsibility for improving dairy cow welfare.
4. To bring about a recognition and acceptance that welfare is dependent on the quality and standard of husbandry and stockmanship in any system.
5. To generate greater consumer awareness and understanding of welfare standards to ensure a continued positive public perception of dairy cow welfare in Britain.

3 Opinion on the Welfare of the Dairy Cow, October 2009

## The Vision

The following organisations support this strategy and endorse this vision for dairy cow welfare.

1. The dairy sector meets consumers' requirements for safe, high quality, and nutritious milk and dairy products from cows reared and managed in an environment that safeguards their health and welfare.
2. The dairy sector is compliant with EU health and welfare legislation.
3. All dairy farmers, in conjunction with their veterinary advisers, maintain high herd health status and minimise the impact of disease by use of herd health plans, disease eradication programmes and prudent use of veterinary medicines.
4. All dairy farmers have effective training programmes available to them on husbandry systems, the promotion of health and welfare, and the management of disease and welfare risks.
5. The veterinary profession will continue to offer up-to-date expertise in recognition, management and prevention of disease threats and the implementation of good welfare strategies.
6. Dairy cow health and welfare provisions are informed by scientific knowledge, professional experience and evidence-based learning.
7. A recognition that welfare standards are underpinned by the suitability of the farm system to meet the needs of the animals and the skills of the stockman, and that the type of production system does not dictate the health and welfare status of the cow.
8. The occurrence of pain and distress is minimised throughout the animal's life, in transport and at slaughter, through the use of appropriate environmental design, safe handling facilities and competent and considerate stockmanship.
9. All stockmen have a compassionate and humane attitude to cattle, are skilled in recognising an animal's needs and are able to anticipate and alleviate any welfare problems.
10. All animals have access to food and water, a comfortable, draught free, dry and well-drained resting area, shelter from adverse weather and space to move around and interact socially.

**CHAWG**  
Cattle Health and  
Welfare Group



**holstein UK**  
holstein & british friesian



**Dairy**  
UK



**Red Tractor**  
Farm Assurance

**ASSURED**  
DAIRY  
FARMS



# The British Dairy Industry

Dairy farms are situated across Britain, but are concentrated mostly in areas where the climate encourages favourable conditions for grassland farming. In recent years milk production has gravitated towards the West and South West of England, and West Wales.

Since the mid 1990s the British dairy sector has undergone significant restructuring, with the number of dairy farms halving to around 13,000 today and the number of dairy cows falling by a fifth to around 1.6 million animals<sup>4</sup>. Despite these major changes British milk production has, until recently, remained relatively stable. This has been achieved by increases in milk yield<sup>5</sup>, herd size<sup>6</sup> and the use of new technology and research.

High quality cattle are a necessity for profitable dairy farming. This requires good quality genetics, excellent management and high standards of health and welfare. Over 90% of the British dairy herd is of the black and white Holstein Friesian type. While other breeds are chosen for specific milk quality characteristics (such as Ayrshire, Guernsey and Jersey) the Holstein Friesian remains the most popular breed, giving high lifetime yields of quality milk from a mix of fresh grass, forage and concentrates.

The average size of the British dairy herd is 102 cows. The majority of British herds produce less than one million litres of milk annually, with less than one hundred producing over 4 million litres.

## Number of British herds per production levels (2009 – 2010)

Annual Production level (litres)	Number of herds
Less than 500,000	5,008
500,000 – 750,000	2,270
750,000 – 1 million	1,628
1 million – 2 million	2,709
2 million – 4 million	681
Over 4 million	94

4 DairyCo Datum, May 2010

5 Yields have increased from an average yield per cow of 5,000 litres in 1980s to around 7,500 litres today.

6 Average British herd size has increased from 72 cows in 1996 to 102 in 2010.

Different types of dairy farming systems can be seen across Britain, reflecting differences in local climate, topography, cow requirements and, increasingly to improve biosecurity. The most common system is that of seasonal grazing, which takes advantage of the British climate, which is generally warm, wet and ideally suited to growing grass. In this system dairy cows graze during the spring and summer months, and are housed for up to six months of the year, usually from late autumn through to the end of winter, when the weather is wet and cold and grass stops growing.

A small, but increasing, number of British dairy herds spend the majority of their time indoors in barns or open sided sheds, generally referred to as 'year round' or 'continuous' housing. This system allows for controlled management of a cow's diet, nutrition, health, breeding and is usually practiced with larger herds. Routinely housed cows may spend up to two months outdoors before calving during their dry period and are fed a freshly cut or conserved forage-based diet, often having access to pasture or dedicated 'loafing areas' for exercise and socialising.

Importantly, welfare standards in any dairy system are underpinned by the skills of the stockman and the production system chosen does not relate directly to the health and welfare status of the cow. It is in the interest of all dairy farmers to have healthy, contented cows that produce high quality milk.





## Current Standards of Animal Welfare

The welfare of livestock, including cows, is protected by the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 and the Animal Welfare Act 2006. These are based on the concept of the Five Freedoms<sup>7</sup>, developed by FAWC in the late 1970s to provide a logical basis for assessing animal welfare within any husbandry system. In October 2009 FAWC published a new report<sup>8</sup> on the effectiveness of British policy on farm animal welfare since 1965, and looked ahead to the next twenty years. The report offers recommendations to Government for commercial policies, which FAWC believes will lead to improvements in the welfare of farm animals in the next twenty years.

Dairy farmers are required by law to have access to, and be familiar with the 'Defra Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Cattle' which takes into account the Five Freedoms and sets out statutory requirements and best practice for keeping cattle. The Code is educational, achievable and aspirational by recommending and illustrating best agricultural farming practice. Compliance is assessed by Animal Health inspectors, through Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs)<sup>9</sup>. Failure to comply with these conditions can result in deductions from, or complete cancellation of a farmer's Single Farm Payment. Strict regulation also controls the welfare of animals during transport and slaughter. For more information, turn to Appendix 1.



### Red Tractor Farm Assurance Dairy (RT Dairy)<sup>10</sup>

Over 95% of British dairy farmers are members of the Red Tractor Farm Assurance scheme. Participating farms are required to comply with a stringent set of standards covering food safety, animal welfare, traceability and environmental protection and are assessed and certified by independent Certification Bodies accredited to EN45011, an internationally recognised standard for product certification. Standards are detailed and comprehensive ensuring that producers have the necessary equipment and expertise to achieve the standards expected by consumers and therefore required by retailers. RT Dairy standards are reviewed every 18 months and amended in light of new scientific information, regulatory changes and stakeholder views. Within the scheme, all participating producers must possess a Herd Health Plan and Welfare Performance Review which covers four areas:

1. Basic disease control measures
2. Herd security against infectious disease
3. Recording, monitoring and control of disease present on the farm
4. Disease surveillance.

7 Appendix 1

8 Farm Animal Welfare in GB: Past, present and future, FAWC, October 2009

9 SMR 18: Animal Welfare and SMR 16: Welfare of Calves

10 Red Tractor Farm Assurance Dairy was previously Assured Dairy Farms [www.assuredairyfarms.org.uk](http://www.assuredairyfarms.org.uk)

### **Freedom Foods**

Dairy farmers can also join the RSPCA Freedom Food scheme. The scheme focuses uniquely and exclusively on welfare standards, and as such, dairy farmers also have to be certified by RT Dairy to meet retailer requirements for assurance on food safety.

### **Retailer standards**

Retailers are taking a more active role in animal welfare through the development of dedicated supply chain arrangements, which remunerate farmers to produce milk to specific standards. A number of major retailers have launched bespoke welfare standards for their dedicated milk suppliers. Importantly these retailers are supporting their farmers financially to achieve the standards required.



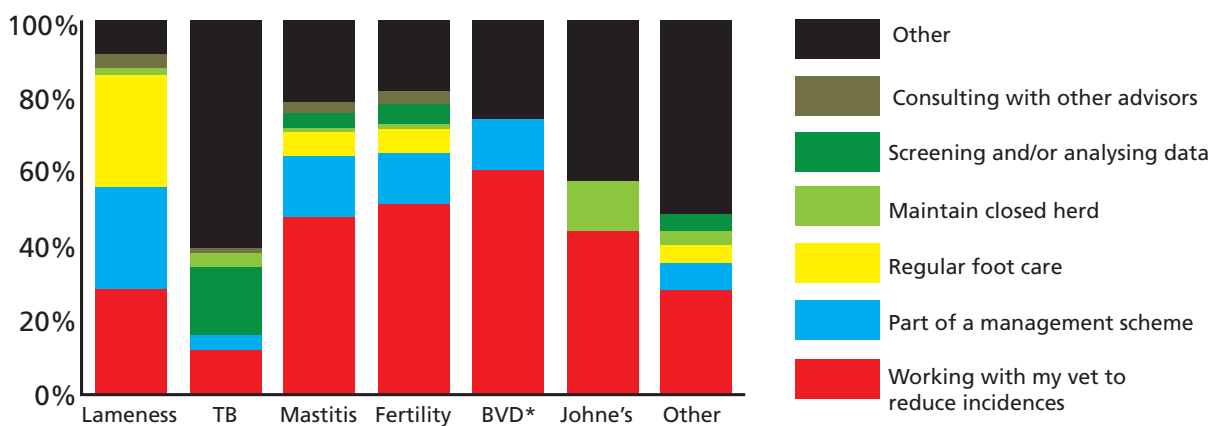
## Current Performance

The dairy industry has already invested a great deal of time and effort in addressing welfare challenges and improving welfare performance. As such, it is important that a welfare improvement strategy acknowledges current performance and promotes welfare achievements made by dairy farmers to date.

***'Over 90% of British dairy farmers are taking measures to reduce health and welfare issues'***

The 2010 DairyCo Farmer Intentions Survey<sup>11</sup> identifies lameness, TB, mastitis and fertility as being the biggest health and welfare issues on dairy farms and reveals that over 90% of farmers are taking measures to reduce them.

Perceived biggest animal health and welfare issues  
(by the steps that are being taken to manage/reduce the issues)



***'Dairy cows are managed to Red Tractor standards on 95% of British dairy farms'***

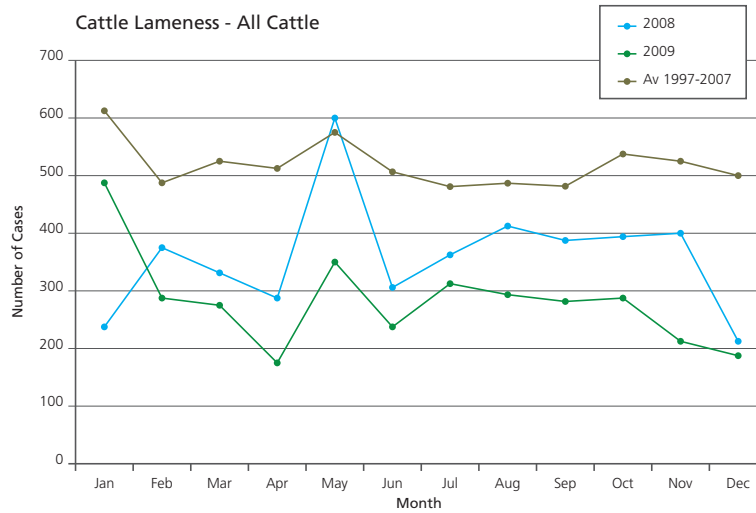
Independently audited RT Dairy inspections are carried out on 95% of British dairy farms on a minimum 18 month cycle. Farms are assessed on cattle health, condition and cleanliness and standards of housing. The Red Tractor logo shows consumers which dairy products have come from assured dairy farms.

***'Incidences of dairy cow lameness are decreasing'***

Currently the best national estimates for lameness incidence are NADIS<sup>12</sup> reports. Data records are updated monthly and recent lameness reports show that good progress has been made year on year in controlling all types of lameness especially in the traditional causes, such as sole ulcers and foul in the foot, helped by increased farmer training and use of trained foot trimmers.

11 DairyCo Farmer Intentions Survey, 2010

12 NADIS is a network of 60 veterinary practices and 6 veterinary colleges who monitor disease levels in cattle, sheep and pigs across the UK.



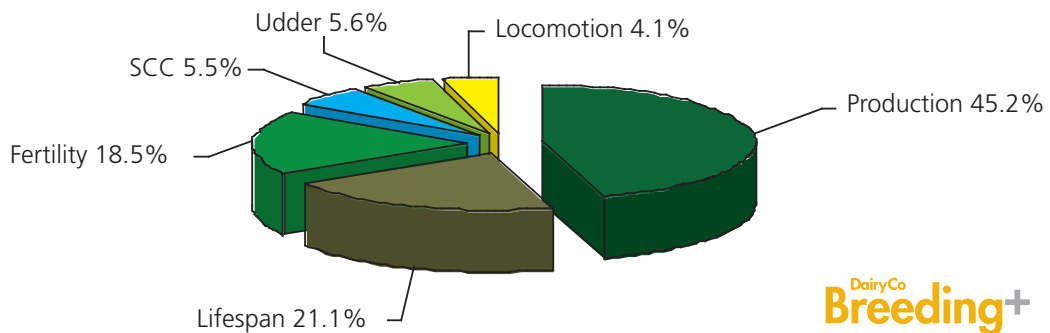
***'Consumers believe dairy farmers do a good job looking after their animals and that animal welfare in Britain is the best in the world'***

The public perception of dairy farming is positive. The 2009 Dairy Council Public Attitudes survey<sup>13</sup> revealed that 75% of the respondents believe dairy farmers do a good job looking after their animals and 62% believed that animal welfare in Britain was amongst the best in the world. These were the most positive results since the survey began in 2004.

***'Breeding priorities focus on health and welfare traits over productivity'***

Breeding has been responsible for much of the tremendous production progress made by the British dairy industry since the 1970s. Now breeding for longer-lived, more productive cows better suited to the needs of modern milk production has meant placing more emphasis on fertility, health and longevity. Future selection indices will be continually monitored to ensure that animal welfare is a high priority on dairy farm breeding programmes.

Relative importance of traits in the Profitable Lifetime Index



13 The Dairy Council and DairyCo Consumer Survey 2009 Final Report August 2009

## Working on Welfare: Drivers of Improvement

Dairy farmers never stop striving to improve the way they do things. However, very often just having the desire to improve is not enough. There are many factors that can enable, support and drive improvements in welfare, including:

**D**airy farmers take great pride in caring for their animals. This is one of the most powerful drivers of all.

**A**wareness of the need to maintain a positive public perception of dairy cow welfare is an important driver for improvement, and is one that the whole supply chain can take responsibility for.

**I**nterest in investment on dairy farms is fundamental to maintaining high welfare standards. Investment will only happen if farmers have the confidence gained from sustained periods of profitability.

**R**esearch, technology and innovation are essential for continued improvement. Farmers must have access to information, new technologies and science to enable improvements in efficiency, competitiveness and performance.

**Y**ields are affected by poor dairy cow welfare. Contented, well cared for dairy cows will produce more milk, and ultimately, the need to produce high quality British milk for consumers to enjoy is the biggest driver of all.





## Working on Welfare: On Farm

### Reducing Endemic Disease

Although this strategy focuses on improving welfare, health and welfare are inextricably linked. For both welfare and economic reasons it is vitally important for dairy farmers to have healthy cows in their herds, which means reducing the prevalence of endemic diseases such as mastitis, lameness, Johne's disease, bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) and bovine tuberculosis (bTB).

### Mastitis

Mastitis is the most common disease of dairy cows, a major reason for premature culling and remains one of the largest costs to the dairy industry; with mild cases costing an estimated £150-£175 per annum. Mastitis is also a significant cause of poor dairy cow welfare and severe cases, whilst rare, may even result in the death of the animal.

Work needs to be undertaken to quantify the levels of mastitis in a herd, but differentiation must be made between type, severity, the numbers of quarters affected, or when veterinary intervention is required. The development of automatic systems of detection, vaccines to prevent and control mastitis (both clinical and sub-clinical) and alternatives to antibiotic therapy should be supported. Research into the heritability of traits associated with reduced clinical mastitis show that these can be included in breeding programmes and should be promoted for the benefit of the industry.

Rather than set arbitrary targets without having baseline data, it is better to aspire to achieve reductions in mastitis through an industry-wide control plan until such time as reliable national data is available.

### Lameness

Lameness can have a serious impact on cow welfare and productivity, causing pain and discomfort, production losses and contributing to culling decisions. Measuring lameness in a herd can be done in two ways: mobility scoring or recording the actual incidence of lameness (cows treated). While there is a debate about what are 'acceptable levels' of lameness and the definition of lameness, there is no dispute that foot and leg health is a priority area for improvement.

A recording, prevention and treatment plan should be encouraged on all dairy farms, but improvements can be made in the provision of information to farmers on foot bathing and trimming, the selection, design and maintenance of flooring, cow tracks and housing, and breeding.

### Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD)

BVD infection in cattle is a widespread disease of major economic importance to cattle farmers. Recent reports show that 38% of Scottish suckler herds and 57% of UK dairy herds are infected. Whilst BVD does cause diarrhoea, the main disease occurs when BVD infects susceptible pregnant cows where the virus quickly crosses to the foetus. Infected foetuses either die and are reabsorbed, are aborted, are stillborn or survive to term but are damaged and grow poorly. Infected calves excrete the virus continuously for the rest of their lives, and BVD infection is spread and maintained through the existence of persistently infected animals.

Control and prevention of the infection can only be achieved by applying strict biosecurity procedures, vaccination and long term control strategies. There is a reasonably effective test for BVD that can identify persistently infected cattle, meaning that reduction and eradication of the disease is achievable.

### Johne's disease

Johne's disease is a chronic intestinal infection in cattle and effectively a wasting condition of ruminants. The effects of the disease can have significant financial and welfare consequences including reduced milk yield, diarrhoea and loss of condition. Johne's disease may be a major cause of the involuntary culling of dairy cattle; and a recently published report<sup>14</sup> reveals that Johne's disease is present in 35% of the national dairy herd. Of the various diagnostic tests available to test for the disease, all are prone to error, yet detecting the disease without testing can be difficult. Currently, there is no effective treatment for Johne's disease and infected cows are culled to prevent degeneration and risk of further spread. Work has begun within the industry to offer improved guidance to vets and farmers on Johne's Disease.

**It is essential that farmers are duly aware of the condition, its symptoms and the potential impact on their businesses and to ensure industry co-ordination to control and eradicate the disease.**

### Bovine TB

In 2009 over 36,000 cattle (of which 20,715 are estimated to be from the dairy herd) were slaughtered in Britain due to bTB. Today around 750,000 cattle are tested every month<sup>15</sup>. The stress placed upon the animals by testing, movement restrictions and handling causes major welfare concerns. The testing process disturbs and upsets cattle, reducing milk production and weight gain in young stock – the cost of which is impossible to evaluate. Farmers have also reported lower conception rates and higher mastitis levels on post TB testing days due to cow disruption. For some farms, labour requirements become

a critical concern as the potential loss of productive dairy cattle and milk yield makes the retention of skilled farm labour untenable. As animal welfare is dependant on the skill and care of good stockmen, this could have a serious impact on welfare. The need to buy in new stock to replace animals lost to bTB increases the risk of bringing in new diseases, which can further impact animal welfare. In addition, the inability to sell animals that are placed under restriction can put pressure on stocking densities on farm.

### Longevity and Voluntary/Involuntarily Culling of Dairy Cows

The recent FAWC Opinion<sup>16</sup> states that a long lifespan can indicate good welfare but recognises that the culling of unhealthy cows should be done promptly. Whilst farmers can and do breed for improved lifespan, taking longevity as a sole measure of welfare is, as such, one that industry should steer away from. Instead, looking at longevity in parallel with the ratio of voluntary to involuntary culling and herd replacement rate will give a more realistic indication of welfare.

That said the average lifespan of the dairy cow is increasing despite outbreaks of major exotic diseases and the continued spread of TB.

The average dairy herd culling rate in Britain is around 24%. Of this, 57% are classed as involuntary culls and 43% voluntary<sup>17</sup>. The reasons for these culls must be considered and addressed before judgements are made about welfare on the basis of longevity. Voluntary culling might be linked to a cow's performance or the management of the herd – in other words it is a planned cull and often prevents welfare problems arising. Involuntary culling on the other hand may be linked to health problems, disease (for example because of TB)

14 SB4022: An integrated strategy to determine the herd level prevalence of Johne's disease in the UK dairy herd. Defra. November 2009.

15 There may be seasonal differences.

16 FAWC, 2009, Opinion for the Welfare of the Dairy Cow

17 FAWC, 2009 Opinion on the Welfare of the Dairy Cow

or infertility. Reducing involuntary culling rates is important for increasing farm profitability as well as for dairy cow welfare.

**Reasons for involuntary culls should be identified, explored and levels reduced.**

### **Understanding Fertility Problems**

Infertility is a complex issue and one that is not always linked to cow welfare. However, infertility can be used as an indirect indicator of poor welfare and is often the main reason for premature, involuntary culling of dairy cattle. Fertility can be influenced by body condition, metabolic disorders and negative energy balance, the presence of disease, poor dry cow and heifer management and chronic stress. Infertility is being addressed through breeding yet only 5% of differences in dairy cow fertility are reported to be due to genetics.

Understanding the impact that selecting for fertility may have is important, as is the need to encourage farmers to use accurate bull and heifer genetic information on fertility.

**A better understanding of the main causes of infertility in the national herd would be a useful outcome for this strategy. There is huge potential to improve national fertility levels through dry cow management, condition scoring, accurate nutrition (during lactation and in the dry period), changes to general farm management and improved breeding.**

### **Youngstock Welfare**

One of the most important influences on calf health and welfare is ensuring that calves receive sufficient, good quality colostrum within six hours of birth. Colostrum is essential to protect the calf against infectious disease. Poor intake can lead to scours, pneumonia, impaired growth, weakened immune system and higher levels of mortality. Good dry cow management and nutrition is also fundamentally important to calves – cows calving in good body condition and free from metabolic disease will calve easily, produce good quality colostrum, and will have “looked after” the calf in late pregnancy, ensuring the calf is fit and healthy.

Dairy heifer calves are integral to the dairy farming system by providing replacements for cows leaving the main dairy herd. Male bull calves offer an alternative income to some farmers through the beef supply chain. The welfare of calves should not be compromised by their sex, value or destination. Farmers on dedicated retailer contracts are often supported and encouraged to improve calf welfare standards.

Further research needs to be carried out into the reasons for calf mortality and improved recording of reasons for death on farm is recommended.

An industry campaign to highlight the importance of colostrum and further research into increasing its intake in young calves should be undertaken. Further promotion of best practice methods for calf rearing and feeding to dairy farmers would also be beneficial.



# Working on Welfare: Working in Partnership

While the responsibility to ensure animal welfare fundamentally rests with dairy farmers, there is undoubtedly a strong responsibility and ability to support and enable improvements throughout the supply chain. By working in partnership and sharing responsibility for welfare we believe that further improvements can be made.

## Improved Co-ordination of Welfare Activity

A wealth of initiatives are available to dairy farmers to improve dairy cow welfare (Appendix 3). Most recently, outcome based welfare standards have been launched by retailers for their dedicated groups of dairy farmers. The recognition of the need to adopt a proactive, and outcome based approach to maintaining and improving dairy cow welfare standards is a positive step, yet awareness and co-ordination of this activity, and the ability to harness the knowledge it provides is limited. Having an inventory of industry activity to enhance welfare and case studies available to highlight successes would be helpful in promoting the industry's efforts, sharing best practice and identifying any gaps in provision.

**The Cattle Health and Welfare Group (CHAWG) is best placed to coordinate this activity.**

## Farm Assurance Schemes

Welfare forms an integral part of the Red Tractor Farm Assurance Dairy standards and performance against these standards has, and continues to drive improvements in welfare. Non-conformance with these standards could ultimately lead to exclusion from the scheme, which would leave many dairy farmers without a market for their milk. It is important therefore

that RT Dairy assessors and Certification Bodies (CBs) are regularly audited to monitor consistency and standards of inspections and that the CBs adopt a robust approach to auditing producer compliance with welfare standards, especially where persistent non-conformances are recorded.

**A stricter corrective programme for high risk producers in the RT Dairy scheme could include an increased frequency of inspections and a publicised charging policy to ensure that only those farms that are considered high risk have to bear the cost of re-inspection.**

## Vets and Vet Services

By working together, vets and farmers can and should do more to improve dairy cow welfare. Vets can take a leading role in addressing welfare issues by being proactive in educating farmers and working with farming clients towards a 'Herd Welfare Plan' followed alongside the 'Farm Health Plan'. Veterinary surgeons are well placed to offer help and advice to farmers on reducing the levels and welfare impacts of mastitis, lameness and infectious diseases and can communicate the benefits of improved health and welfare on productivity and profits.

The role of the vet in food animal production is being further explored and debated within the remit of the Vets and Vet Services Group<sup>18</sup>. Future challenges include succession planning for large animal vets, training and support for newly qualified vets, encouragement of veterinary specialism and the promotion and protection of animal welfare.

**The veterinary profession has a responsibility to keep up to date with new disease threats, developments in antibiotic and vaccine production and risks associated with changes in dairy cow management systems or practices.**

18 Vets and Vet Service website and report

## Information Sharing on Health and Welfare Trends

There is currently a dearth of statistical evidence upon which levels and trends in dairy cow welfare can be fully understood. This knowledge base must be developed to improve industry understanding of the incidence of welfare issues and to provide the evidence base upon which the industry can challenge negative welfare propaganda and proactively communicate positive efforts to improve dairy cow welfare.

Currently, the statistics available include RT Dairy inspection records, milk recording data, breed society data, dairy farm consultancy data and veterinary data. This could be enhanced by better on farm recording of data, co-ordination of industry data and, increasingly, having access to the data generated by retailers working with their dedicated supply chain groups.

**Collating health and welfare data would enable a national picture of animal health and welfare traits to be developed, and potentially, for benchmarks on key welfare priorities to be set. Farmers would then be able to compare their individual performance against national averages.**

**Veterinary surgeons are well placed to record the incidences of health and welfare disorders and to help develop a national picture of the disease situation across Britain. Recording of disease via NADIS<sup>19</sup> or similar databases should be encouraged.**

## Skills and Training

The FAWC recognises the importance of training and certification of stockmen to improve dairy cow welfare. Specific short courses on dairy cow welfare have been developed, but there is a need for greater co-ordination and quality assurance of these courses. In addition to formal, vocational qualifications, Lantra Awards and NPTC are the two main Awarding Bodies for the agricultural sector and both offer a variety of technical training courses, many with specific dairy industry content. These courses are often delivered flexibly, on-farm and are deemed to be relevant to farmers' business needs. However, there are barriers which exist to the uptake of training<sup>20</sup> which need to be overcome.

As well as considering skills and training for the current workforce, it is also important to recognise that graduates and new entrants must have the right level of practical skill and competence to operate effectively in the dairy industry. To this end the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the dairy industry, upon which qualifications are based, must meet industry needs and be kept up to date to reflect new technologies and management systems. For example the Scottish Dairy Academy<sup>21</sup> aims to offer dairy training and qualifications which will be delivered to all from total beginner through to graduate and experienced dairyman/ manager.

**Training and skills development is a requirement of the RT Dairy scheme and there should be an industry wide recording system for farmers and their employees to undertake and record skills development.**

19 National Animal Disease Information Service

20 Lantra Sector Skills Agreement: Livestock Industry 2007

21 [www.scottishdairyacademy.com](http://www.scottishdairyacademy.com)

## Research Priorities and Dissemination

There is a need to ensure greater linkage between research bodies, institutes and industry stakeholders engaged in driving the welfare agenda in the dairy sector. The importance of this is twofold:

1. Ensuring that funding for research is directed at addressing the industry's welfare priorities alongside the need for productive, efficient milk production.
2. To focus the research agenda on delivering benefits and solutions to welfare problems.

The dairy sector recognises the essential need for proper scientifically conducted and adequately funded research. Priorities include: breeding, rearing, production and handling practices, the design, construction and management of facilities, the epidemiology of diseases and the welfare needs of dairy cows in new and modified management systems.

The creation by DairyCo of its Research Forum as a means of bringing together dairy industry experts to discuss research needs and priorities is a welcome move.

Continued involvement and funding by Defra is vital for this research work. Whilst directly benefiting the dairy sector, research also informs public debate and underpins new welfare codes and regulations.

**It is essential that funding for dairy research is maintained and increased and that findings are disseminated and communicated to dairy farmers to bring about positive changes in management practices on-farm.**

## Proportionate and Informed Welfare Policy

Government must ensure that welfare policy is informed and driven by science, evidence and professional experience. While industry agrees that regulation has a role to play in setting minimum standards of welfare, this must be proportionate to the needs of farmers, and not hinder production and on-farm investment. Industry-led initiatives and developments should be welcomed, and regulation only considered as a last resort. The key to avoiding legislation is to ensure farmers have the opportunity and ability to deliver the welfare 'outcomes' required. To do this we must be agreed on welfare priorities and how they are improved.

**Government should respond to the recently published FAWC Opinion on the Welfare of the Dairy Cow. This report made recommendations on longevity, skills and training, breeding, disease incidence and surveillance. All these areas have been taken into consideration in drafting this strategy.**

## Funding for Welfare Improvement

Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have an important role to play in supporting improvement in animal welfare through the allocation of Axis 1 Rural Development funds at regional level. Although each RDA has set regional priorities, it is important that there is a degree of co-ordination to ensure that any programmes reflect wider national priorities for animal welfare. RDA funding has created opportunities for regional collaboration between the livestock sector and local veterinarians to promote health and welfare as a contribution to regional development.

As an example, Yorkshire Forward developed a package of RDPE support for the dairy sector to

encourage and enable capital investment that is above standard practice for animal health and welfare. The package recognised that the delivery of exceptional welfare standards incurs additional costs.

**Amidst current uncertainty regarding future delivery of RDPE, it is essential that rural development budgets remain available to address health and welfare improvements within the current programme. A cohesive and collaborative approach needs to be taken to best address dairy cow welfare, and future rural development schemes should support this.**

### **Informing Consumers and Raising Awareness**

While current data suggests that the British consumer believes that standards of welfare on British farms are amongst the best in the world, consumers would undoubtedly benefit from receiving more consistent, positive and factual messages on animal welfare. A major focus of this should be better promotion of the RT Dairy scheme and the standards farmers are operating to within it.

The DairyCo developed consumer facing welfare website<sup>22</sup> should provide a central focus for proactive, positive and factual communications and provide a platform for the industry to educate consumers on dairy farming systems, standards and practices.



22 [www.thisisdairyfarming.com](http://www.thisisdairyfarming.com)

Over the last five years, retailers have taken a more active role in animal welfare through the development of dedicated supply chain arrangements, which remunerate farmers to produce milk to specific standards. This interest in welfare comes in response to a heightened public awareness of animal welfare issues, which in turn creates a desire for greater welfare assurances. Crucially, all these initiatives have one thing in common, and that is a recognition that higher welfare comes at a price, either to the retailer, or to the consumer. It is hoped that the data and research findings from these dedicated supply chains will be made available to the industry so that welfare achievements can be recorded and promoted, and the knowledge and science disseminated to benefit the wider dairy industry.

**There is a role for all industry stakeholders to maintain and improve public perception through education and proactive communication. There is great potential to provide point of sale information to consumers on dairy cow welfare initiatives, farm assurance schemes and the consumer facing website.**

### Preparing for the Future

The British dairy industry is constantly changing as farmers take advantage of new technologies in breeding, milking and farming systems, and as relationships in the dairy supply chain evolve. This progress means that the industry is continually finding new and better ways to manage dairy cows, while delivering to consumers the huge range of quality, British dairy products they enjoy.

Public confidence in dairy products is an absolute priority for farmers and as an industry we will always be guided by consumer preference. However, these preferences need to be informed by balanced, scientifically-based research and assessment wherever possible.

Predicting the future direction of the British dairy industry is a difficult task; however, certain trends are beginning to emerge – such as a gradual increase in herd size. It is in the whole industry's interest to be united and consistent in its messages to farmers, consumers and the general public. Greater industry co-ordination, communication and collaboration will better prepare us for coping with the changes that may face the British dairy industry - be they expected (through technological advances, food security challenges or agricultural policy) or unexpected (future disease threats or the impacts of climate change).

**Achieving one voice on animal welfare is a desirable and realistic goal for this strategy.**



## Putting the Strategy into Practice

The Cattle Health and Welfare Group (CHAWG) is an industry group responsible for prioritising, planning and co-ordinating a programme of economically focussed improvements to cattle health and welfare in England, and for coordinating a wide range of health and welfare activities across Britain.

Its membership includes farmers, farming organisations, industry levy bodies, vets, government, assurance bodies and breed societies. CHAWG is the first port of call for all cattle health and welfare research, new disease challenges and knowledge interaction initiatives to ensure efficiency, knowledge gap identification, co-ordination and minimal duplication. CHAWG also liaises closely with all industry stakeholders and educational institutions to promote consistent regional dissemination of national work and encourage the uptake of technological advances and best practice.

CHAWG is the logical focal point for coordinating industry activity on welfare and is tasked with overseeing delivery against the actions and priorities set out in this strategy. In addition, CHAWG's members will review any new scientific and industry developments and refocus the strategy as necessary.

CHAWG and its member organisations will monitor progress against each priority area. A more detailed timescale is provided in the action plan. As and when required, other relevant organisations will be invited to CHAWG meetings to provide expertise and information on certain priorities.



# Dairy Cow Welfare Action Plan: Top 10 Priorities

The action plan below summarises the top ten priority areas for action, which are categorised as short, medium or long term goals. Responsibilities have been assigned to individual organisations and bodies for each activity and recommendation. This table should be reviewed and amended as issues evolve taking into account changes in knowledge, technological advances and veterinary expertise.

**Red:** begin work immediately and review progress in 2011

**Amber:** aim to be underway by 2011 and review progress in 2012

**Green:** ongoing aspiration to achieve a lasting change in behaviour / outcome – review annually and assess priority level

Action	Outcome	Organisations	Current situation	Target	Measure
<b>Priority 1: Better on-farm recording and use of aggregate data</b>					
Increase in the number of farmers recording production, health and welfare data.	The benefit of understanding and recording production, health and welfare trends on-farm cannot be underestimated  Farmers should know the baseline situation on-farm to understand if, and how improvements can be made	NMR CIS NFU DairyCo RT Dairy Retailers CDI Breed Societies	No accurate information on number of farmers recording on-farm data	All dairy farmers recording the incidence of mastitis and lameness, and the reasons for culling as a minimum and aggregate data shared with industry	NMR data CIS data RT Dairy data BCMS data NFSCo data
Development of a national system to collate dairy cow production, health and welfare trends and measures	A centralised recording system for cattle health and welfare trends to allow industry to identify how the actions within the strategy are improving welfare	DairyCo RT Dairy BCVA VLA NMR Retailers CDI HUK	No central body for information collation	Data set analysed in 2011	Industry wide data set available
<b>Priority 2: Mastitis: Improvement in recognition, treatment, prevention and control</b>					
Expansion of the DairyCo Mastitis Control plan or similar	Increased number of veterinary surgeons and consultants trained on mastitis prevention, control and treatment	DairyCo BCVA BVA Farmers Retailers Breed Societies	146 people trained with 354 farms enrolled on scheme	750 farm plans by 2012	DairyCo data Other scheme data

Action	Outcome	Organisations	Current situation	Target	Measure
<b>Priority 3: Lameness: Improvement in recognition, treatment, prevention and control</b>					
Develop and launch DairyCo Mobility programme	Veterinary surgeons, foot trimmers and farmers trained on lameness prevention, control and treatment	DairyCo BCVA BVA Farmers Breed Societies	Under development	2011 launch	DairyCo data  Other scheme data
Increase in the number of qualified foot trimmers	Ensure training and continued CPD of foot trimmers	DairyCo NACFT	Website and training set up.  102 foot trimmers registered.	200 foot trimmers on NACFT website	NACFT website
<b>Priority 4: Understanding Infertility</b>					
Lead an advisory campaign on understanding fertility problems	More effective communication of current information and new research to farmers	BCVA Breed Societies	No industry co-ordination of materials and key messages at present	Campaign / programme to be scoped and developed by 2012	BCVA AI Companies  Other data sources
<b>Priority 5: Cow Nutrition</b>					
Increased use of Cow Body Condition scoring	Promotion of Body Condition Scoring as a tool for measuring dairy cow welfare	DairyCo RT Dairy BCVA Retailers Processors	Some retailers stipulate that farmers Body Condition Score	10% of British dairy farmers regularly Body Condition scoring their herds	Retailer data  RT Dairy data  DairyCo survey
Increased farmer guidance on feeding the modern dairy cow	Organise and promote industry workshops on feeding the dairy cow	DairyCo Farmers Consultants BCVA	Certain events but variation regionally	10% of dairy farmers attending DairyCo Feeding + events by 2012 (or similar)	DairyCo data  Industry data



Action	Outcome	Organisations	Current situation	Target	Measure
<b>Priority 6: Addressing welfare through Farm Assurance</b>					
Ensuring conformance with RT Dairy standards are maintained at all times	Corrective programmes developed for farmers who are non-compliant at RT Dairy inspections	RT Dairy AFS Certification Bodies Dairy UK	Data on non-compliances and high risk farms available	Reduction in number of farmers classified as High Risk by RT Dairy	RT Dairy standards
Future standards to incorporate welfare outcome measures	Farm inspectors will be able to measure against more specific welfare standards	RT Dairy BCVA RSPCA	Standards reviewed every 18 months	Incorporation of welfare outcomes measures in future review	RT Dairy standards
<b>Priority 7: Improving welfare through Breeding Programmes</b>					
Promoting breeding as a tool for improved welfare	Improve industry understanding, availability and use of genetic information for the benefit of dairy cow welfare	DairyCo Breeding Societies AI Companies	Information available through DairyCo Breeding+	All farmers aware of Breeding+	Increase number of knowledge transfer events on breeding
<b>Priority 8: Informing and educating the Consumer</b>					
Promotion of consumer facing website on British dairy farming	Proactive, factual and positive information available to consumers and heightened consumer awareness of the welfare standards achieved by British dairy farmers  www.thisisdairyfarming.com	DairyCo Dairy Council Dairy UK NFU	Consumer website launched	Website promoted by all stakeholders	Cross-industry promotion
Consumer-facing dairy welfare literature and point of sale information	Retailers, processors and industry organisations should promote the current achievements of the British dairy sector to consumers	NFU DairyCo Retailers Dairy UK RSPCA	Very little positive literature of dairy cow welfare.	Improvement in consumer knowledge of dairy farming	The Dairy Council/ DairyCo Consumer Survey data

Action	Outcome	Organisations	Current situation	Target	Measure
<b>Priority 9: Preparing for the future</b>					
PR Protocols for Dairy Farmers	Reflecting a positive and proactive message on dairy cow welfare to consumers and the general public	NFU DairyCo	Best practice guidance given by NFU and DairyCo	Clear protocol in place for farmers and industry on dealing with welfare and other sector issues	Number of farmers attending training
Programme of welfare focused farm walks	Knowledge transfer events for dairy farmers to promote welfare best practice and communicate updates on dairy policy, regulation and initiatives	NFU RABDF DairyCo Holstein UK	Not in place currently	Two briefing days annually in addition to current industry events	Two briefing days held
Farm Welfare Champions	Recognition of the good welfare standards already achieved by British dairy farmers	NFU RABDF DairyCo Holstein UK	No welfare-specific visits	As required	Database of welfare champions
<b>Priority 10: Industry Co-ordination</b>					
Develop industry inventory on welfare activity	Bringing together all dairy cow welfare initiatives across Britain	CHAWG	No industry co-ordination	Annual report published	CHAWG report
One voice for dairy welfare	Endorsement of dairy cow welfare strategy and increased use of agreed "issue statements" that set the current scene for dairy cow production, health and welfare	DairyCo NFU Dairy UK Processors Retailers Breed Societies	Welfare issue statements agreed	Issue statements to be reviewed regularly, and new issues identified	Positive media increased

# Appendix 1

## Current Standards of Dairy Cow Welfare

### World

The World Health Organisation “Guiding Principles for animal welfare” stipulate that:

- There is a critical relationship between animal health and animal welfare;
- The internationally recognised ‘five freedoms’ provide valuable guidance in animal welfare;
- Improvements in farm animal welfare can often improve productivity and food safety, and hence lead to economic benefits.

### European

Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes lays down minimum standards for the protection of animals bred or kept for farming purposes, including cattle.

The recently adopted Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals (2006 – 2010) sets a clear and comprehensive map of the Commission’s planned animal welfare initiatives. These include

- Upgrading existing minimum standards for animal protection and welfare
- Giving a high priority to promoting policy-orientated future research on animal protection and welfare
- Introducing standardised animal welfare indicators
- Ensuring that animal keepers/ handlers as well as the general public are more involved and informed on current standards of animal protection and welfare and fully appreciate their role in promoting animal protection and welfare
- Continue to support and initiate further international initiatives to raise awareness and create a greater consensus on animal welfare

## Welfare of animals in transit and at slaughter

In 2007, new EU regulation on the welfare of animals in transit<sup>23</sup> came into force, with the new rules stating that animals must be fit to travel and that transporter authorisation is required for journeys over 65km. Regulations to protect animals at the time of slaughter and killing both inside and outside of slaughterhouses make it an offence to cause or permit an animal to be caused avoidable excitement, pain or suffering. There are also specific rules on handling, restraining, stunning and slaughter of animals<sup>24</sup>.

## Great Britain

In 2004 the GB Animal Health and Welfare strategy<sup>25</sup> was developed to improve animal health and welfare for domestic and production animals. It was followed in 2007, by the Animal Welfare Delivery Strategy (AWDS)<sup>26</sup> setting out Government's priorities for improving animal welfare standards. Successful implementation of the AWDS will ensure all animal keepers have the knowledge and means to improve animal welfare and provide a partnership framework giving consumers clear and simple information on the welfare origins of the product they are buying. The Welfare of Farm Animals (England) Regulations 2007 also include specific schedules for calves and cattle.

## Five Freedoms

The five freedoms, which have been widely integrated into UK and EU legislation and farm assurance schemes and have gained recognition and legislative inclusion outside the EU, are:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst – by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour;
2. Freedom from discomfort – by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area;
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease – by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment;
4. Freedom to express normal behaviour – by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals' own kind;
5. Freedom from fear and distress – by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

23 The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006

24 Welfare of Animals (Slaughter and Killing) Regulations 1995

25 Animal Health and Welfare Strategy, 2004

26 Animal Welfare Delivery Strategy, 2007, England

## Appendix 2

# FAWC Opinion on the Welfare of the Dairy Cow 2009

### Recommendations

- The British dairy industry should aim to raise the standard of welfare of dairy cows over the next five years. A target lifespan of eight years for the dairy cow should be an aspiration of the industry.
- The British dairy industry should invest more in education, skills, training and professional development of farmers and stockmen.
- Breeding programmes used by British dairy farmers should place more emphasis on welfare traits, resulting in a cow that is better able to deal with the demands of modern dairying. Breeding programmes should aim to improve health and welfare rather than merely to halt their decline.
- The incidence of endemic diseases in dairy cows, particularly mastitis and lameness, should be reduced urgently. Government and industry should put every effort into agreeing and implementing an eradication plan for bovine Tuberculosis. On-farm recording of disease and welfare by the farmer should be encouraged, perhaps as part of farm assurance schemes. Health and welfare plans are an important part of dairy husbandry and should be developed by the farmer with his veterinary surgeon.
- The Government should ensure that public surveillance of cow welfare is carried out efficiently and effectively so that progress can be monitored. Findings should be given greater publicity and information about best practice should be disseminated. A national database of information about cow health and welfare, as well as production measures, should be developed.

## Appendix 3

# Working on Welfare: Industry Initiatives

Many of the improvements and achievements in animal welfare are closely linked to farm management practices. There is a wealth of industry activity and initiatives aimed at improving welfare, and promoting best practice, a few of which are listed below:

**Locomotion and Mobility Scoring:** The UK was the first country in the world to routinely record 'locomotion' defined as the cow's ability to move with ease. Currently Holstein UK records locomotion on over 125,000 cows annually as part of its routine type evaluation service providing farmers with breeding values for locomotion<sup>27</sup>. In 2008 DairyCo launched the cattle mobility score, becoming the industry standard for measuring mobility and lameness in dairy herds and allowing farmers to record the mobility of their herd with the images on the guidance sheet indicating different mobility scores and making suggestions on how to improve them. This work started through the Tubney Trust's Healthy Feet Project whose overall aim was to help the industry reduce lameness in dairy cattle.

**Ensuring professionalism:** The National Association of Cattle Foot Trimmers is the UK's representative body for professional hoof trimmers, set up to increase the credibility and professionalism of the industry, to encourage continuing professional development and to share best practice. The NACFT website allows farmers to access information on certified foot trimmers in their regions who are fully trained and continually assessed.

**Dairy Centre of Excellence:** In 2009 Tesco launched the Dairy Centre of Excellence in collaboration with the University of Liverpool, bringing together experts from across the dairy sector to look at issues from animal welfare to consumer trends. As well as offering state of the art knowledge and research for the benefit of the wider dairy industry, the centre also houses a visitor centre and acts as a national resource centre for farmers, the general public and non-governmental organisations.

**DairyCo Mastitis Management Plan:** The DairyCo Mastitis Control Plan, launched in 2009, provides a transferable method for addressing mastitis problems and achieving mastitis control which can be used by farmers in consultation with suitably qualified and trained veterinary advisors. The plan has been shown to reduce farm mastitis by at least 20%, and DairyCo are investing heavily over the next three years to allow farmers better access to the plan. The purpose of this DairyCo initiative is to identify a team of UK veterinary surgeons and other advisers to work in a collaborative manner to initiate and develop a widespread mastitis control scheme. This aims to reach approximately 750 dairy herds by 2012.

**Beyond Calf Exports Forum:** This forum was set up to encourage the whole supply chain to work together in an integrated way to develop value added markets for dairy bull calves. The forum aims are threefold; an increased uptake of male dairy calves in the UK beef chain, a reduction in the number of calves killed on farm and a reduction in live exports of calves for veal. The success of the forum highlights how voluntary, industry-led initiatives and sharing of best practice can work to benefit dairy calf welfare and how industry can work together to solve specific welfare problems.

<sup>27</sup> Holstein UK data, 2009

**RDPE Funding for Livestock Health and Welfare:** European money is available through the Rural Development Programme for England to address regional livestock health and welfare issues. In certain regions, Lantra managed LandSkills programmes have been developed allowing funding of up to 80% for farmer training and development needs. RDPE has also funded the Livestock Northwest website and programme, a gateway to information, advice and support for livestock farmers looking to improve performance in England's North West. The programme is a four-year business support package aiming to improve farm competitiveness, animal health and welfare and the efficient use of main farm resources.

**Knowledge Transfer:** There have been huge advances in the availability and quality of skills and training available to dairy farmers, either through DairyCo, the industry levy body; independent consultants; veterinary surgeons; milk processors and retailers, and other industry bodies. Between April and November 2009 DairyCo held over 300 discussion group meetings, which were attended by over 2500 dairy farmers. On a professional level more than 130 veterinary surgeons, consultants and farmers attended the 2009 British Mastitis Conference, 160 delegates attended the Cattle Lameness Conference 2010 held at Nottingham University and 300 delegates attended the National Cattle Mobility Event 2010. These events have been instigated to address the absence of a UK forum to share the latest research findings and disseminate best practice, and are aimed to gather interested parties to facilitate knowledge sharing and discussion.

**British veal:** Standards for veal production in Britain are significantly higher than what is required by EU regulation. Calves reared for veal in Britain are reared in groups and must be provided with bedding which gives them a comfortable floor surface. Young calves are supplied double the amount of fibrous food compared with EU requirements, and older calves have greater space allowance than stipulated in EU law.





## Bibliography:

Assured Dairy Farmers: [www.assuredairyfarmers.org.uk](http://www.assuredairyfarmers.org.uk)

DairyCo Breeding: [www.dairyco.org.uk](http://www.dairyco.org.uk)

DairyCo Consumer Website: [www.thisisdairyfarming.org.uk](http://www.thisisdairyfarming.org.uk)

DairyCo Datum: [www.dairyco.org.uk/datum.aspx](http://www.dairyco.org.uk/datum.aspx)

DairyCo Farmers Intentions Survey, April 2010

Defra: An integrated strategy to determine the herd level prevalence of Johne's disease in the UK dairy herd. November 2009.

Farm Animal Welfare Council: Farm Animal Welfare in GB: Past, present and future. October 2009

Farm Animal Welfare Council: Opinion on the Welfare of the Dairy Cow, October 2009

Lantra Sector Skills Agreement: Livestock Industry 2007

National Animal Disease Information Service: [www.nadis.org.uk](http://www.nadis.org.uk)

The Dairy Council and DairyCo Consumer Survey 2009: Final Report August 2009

Unlocking Potential: A report on veterinary expertise in food animal production by Professor Philip Lowe





## Glossary:

AFS	Assured Farm Standards
BCMS	British Cattle Movement Service
BCVA	British Cattle Veterinary Association
BVA	British Veterinary Association
CDI	Centre for Dairy Information
CHAWG	Cattle Health and Welfare Group
CIS	Cattle Information Service
DairyCo	
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
FAWC	Farm Animal Welfare Council
HUK	Holstein UK
NACFT	National Association of Cattle Foot Trimmers
NADIS	National Animal Disease Information Service
NFSCo	National Fallen Stock Company
NFU	National Farmers Union
NMR	National Milk Records
NPTC	National Proficiency Tests Council
RABDF	Royal Association of British Dairy Farms
RDA	Rural Development Agency
RDPE	Rural Development Plan for England
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
RT Dairy	Red Tractor Dairy (formerly Assured Dairy Farms)
VLA	Veterinary Laboratories Agency





If you have any questions or comments,  
please contact a representative at:

**NFU Head Office**

Agriculture House  
Stoneleigh Park  
Stoneleigh  
Warwickshire  
CV8 2TZ

Tel: 024 7685 8500  
Fax: 024 7685 8501

**Cattle Health and  
Welfare Group**

PO Box 3592  
Malmesbury  
SN16 1AR

[ruminanthandw@gmail.com](mailto:ruminanthandw@gmail.com)

