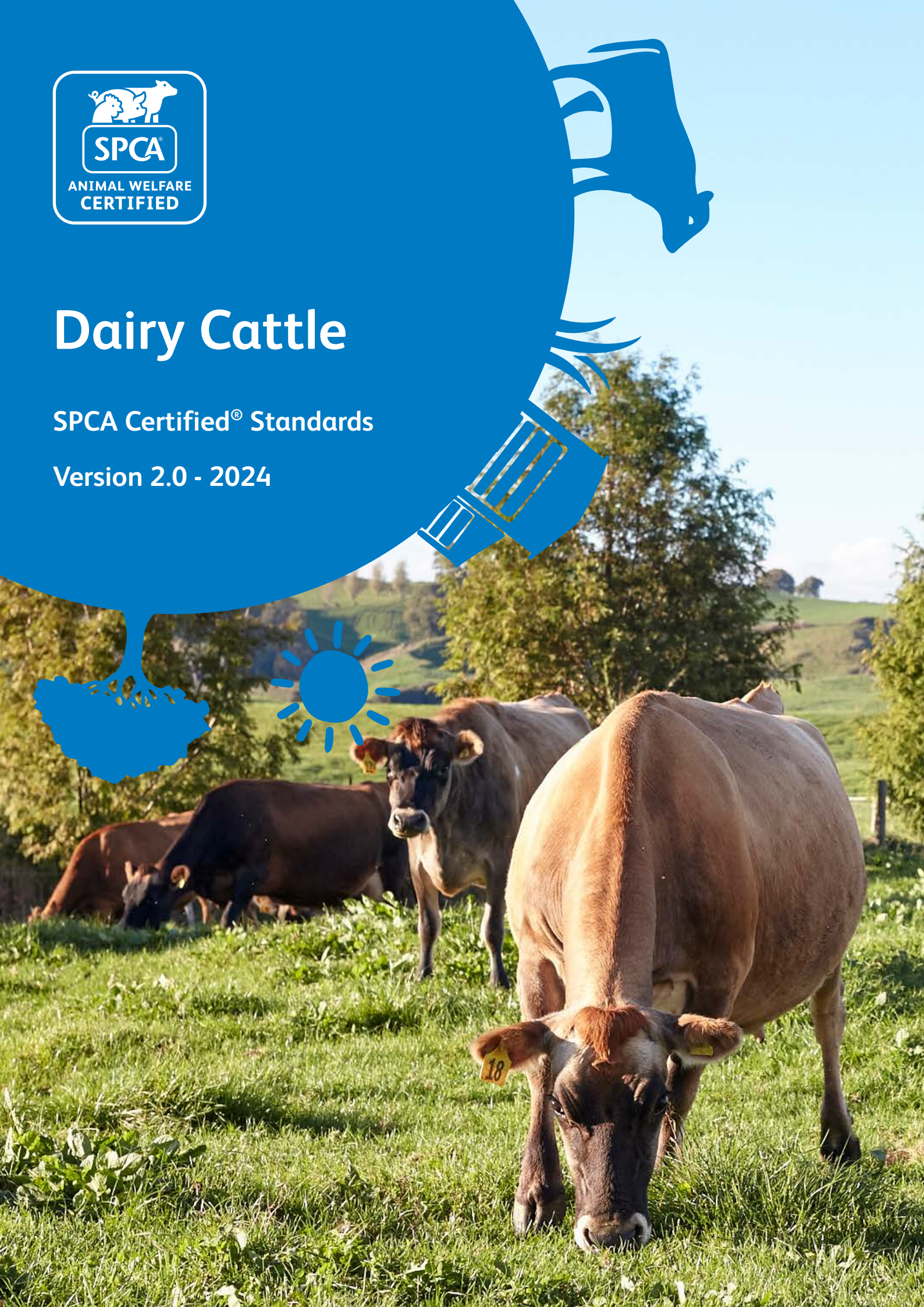
SPCA
ANIMAL WELFARE CERTIFIED

Dairy Cattle

SPCA Certified® Standards

Version 2.0 - 2024



SPCA Certified Standards for Dairy Cattle

Version 2.0 – 2024

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SPCA Certified Standards for Dairy Cattle

Overview of SPCA Certified

SPCA Certified is a certification system designed to celebrate good farming and raise animal welfare above current legal requirements. Its overarching goal is to improve the lives of as many animals as possible, through a process of increasing uptake and continual improvement over time. As such, SPCA Certified standards for dairy cattle allow participants to demonstrate that they apply a high level of animal welfare to their farming operations.

Certification is given to participants, which may include farmers, distributors, retailers, and companies, through a legal contract, following a successful initial assessment and subsequent welfare audit of compliance with the SPCA Certified standards.

SPCA Certified standards for dairy cattle apply to cattle that are bred, grown, and cared for either outdoors on pasture, or with a free choice between housing and pasture, where they have a degree of autonomy over diet selection, water consumption, and access to shade and shelter. Permanent housing without access to pasture is not acceptable under any circumstances unless in an emergency to protect the welfare of the cattle.

IMPORTANT: ***SPCA does not support the routine killing of surplus calves, either on-farm or as bobby calves. Such animals MUST be reared for beef production (dairy beef) instead, either on the home farm or, where possible, on another SPCA Certified property.***

In terms of the welfare outcomes they achieve, SPCA Certified standards are intended to go beyond the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and relevant Codes of Welfare. They are informed by animal behaviour and welfare science, consultation with stakeholders, and the values of SPCA. All farm staff, operators, and owners must be aware of, and compliant with, the standards and legal requirements relating to the animals in their care.

SPCA Certified standards are intended to be used alongside existing industry programmes and practices on farm, and should be read in association with the following documents:

- Animal Welfare Act 1999
- Animal Welfare (Care and Procedures) Regulations 2018
- Code of Welfare: Dairy Cattle 2019
- Code of Welfare: Painful Husbandry Procedures 2018
- Code of Welfare: Transport within New Zealand 2018
- Code of Welfare: Commercial Slaughter 2018

Framework of the SPCA Certified Standards

Previous iterations of SPCA Standards (Blue Tick) were based on the 'Five Freedoms' framework, which focuses on freedom from negative states (e.g. hunger, fear, and injury) to achieve good welfare. However, with the recognition that animals can experience positive as well as negative emotions, and the acknowledgement of sentience[1] in the amended Animal Welfare Act 1999, the time has come for a new approach.

As a result, the framework for the SPCA Certified standards has been derived from the Five Domains model of animal welfare, developed by New Zealand Professor David Mellor[2]. The Five Domains model is a holistic assessment of animal welfare, which addresses both minimising suffering and actively promoting positive emotional states.

The Five Domains are:

- nutrition;
- physical environment;
- health;
- behavioural interactions; and
- mental state.

Each of the four physical domains contribute to the provision of opportunities for positive mental experiences, as evaluated in the fifth domain.

1. *Animal sentience refers to the concept that animals can have emotions, feelings, perceptions, and experiences that matter to them.*
2. *Mellor, D. J., Beausoleil, N. J., Littlewood, K. E., McLean, A. N., McGreevy, P. D., Jones, B., & Wilkins, C. (2020). The 2020 five domains model: Including human–animal interactions in assessments of animal welfare. Animals: an open access journal from MDPI 10(10): 1870*

Scope

SPCA Certified standards for dairy cattle apply from the moment that an animal arrives or is born on the farm, until the time that they leave the farm or are euthanised on farm. Where calves are raised for beef production (dairy beef) on the certified farm they must be reared according to the SPCA Certified dairy standards until weaning.

All transport, including transport to and from the farm, and all slaughter processes, are covered by the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and relevant Codes of Welfare. It is the responsibility of the participant (farmer/licensee) to ensure that transport operators, contractors, and slaughter facilities comply with the law and ideally follow all best practice recommendations.

Traceability and Integrity

SPCA Certified endeavours to inspire best practice animal welfare within the dairy industry and to ensure transparency in animal welfare. To protect the integrity of SPCA Certified and the participating farmers, distributors, retailers, and companies who use the brand, it is important that all SPCA Certified members clearly demonstrate product traceability throughout their supply chains.

SPCA Certified also uses independent audits, including unannounced audits, to maintain the integrity of the programme and ensure that participants meet its standards. As a result, products carrying the SPCA Certified logo allow consumers to identify dairy products that have come from cattle farmed to a higher standard of animal welfare than is currently required by law.

For more information about SPCA Certified, including types of membership, complaints and other procedures, and the independent auditing process, please contact us at certified@spca.nz or visit our website.

SPCA Certified Standards for Dairy Cattle

Important notes:

- Section titles and their accompanying descriptions are taken from the Five Domains model.
- Unless stated otherwise, all standards apply equally to adult cattle, including bulls, and calves.
- Information presented in ***bold italic*** type is either a standard explanation, a recommendation, an area of concern, or an indication of where a standard is likely to be reviewed in the future.
- To avoid unnecessary duplication, existing information/records from other sources can be used to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of a standard. Electronic records are acceptable if they can be accessed by SPCA Certified during assessments/audits.
- SPCA Certified templates (e.g. health plan, biosecurity plan, etc) can be requested from certfied@spca.nz and may be used where current records do not exist.

Positive Mental Experience

Provide safe, congenial, and species-appropriate opportunities to have pleasurable experiences.

The dairy cow icon indicates those standards and recommendations that provide positive mental experiences for dairy cattle.

Good Nutrition

Provide ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.

Feed

N1 Cattle must be fed at a rate and in a manner that provides for their nutritional and health requirements at all stages of life and production.

N2 With the exception of milk-fed calves or emergency situations, cattle may only be fed fresh or conserved plant material grown in New Zealand.

N3 A written plan to adequately manage feed supply and pasture is required for periods when there may be limited feed, such as drought, extreme winter conditions, or dry summers (see E65), and during different physiological stages of the life cycle (e.g. during the transition period and at calving). The plan must also include:

- any crops to be used, identifying the risks for each and the measures to be put in place to minimise the risk;
- any concentrates to be fed, identifying the risks and the measures to be put in place to minimise the risk (i.e. provision of palatable, fibrous feed when feeding concentrates to ensure normal rumen function, limiting concentrates to 2kg/cow/day).

N4 Crops may be fed to cattle if they, or the way they are fed, do not pose a risk to the animal's health and welfare. Cattle on crops must be provided with access to a clean, dry, and comfortable resting area for at least 12 hours a day.

N5 Where supplementary feed is required, it must be introduced gradually (where appropriate) and provided in a manner that avoids unnecessary competition for access between animals.

N6 Fodder beet must not be fed to cattle and Palm Kernel Extract (PKE) may only be fed in emergencies. Where PKE or fodder beet is being fed currently, there must be an SPCA Certified-approved reduction plan in place to transition away from its use.

N7 A current feed declaration or letter of guarantee must be available for inspection, stating that feed is free from animal by-products/proteins.

N8 Where feed is stored, practices must be in place to ensure that it does not become contaminated or unsuitable for cattle to eat.

N9 A trace element / mineral supplementation programme must be written in consultation with a veterinarian or farm consultant. The programme must include a monitoring regime and state the levels at which supplementation is required. Records of testing and supplementation must be available for inspection upon request.

N10 Adult cattle body condition must be managed between BCS 4-6 (on a scale of 1-10). Where the body condition score of any adult animal drops below 4, immediate corrective action must be taken.

N11 Body condition of each cow must be assessed and recorded at least four times each year by a certified assessor. The times include:

- mid to late lactation;
- prior to drying off;
- prior to calving; and
- prior to mating.

It is recommended the farmer establish a good working relationship with a specialist in cattle nutrition.

Dairy cattle should be offered a variety of nutritious herbages so they can choose their preferred feed and experience different tastes and textures.

Water

N12 All cattle, including unweaned calves, must always have access to a freely available supply of clean, palatable drinking water, including in holding yards and races.

N13 Water delivery systems must be sufficient in number and size and maintained to ensure water is accessible and freely available for all calves and cattle to meet demand across all seasons, including peak drinking times.

N14 Troughs and drinkers must be provided at a height that allows calves and dairy cattle to drink using a normal, comfortable drinking posture.

N15 Portable electric fences used for break feeding must be placed so as not to discourage cattle from accessing troughs or drinkers.

N16 The area surrounding troughs and drinkers must be actively managed to ensure it does not become flooded or excessively muddy.

N17 Troughs and drinkers must be cleaned as required to maintain clean, palatable water.

Each separate watering point (e.g. trough) must be tested annually for water clarity. This can be done using a water clarity card (see Appendix 2) or any other appropriate method.

N18 Primary water sources must be tested every three years for contaminants (e.g. salinity, bacterial load, and mineral content) that may be harmful to the health of cattle or prevent cattle from drinking.

Where a new water source is established that is not town water (e.g. dam or bore), it must be tested as above before cattle are given access to it.

N19 An alternative source of water to the primary source must be available in the event of an emergency and identified in the emergency preparedness plan (see standard E65).

Calf rearing and weaning

Note: Standards N21 – N26, N28, N30 & N33 specifically apply to calves that are not kept with their mothers and weaned naturally.

N20 Calves must be fed at a rate and in a manner which meets their physical, health, and behavioural needs.

N21 Calves must receive warm colostrum (first milking/gold colostrum not pooled with older colostrum) or a good quality colostrum substitute, equivalent to a minimum of 10% of body weight (e.g. 3-4L depending on size of breed), as soon as possible within the first six hours after birth and a further 2-4L between 6-12 hours after birth.

In any case, calves must also be offered 2-4L of warm first milking/ gold colostrum or good quality colostrum substitute within four hours of removal from the dam.

N22 Colostrum for newborn calves must be the highest Brix % available on farm (i.e. first milking/gold colostrum not pooled with older colostrum), preferably at a Brix of 22% or higher.

Where Brix is below 18%, good quality colostrum of an alternative source or colostrum substitute must be fed to newborn calves within the required timeframes set out under N21.

N23 If colostrum is being stored, it must be kept in a clean container with a lid and either refrigerated, frozen, or preserved to maintain its quality and prevent bacterial contamination.

N24 Calves must be fed consistently warm colostrum, colostrum substitute, or transition milk during the first four days after birth and consistently warm milk or good quality/reputable milk replacer thereafter.

After the first day, liquid feed must be fed at a rate of 15-20% of estimated average calf weight within a group (or equivalent milk solids) per day ideally ad libitum, or divided into at least three feeds, for the first month after birth, then in at least two feeds per day until weaning.

Where this requirement cannot be reached at present, an SPCA Certified-approved transition plan must be in place. During a transition, calves must be fed at least twice daily.

Where calves show signs of hunger (e.g. excessive vocalisation) immediate remedial action is required.

N25 Immediate remedial action must be taken and recorded where signs of bloat/scours are observed (see H1).

N26 Tube feeding is not permitted except where necessary for initial colostrum feeding to ensure passive transfer of immunity or when teat feeding methods have failed. Where tube feeding is undertaken it must be done by a trained and competent person with clean, well-maintained equipment designed for the purpose of feeding calves.

N27 A minimum of 12 calves must be tested for failure of passive transfer of immunity (FPT) within seven days of birth at the start of calving and a further 12 tested at the same age at peak calving. If one or more calves test positive for FPT at either time, veterinary advice must be obtained.

N28 Liquid feed must be provided in teat feeders to meet calves' behavioural need to suck, and in a manner that prevents competition.

N29 Calves must have access to appropriate fibrous feed (e.g. hay) from birth to encourage normal rumen development.

N30 All equipment used to feed calves, including storage containers and preparation equipment, must be cleaned with hot soapy water after each use.

N31 Milk from animals receiving medical treatment, especially antibiotics (i.e. waste milk), must not be fed to calves.

An SPCA Certified-approved plan to transition away from the use of waste milk must be in place where this standard cannot be complied with at present.

N32 Calves must not be weaned off milk before eight weeks of age. At the time of weaning, they must consistently eat 2kg of pasture or 1kg of meal daily and have achieved at least 2.5 times their birth weight. The only exception to this is when acting under veterinary advice, in which case the reason must be recorded.

Calf weaning records must be kept (e.g. calf weaned weights, dates started, and date weaned).

N33 Calves must be weaned by gradually decreasing milk amount over a period of at least 10-14 days using low-stress methods including keeping calves in stable groups with access to familiar solid feed.

N34 Calves must be weaned in an area where they have access to both shade and shelter.

It is strongly recommended that calves are kept with their mothers until natural weaning occurs. Future versions of this standard will likely require this as a mandatory requirement.

A colostrum management plan should be in place to ensure good colostrum quality on farm. For more information about colostrum management visit the DairyNZ website.

It is recommended that calves are provided with liquid feed at a rate of 20% of bodyweight (or equivalent milk solids) on an 'ad libitum' basis to ensure growth, health, and welfare.

Farmers should ensure they have good support when setting up and running ad libitum feeding systems so any risks to calf welfare can be addressed quickly.

Good Environment

Provide shade/shelter, suitable housing, good air quality, and comfortable resting areas.

Site plans

E1 A detailed site plan must be kept on farm, showing the layout and dimensions of:

- all buildings, yards and pasture areas (including paddock numbers);
- sanitary facilities for visitors/staff;
- isolation/quarantine areas;
- all natural and/or artificial shelter and shade provisions;
- stand-off/feed pads (if used);
- the milking shed;
- any fenced waterways, ponds, etc.;
- access roads, laneways, and raceways; and
- waste disposal areas.

Fencing

E2 All fencing, including electric fences, must be designed, constructed, and actively maintained to minimise the risk of injury to animals and to ensure that they are securely contained.

E3 The use of barbed wire fencing is prohibited.

E4 All fencing and gates must be visually checked:

a. each time cattle enter or leave a new paddock, or
b. daily, where they are used to contain calves.

Shade and shelter

E5 Cattle must always have access to shade and shelter to let them manage their own temperature and avoid the impact of extreme weather (both hot and cold).

To ensure effective shade, cattle should always be able to freely access shade areas with sufficient airflow that are a minimum of 6m^2 per cow.

E6 Cattle must be checked at least twice each day during extreme weather warnings (both hot and cold) to ensure that the shade and shelter provided is appropriate. Where signs of heat or cold stress (e.g. increased breathing rate, cows huddling together) are observed, immediate remedial action must be taken.

E7 Activities such as prolonged yarding and moving cattle long distances must be avoided during hot conditions and additional heat mitigation strategies (e.g. milking during the cooler hours of the day, sprinklers in the dairy yard, OAD milking) must be employed to reduce the risk of heat stress.

E8 Cows close to calving (around 14 days prior to expected calving date) and those with newborn calves must be provided with an environment that affords both the dam and newborn calf adequate protection from adverse climatic conditions. This includes the provision of suitable shade/shelter.

E9 Calves that are not kept with their dams must be provided with shelter and a substantial amount of suitable bedding material to keep them comfortable, warm, and dry (e.g. nesting score 3; see Appendix 3).

Bedding must be maintained in a clean/dry condition and topped up/cleaned out as necessary.

Free access to shade and shelter is important for animals to manage their temperature and overall wellbeing. It can also provide health, productivity, and comfort benefits.

For most grazing livestock in New Zealand, when the air temperature rises above 20°C, welfare and productivity begin to decline as animals use energy to stay cool.

Shade and shelter can include natural and artificial structures, including windbreaks, treed areas, shade sails, lean-to structures, and shelterbelts.

In holding areas, cooling systems, such as sprinklers and fans, can be used to maintain cow comfort when the weather is hot.

During winter, it is recommended that cattle are scored for cleanliness on a regular basis to ensure that their lying areas are comfortable and dry. If dirty animals are seen, the reasons for this need to be investigated and remedied.

Visit DairyNZ for access to useful resources concerning shade and shelter provision for cattle and pasture-based herd cleanliness.

Feed pads and stand-off areas

E10 Feed pads must not be used for more than two hours per day during supplementary feeding before milking. Where it is necessary to use a feed pad for emergencies, stand-off standards E11-E13 apply.

E11 Stand-off areas may only be used during periods of extreme weather and must not be used routinely. Cattle must not be kept on any stand-off area for more than eight hours/day and for no more than three days in a row.

SPCA Certified must be notified of any stand-off area use and the period that the cattle are kept off pasture must be recorded.

E12 Stand-off areas must be well drained, provide shade/shelter, and have a minimum space allowance of 3.5 m^2/cow.

E13 Bare concrete and stones are not permitted as standing/lying surfaces for cattle of any age.

Stand-off areas must be covered with a compressible non-slip surface (e.g. woodchip, bark, sand, or soft rubber matting if it can be cleaned as required), for cow comfort and hoof health.

Housing (with unrestricted access to pasture)

E14 Where housing facilities are used, heifers and cows must have free, unrestricted access to pasture (see E67 for emergency situations).

E15 All housing must provide a minimum space allowance of 8m^2/cow to allow cattle to easily and comfortably stand up, turn around, lie down, stretch out, groom themselves using natural postures, and to allow subordinate cattle to remove themselves from dominant cattle if they need to.

If developing new housing facilities, minimum space allowance must be 11m^2/cow.

E16 Housing must be made of materials that are easily cleaned and can be replaced when necessary. There must be no features that are likely to cause injury, distress, or increase the risk of disease.

E17 Facilities must be maintained in good working order and allow ease of cow movement.

E18 Housing must provide a dry, draught-free, and thermally comfortable environment for the animals being housed. Floors must be solid and of non-slip construction.

E19 Housing must provide appropriate ventilation so that inside air quality provides for good respiratory health and welfare of the cattle inside.

Ammonia levels must not be allowed to build up to the point where they are aversive (i.e. above 10ppm). If ammonia can be smelled at the level of the animal's head remedial action must be taken.

E20 Artificial or natural lighting of at least 200 lux at animal eye level must be provided during normal daylight hours to enable cattle to see each other and to be inspected.

Supplementary lighting (e.g. torches) must also be available to enable animal inspections at night, where these are necessary.

E21 All housed cattle must have access to a suitable lying area, which has enough dry, friable bedding for them to lie down comfortably, and is topped up as necessary. All cattle must have sufficient space to lie down and rest at the same time.

E22 Any areas of bedding that become irreparably fouled or wet must be removed and replaced immediately.

E23 Regular cleanliness scoring must be undertaken to ensure the lying areas are clean, dry, and comfortable (see Appendix 4).

E24 Feed and water must be provided in a way that does not cause unnecessary competition between animals and drinkers must not be situated over, or close to, areas of bedding.

E25 Fixed or rotating brushes must be provided to enable cows and calves to groom themselves (see also B14 and B17).

E26 Cattle must always be housed in a way that allows them to see and hear other cattle. The only exception to this is when acting on veterinary advice or when dealing with a disease/ situation that requires the animal to be completely isolated.

E27 Calves must not be housed in groups larger than 12 calves per pen.

Each calf must have appropriate space (at least 2.5 m^2/calf) so that all calves in the group can lie down comfortably, show normal behaviours, and engage in play at the same time.

Where calves do not show normal behaviours, or disease, injury, or other poor welfare indicators occur, space usage must be reviewed and if necessary, usable area per calf increased to ensure better animal welfare outcomes.

To avoid unnecessary competition, one brush should be provided for every 50 cows in a group.

Milking

E28 Cows must not be walked more than 4km daily for milking (average daily walking across the season). Water troughs must be provided along the way.

E29 Tracks, raceways, and laneways leading to and from the milking shed must be well maintained and well fenced to maintain good foot health and allow the herd to move freely and easily.

Particular attention must be paid to high traffic areas and race junctions to minimise the risk of lameness.

E30 Cows in holding yards must be able to move comfortably and safely with their heads down to see where they walking to minimise overcrowding and stress and prevent injury to animals.

E31 Holding yards must have a safe and durable surface, which provides adequate footing and is easily cleaned.

E32 Holding yards must provide appropriate shade and shelter for the animals (e.g. shade sails) and provide for mitigation strategies (e.g. fans or sprinklers) to minimise the risk of heat stress.

E33 Backing gates must never be used to physically push cows and must be fitted with a bell or buzzer so that cows know when they are moving, have a pre-start warning so cows know the gates are about to start (e.g. water pump starting or gentle tone) and must only be moved slowly.

Backing gates should not be moved for at least 15 minutes after the last animal has entered the yard.

E34 Backing and top gates that use an electric shock to encourage cow movement are prohibited.

E35 The area around the milking shed must be kept clean and free of contaminants, including effluent, that could attract pests or disease.

E36 Feeders, troughs, and feed storage bins inside the milking shed must be kept clean and be situated where they cannot cause injury to animals or people.

E37 All pharmaceuticals that are held in the milking shed must be kept in secure, lockable storage. In addition, a list of all pharmaceuticals used on the farm must be kept in the milking shed and made available for inspection during audit.

E38 All electrical equipment within the milking shed must be safety-checked by a qualified electrician at least once each year.

E39 Unexplainable cow behaviours around milking must be investigated (e.g. a stray-voltage check).

E40 Teat liners must be long enough to fully collapse beneath the teat during pulsation, regularly checked, and replaced according to the manufacturer's recommendations (after every 2,500 milkings or when they become cracked or damaged).

E41 Where more than one person is involved in the milking process, training plans must be in place so that the farm's standard operation procedures are followed to ensure consistent milking routines.

E42 There must be a written plan in place and implemented for familiarising heifers with the milking system prior to their first lactation.

Training must occur for 7-10 days in a calm and gentle manner to ensure heifers experience the milking system positively.

E43 Oxytocin must not be used to induce milk let down.

E44 Sick, lame, or treated cows must be brought into the milking shed last and be marked, recorded, and treated. They must be kept separate from the main milking herd in paddocks close to the dairy shed to enable regular monitoring to occur.

A calm, gentle, and consistent milking routine is essential for minimising stress, inducing milk let down, and maintaining good udder health. In addition, foremilk stripping can help stimulate milk let down and is a good way of detecting clinical cases of mastitis.

SPCA Certified recommends regularly teat scoring cows to detect and address any problems as soon as they occur.

Useful information about maintaining teat health and familiarising heifers to milking is available on the DairyNZ website.

Reward-based training using positive reinforcement (e.g. food rewards) should be used as part of introducing heifers to the milking system.

Preparation for transport

E45 Before loading, cattle must be assessed to ensure that they are fit for transport and able to withstand the entire journey without suffering pain or distress. The assessment must take into consideration the animal's

- health condition;
- body condition score (no less than 4);
- age;
- the likely duration of the trip; and
- the likely weather/temperature conditions.

If there is any question about whether an animal is fit for transport or not, a veterinarian must be consulted.

E46 All cattle must be free from signs of injury or disease to be eligible for transport.

Cattle that are unfit for transport must be given immediate veterinary care or else euthanised without delay.

E47 Lactating cows identified as culls must be dried off at least three weeks prior to transport.

E48 Where animals have undergone a painful husbandry procedure (e.g. castration or disbudding), they must not be selected for transport for at least three weeks after the procedure.

E49 Holding and loading facilities must be designed to facilitate ease of movement and reduce handling stress for cattle and stock people.

E50 Cattle must not be stood-off on concrete prior to transport for longer than two hours. Where longer wait periods occur this must be recorded.

E51 After being herded, cattle must be allowed enough time to rest and drink (approximately 20 minutes) before being loaded for transport.

E52 Cattle must be provided with free access to clean water and good quality hay until immediately before loading. Water must be given in a way that avoids unnecessary competition between animals.

E53 Holding yards must provide enough shade and shelter to cover all animals contained. Where signs of thermal stress (hot or cold) are evident during lairage immediate remedial action must be taken.

There must be enough space to allow all animals to be able to stand up, lie down, and remain in their original social groups.

E54 Unfamiliar animals must not be mixed before transport.

E55 Loading facilities, including ramps, must have surfaces that are non-slip and must be maintained regularly.

E56 Cattle must be allowed to load at their regular walking speed, without unnecessary force or noise.

E57 The use of electric prodders is not permitted and either the owner or person in charge of the animals must be present at all times during loading.

E58 When dealing with animals being sent for slaughter, stockpersons must request animals to be sent to the closest slaughterhouse so that animals are transported for the least amount of time and for no longer than eight hours, and that animals are processed the same day to prevent excessive lairage times. Where this does not occur, a record must be kept.

In addition, stockpersons must inform transport operators when selecting animals where transport may increase the risk of injuries (e.g. tall/large animals, bulls).

E59 Transport records must be kept on farm and must include:

- the name and address of the final destination;
- the name of the transport company used for each journey;
- the number of, and approximate age of, the cattle being transported for each journey;
- the time the cattle last had access to water and green feed;
- the time the cattle arrived at the yards on-farm and when they were loaded onto the vehicle;

- the number of animals found unfit for transport, the reasons why, and their fate; and
- the time the vehicle left the farm.

E60 A copy of contingency plans that outline how animal welfare will be protected in case of an emergency (e.g. vehicle delay, mechanical breakdown, major accident/weather event) must be requested from transport operators and must be available for viewing during audits.

Transport is a highly stressful experience for most animals, including cattle. Careful planning is therefore required before transport to minimise the risk of distress and injury.

DairyNZ has detailed information available on selecting animals for transport.

Provision of a compressible surface, such as a grazed-out paddock, to allow cattle to lie down and rest prior to transport is recommended.

The angle of the on-farm loading ramp should not exceed 20 degrees for adult cattle.

On-farm and between-farm transport

E61 Trailers used for transporting calves from the paddock to the calf shed must be clean, lined with bedding, and each calf must have enough space to stand or sit comfortably.

E62 Transport of cattle between farms (e.g. transport to run-off block) must not exceed two hours.

If complications arise outside of the farmer's control and these hours are exceeded, then SPCA Certified must be notified as soon as possible.

E63 Cows must not be transported between farms for at least seven days after calving unless it is necessary for welfare reasons, which must be recorded.

E64 Transport must be managed to avoid the risk of heat/cold stress occurring. Where transport during high-risk periods cannot be avoided, stocking densities on the vehicle must be adjusted accordingly and stationary periods during loading, transport, or before unloading must be minimised, as heat and humidity build-up during this time is a major contributor to heat stress in cattle.

Emergency preparedness

E65 An emergency preparedness (contingency) plan must be created, and all staff must be familiar with it.

The plan must clearly set out everyone's roles and responsibilities and must detail how the health and welfare of the cattle will be ensured in an emergency (e.g. drought, flood, fire, storm, and biosecurity breach). Continuation of milking and access to comfortable and dry areas to meet daily lying needs must be considered alongside general provisions for feed, water, shelter, and health.

The emergency preparedness plan must be reviewed annually and updated where major changes in management practices have occurred or where a new emergency has been encountered and resolved.

E66 Provision must be made to inspect stock as soon as possible when there is an event that may impact animal welfare, providing it is safe to do so.

E67 The temporary use of housing without pasture access for limited periods in an emergency is only acceptable when it is done in the best interests of the animal. It must be documented and SPCA Certified must be notified.

E68 Any housing environment must be designed to enable cattle to be moved or released quickly and with a minimum of stress in the event of an emergency.

Good Health

Prevent or rapidly diagnose and treat disease and injury, and foster good muscle tone, posture and cardiorespiratory function, for a healthy animal.

Animal health plan

H1 A farm specific and seasonally appropriate animal health plan must be created and maintained in conjunction with a registered *veterinarian and all other relevant personnel.

The plan must include:

- a preventative disease and parasite management plan (e.g. vaccinations and drench programmes);
- provisions for segregation (e.g. hospital pens) and care of sick and injured animals;
- a pain management plan (including painful health conditions such as lameness, mastitis, metritis, and dystocia);
- a procedure for dealing with down cows;
- early identification of cull cows (proactive culling) and end of life management plan (e.g. underlying conditions that require preparation to mitigate risk of cows going down during transport or lairage at processing);
- monitoring of mineral status;
- a management plan for all common diseases/disorders (e.g. mastitis);
- monitoring of issues associated with parturition and reproduction;
- a plan for managing scouring calves (including provision of electrolytes, pain relief, and timely veterinary intervention where indicated);

- a management plan to minimise lameness incidence (i.e. below 5 % at herd level);
- health details of incoming cattle checked and recorded (e.g. BVD status);
- biosecurity precautions; and
- weaning process (e.g. dates started, weaned, weaning weight).

In addition, body condition scores, births (including stillbirths) and all mortality must be recorded.

*The farmer must have a genuine working relationship with a veterinarian, who visits the farm and sights cattle at least twice a year.

H2 All farm records concerning animal health and welfare, as well as any associated corrective actions taken, must be kept for a minimum of four years.

H3 The animal health plan must be updated at least annually, after any major health or welfare incident (e.g. a disease outbreak), or following significant changes to the production system.

In the case of a notifiable disease being confirmed on farm this must be reported to SPCA Certified as soon as possible.

H4 Each farm must have a euthanasia plan that describes the euthanasia process in detail, including the equipment used and the staff who are permitted to conduct the procedure.

H5 A treatment/monitoring plan must be put in place immediately for any animals identified with health or welfare concerns and these animals must be marked and monitored.

The animal health plan referred to in this document may come from various sources (e.g. the farm diary) and is not intended to duplicate existing information.

The use of wearable or remote technologies for monitoring the health and behaviour of animals is encouraged by SPCA Certified. However, it is not a replacement for close monitoring of animals by experienced and competent farm staff, especially for those animals that may be undergoing or recovering from treatment.

Inspection of animals

H6 Cattle must be inspected at least daily to detect signs of lameness, injury, disease, distress, abnormal behaviour, aggression, loss of body condition, or other issues of concern.

H7 Staff conducting herd inspections must be trained and competent to perform such inspections in a careful and respectful manner, allowing them to observe cattle without the animals becoming distressed.

H8 Inspections must increase to at least every six hours where cattle are within four days of their expected calving date, unless automated monitoring technology is used to detect calving cows, in which case every 12 hours is sufficient.

H9 During the first week post-calving, cows and heifers must be inspected at least twice each day, more frequently if they are compromised. Milk-fed and newly weaned calves must also be inspected twice each day.

H10 All calving issues must be recorded and, if required, a vet must be contacted at the earliest sign of complications for births.

H11 Animal inspections must occur at least twice each day during extreme weather conditions, after painful husbandry procedures, or where animal welfare issues have been identified. Such inspections must continue until conditions have returned to normal.

H12 A tail audit must be conducted by a veterinarian or specialist service provider for the entire herd at least once each year, with the results recorded and any damaged/injured tails promptly attended to. The underlying issues must be investigated and addressed to prevent further damage occurring and subsequent tail audits must be conducted at increased frequency to ensure the underlying issues have been appropriately addressed.

Animal identification

H13 Ear marking, notching/splitting and freeze branding are not acceptable methods of permanent identification.

H14 SPCA Certified must be informed before any branded or otherwise altered animals are brought onto a farm that is SPCA Certified.

H15 Temporary identification methods (e.g. paints, dyes, and wax markers) may only be used to identify animals if they are specially formulated for use on animals.

Bull management

H16 Upon arrival at the farm, new bulls must be:

- unloaded carefully into the yards;
- held in a separate paddock to the main herd for a minimum of 30 days, with feed and water, and shade and shelter available at all times;
- observed for any disease, injury or walking defects prior to use on the farm;
- familiarised with the area and facilities prior to mating; and
- in good body condition when they arrive on the farm and prior to mating, with a recommended BCS of between 5-6.

H17 Bulls must be monitored daily to detect potential issues. If any problems are observed (e.g. lameness, abnormal behaviour during mounting, or aggression between bulls) the affected bull must be removed, treated as required, and the corrective action taken must be documented.

The selection of bulls for calving ease and polled genetics is recommended for the welfare of the cow and resulting calf.

Breeding

H18 All breeding on the farm must make use of trait selection that improves animal welfare. This should include cattle temperament, calving ease, dam factors, reduced lameness, and mastitis, avoiding excessive milk production and the use of polled genetics.

H19 All assisted calvings must be recorded along with their severity (e.g. 'Unassisted', 'Easy pull', 'Hard pull', or 'Vet assistance required').

H20 Only natural breeding and artificial insemination (AI) are permitted for breeding purposes. Artificial insemination must only be done by a certified technician or other fully trained person.

H21 Calving aids must only be used where the size or presentation of the calf requires it and must not be motorised (i.e. only manual methods can be used).

H22 Caesarean sections must not be used routinely and must only be performed by a registered veterinarian.

H23 Use of the Blockey test, or any other adverse serving capacity test for bulls that uses restrained heifers or cows, and electroejaculation of bulls are prohibited.

Pharmaceutical use

H24 Staff involved in the administration of pharmaceuticals must be trained and competent to do so and only do so under veterinary guidance.

H25 Induction of parturition may only be used in exceptional circumstances where the health/welfare of the cow or calf is at risk of serious compromise. In such cases, the procedure must be performed by a registered veterinarian and the following details documented:

- date;
- time;
- attending veterinarian;
- reason for treatment;
- number of animals treated; and
- the outcome of treatment.

H26 An antimicrobial stewardship plan for the farm must be developed in conjunction with a registered veterinarian.

H27 Antibiotics must only be used where they have been prescribed by a veterinarian for the treatment of a specific diagnosed condition, disease, or injury. Prophylactic use of antibiotics is not permitted by SPCA Certified.

H28 Pharmaceuticals must only be administered as per the manufacturer's guidelines on the label, be in-date, and be licensed for use in New Zealand unless otherwise authorised by a registered veterinarian.

Assessment of live weight is required for ensuring accurate dosages.

All pharmaceutical treatments must be safely discarded after the expiration date.

H29 Up-to-date records must be kept of all treatments administered to cattle, including:

- pharmaceutical name, administration method and dose rate;
- reason for administration and the result of treatment;
- date(s) administered;
- withholding period; and
- animal identification.

The animal health and antimicrobial stewardship plan should include protocols addressing the usage, storage, and monitoring of antibiotic treatments and a strategy for the reduction of their use. Protocols should be in line with the recommendations of the New Zealand Veterinary Association policy on judicious use of antimicrobials.

As a guiding principle, SPCA Certified recommends the use of pain relief when dealing with painful health conditions including, but not limited to, dystocia, lameness, mastitis, metritis, and calf scours.

Painful husbandry procedures

H30 Regardless of their age, animals must be given pre- and post-operative pain relief (e.g. local anaesthetic and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)) to minimise pain and distress during painful husbandry procedures.

H31 Staff undertaking painful husbandry procedures must only do so in accordance with the relevant regulations, must be trained and competent in performing the procedure, and must be trained to recognise the early signs of distress, injury, or ill-health in the animal(s) being handled.

Training records must be kept and must be available for inspection.

H32 Painful husbandry procedures must not be performed on animals less than 24 hours old, and the procedures must only be conducted where animals can be expected to make a full recovery without experiencing unnecessary pain or distress.

H33 Animals must be restrained in a manner that does not cause additional, unnecessary pain, fear, or distress, and appropriately sedated (if required) so that they do not injure themselves or other cattle while painful husbandry procedures are being performed.

H34 All equipment used for painful husbandry procedures must be clean, well-maintained, in full working order, and appropriate for the procedure being undertaken.

H35 Records must be kept of all painful procedures carried out. Records must include:

- the type of procedure performed;
- the date performed;

- the animal ID;
- the type(s) of pain relief provided;
- the initials of the person performing the procedure; and
- the reason why the procedure was medically necessary.

Where multiple painful husbandry procedures are planned (e.g. castration and disbudding) they should be undertaken at the same time to reduce the overall impact on the animals.

Tail docking and claw amputation

H36 Tail docking or claw amputation are not permitted unless it is deemed medically necessary by a registered veterinarian, in which case a record must be kept and SPCA Certified must be notified.

H37 Tail docking or claw amputation may only be performed by a veterinarian or a veterinary student under direct veterinary supervision using appropriate pre- and post-operative pain relief (e.g. local anaesthetic and NSAIDs).

Disbudding

H38 Disbudding must be performed after calves are a week old, and preferably before six weeks, but must be completed before calves are eight weeks of age, using thermal cautery, sedation, and appropriate pre- and post-operative pain relief (e.g. local anaesthetic and NSAIDs).

Where calves are disbudded between six and eight weeks of age, an SPCA Certified-approved contingency plan must be in place to transition toward disbudding prior to six weeks of age.

H39 Disbudded calves must be inspected twice daily, for a minimum of two weeks after the procedure, and any infected wounds must be treated and recorded.

H40 Disbudding using caustic chemicals, scooping, or amputation is prohibited. Where horn buds are too large for the disbudding iron, scooping plus cautery may be indicated. In these circumstances, appropriate pre- and post-analgesics must be used, the incidence recorded, and a plan must be put in place to decrease the age at disbudding to prevent the necessity for scooping going forward.

H41 Horn tipping may only be performed in exceptional circumstances where the horn tip is likely to cause injury or damage to the animal itself. Horn tipping must only be conducted by a registered veterinarian or a veterinary student under direct veterinary supervision.

H42 Dehorning may only be performed in exceptional circumstances where the horn is likely to cause injury or damage to the animal itself. Dehorning must only be conducted by a

registered veterinarian or a veterinary student under direct veterinary supervision and must be done using appropriate pre- and post-operative pain relief (e.g. local anaesthetic and NSAIDs).

Prior to any dehorning SPCA Certified must be notified.

SPCA strongly encourages the use of polled breeds of cattle, to reduce the need for subsequent disbudding.

Castration

H43 Where castration is performed, it must be done using rubber rings designed for the purpose within the first month of life, ensuring the calf is healthy and gaining weight.

H44 Pre-and post-pain relief for castration (e.g. local anaesthetic and NSAIDs) must be used regardless of calf age.

Mastitis

H45 Mastitis is painful and any animal showing signs of mastitis (e.g. a red, hot, or uneven udder or milk that is watery or contains flakes, clots, or pus) must be separated from the herd, marked, and immediately treated, including the provision of NSAIDs.

Individual cows and their treatment/management plan must be recorded, including the date(s) drugs were administered, the type of therapy used, and the withholding period.

H46 At every milking, udders and teats must be inspected for signs of dirt and damage and cleaned/treated as necessary to minimise the risk of infection and suffering. Any remedial action taken to address udder/teat problems must be recorded.

If teat damage is seen on multiple animals, the milking equipment must be checked to determine that it is working effectively. Additionally, teat spraying techniques must also be reviewed.

H47 All cows must be teat sprayed or dipped using an appropriate disinfectant (e.g. iodine solution) immediately after milking to maintain hygiene and reduce the risk of bacterial infection.

H48 To avoid the risk of spreading infection, staff involved in the milking process must follow good hygiene practices.

H49 Daily Bulk Milk Somatic Cell Counts (BMSCC) must be maintained below 400,000 cells/mL, with the seasonal herd average not exceeding 150,000 cells/mL.

If these levels are exceeded, immediate action must be taken to identify and treat the affected animals. This may involve consultation with a registered veterinarian or other qualified service provider to identify the type of infection and the best treatment method.

H50 Herd tests must be done at least twice each year and the results recorded.

H51 A drying-off plan must be in place and detail at least:

- how milk yields will be reduced prior to drying-off;
- how discomfort, pain, and hunger will be minimised;
- what steps will be taken to reduce the risk of mastitis; and
- how udder health will be monitored (observations should continue for at least three weeks after drying off).

Any sudden and unexpected increase in the BMSCC must be investigated as a priority.

H52 Dry-off dates must be calculated to allow cows to be dry for at least 8 weeks before their calculated calving date.

H53 Drying-off treatment decisions must be made on a cow-by-cow basis, considering clinical records, herd testing results, and any relevant bacteriology results.

H54 All staff involved in the drying-off process must be trained and competent in the correct application of teat sealant. Training records must be available for inspection.

The 'Rapid Mastitis Test' (RMT) is acceptable for determining the presence/absence of infection but is not an acceptable substitute for regular somatic cell counting. In addition, SPCA Certified strongly recommends that on-farm/veterinary diagnostic testing (such as milk culturing) is done for all mastitis cases to encourage appropriate treatment and reduce unnecessary/inappropriate antibiotic use.

Targeted 'Dry Cow Therapy', involving antibiotic use and teal sealant is recommended for clinically infected animals or those with damaged teat ends, while teat sealant only can be used for animals with no/low levels of mastitis. In all cases, it is vital that the teat end is kept clean during treatment to avoid introducing environmental bacteria into the teat canal, which can lead to severe infection.

For information on good hygiene practices during the milking process visit DairyNZ.

Lameness

H55 In addition to daily observations by trained staff, whole herd lameness scoring must be done four times a year by trained staff or a qualified service provider.

H56 Every lame animal must be separated from the herd where necessary, marked, and treated, including the provision of NSAIDs. Animals with a lameness score of 2 or 3 must be assessed and treated within 24 hours of becoming aware of the issue.

Individual animals and their treatment/management plan must be recorded, including the date(s) drugs were administered, the type of therapy used, and the withholding period.

H57 The cause of lameness must be investigated and remedial action taken to prevent further issues.

H58 A plan must be in place to manage lameness at the herd level below 5 % (see H1). Where lameness incidence reaches ≥5 % SPCA Certified must be informed.

> ***More information on hoof health, preventing lameness, and lameness scoring can be obtained from DairyNZ.***

Recumbent animals (down cows)

H59 Recumbent animals must be frequently inspected, kept in sternal recumbency (upright), and gently shifted from side to side as often as possible, ideally every three hours, to prevent damage to their legs.

H60 Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) must be provided to increase chances of recovery and improve animal welfare.

H61 Where it is necessary to move a recumbent animal for safety reasons or to provide appropriate care, this must be performed using a sled or by gently rolling the animal into a deeply bedded/strawed bucket of a front-end loader. Regardless of the method used, the animal must be adequately restrained to prevent further injury or distress.

H62 Recumbent animals must be kept in a covered/well-sheltered area containing clean, dry, soft bedding with a non-slip floor. Feed and water must be made freely available to the affected animal. If the animal cannot be moved safely, a suitable sheltered area may be built up around the animal (e.g. by using hay bales).

H63 Lifting equipment must

- only be used under direct supervision to assist the cow into a standing position;
- not be used to suspend (i.e. cow unable to support her own weight) or transport a cow incapable of standing upright on her own;
- be immediately released if the cow cannot support her own weight;
- only be used by a staff member trained in their use, preferably after veterinary diagnosis and on veterinary recommendation;
- not cause unnecessary pain and distress to the animal;
- not be used more than twice a day, and if a cow has failed to respond to their initial use, she must be allowed a period of rest before they are retried.

All use of lifting equipment, including the type used, the duration of use, number of lifting attempts, and outcome, must be recorded.

H64 If hip clamps are to be used they must be padded and used in conjunction with a breast strap.

H65 Recumbent animals that do not respond to treatment after 24 hours must either receive veterinary attention or be euthanised.

SPCA Certified strongly recommends early veterinary attention within 12 hours for non-responding recumbent cows.

Information on recumbent cow management is available from DairyNZ.

The use of an aqua-therapy floatation tank to aid in the accurate diagnosis and treatment of recumbent cows is highly recommended. Instructions on how to make a floatation tank can be obtained here: Cow Bath

Euthanasia and Mortality

H66 Euthanasia must be performed where:

- there is likely to be an unacceptable delay in treating an animal's source of suffering;
- the animal is failing to respond to treatment;
- the source of suffering is unknown, untreatable, or severe; or
- where transporting the animal for any reason would aggravate the condition or cause unnecessary pain or distress.

H67 There must be a robust process in place around the decision to kill animals, this includes seeking veterinary advice on whether treatment is possible or if euthanasia is required.

If the veterinarian cannot provide advice within two hours of the question arising, then the animal must be euthanised to avoid unnecessary suffering.

H68 Euthanasia must only be performed by trained and competent staff or a registered veterinarian. Responsible staff must be named in the animal health plan.

H69 There must always be at least one person on the farm who is trained and competent in euthanasia of cattle of all ages.

Where this is not possible, there must be a nominated emergency contact person/service who is available to euthanise the animal within two hours of being contacted.

H70 All equipment used for euthanasia must be maintained in correct working order and operated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Equipment (where appropriate), as well as relevant servicing reports, must be made available for inspection during an audit.

H71 All cattle must be handled and restrained (where required) in a manner that does not cause unnecessary pain, fear, or distress.

Where there is no risk to human safety, animals must be euthanised where they are found and must not be dragged, pulled, lifted, or otherwise moved while still alive.

H72 Animals must be immediately rendered insensible (stunned) using either a captive bolt or shot to the head, which must be followed within fifteen seconds by a secondary procedure (e.g. pithing, bleeding out, secondary shot) to ensure death occurs before recovery.

The choice of euthanasia method will vary depending on factors such as animal age and sex (e.g. shotguns are not suitable for use on adult animals).

If an animal shows any sign of regaining consciousness, it must be immediately re-stunned, and the effectiveness of the re-stun confirmed.

H73 Blunt force trauma is not permitted.

H74 Staff euthanising animals must remain with the animal until death is confirmed. The signs of death in dairy cattle include:

- a complete lack of the corneal reflex;
- a complete lack of breathing for five minutes;
- a complete lack of heartbeat for five minutes;
- a relaxed jaw, with a floppy tongue;
- dilated pupils;
- no response when the nose is firmly pinched;
- a change in the colour of the mucous membranes, from pink to grey.

H75 For euthanasia, the details recorded must include:

- the animal's identification (if available);
- the reason for and method of euthanasia;
- the time and date when the animal was discovered and when the animal was killed;
- the veterinarian's advice regarding euthanasia (if this was needed);
- the staff involved and their role in the process; and
- the method used to restrain the animal (if required).

Where practical, steps must be taken to prevent the issue from occurring again.

H76 All cases of death must be investigated; the details recorded must include:

- the animal's identification (if available);
- the time and date when the animal was discovered; and
- the cause of death (where known).

Nothing outlined in this section is intended to discourage the prompt diagnosis and treatment of any sick or injured cattle.

It is recommended that all staff are familiar with the contents of the Humane Slaughter Information Pack available from DairyNZ.

Biosecurity

H77 Where animals are brought into the herd, whether purchased or temporarily kept on the farm, they must be kept in a separate area to the main herd for a minimum of 10 days to allow for health checking, drenching, and any vaccinations to occur.

H78 A detailed biosecurity plan must be created, followed and available to view on the farm. Staff must be familiar with and able to access this information. As a minimum, the plan must address the following requirements:

- identification of all farm visitors (e.g. through a sign in book, Onside);
- provision of appropriate personal protective equipment for staff and visitors;
- sanitary facilities, including hand washing facilities, a foot bath with disinfectant, and a dedicated scrubbing brush for boot cleaning;
- provision of a designated area for the entry of incoming stock, visitors, trucks and equipment, which is separate from the area where cattle are kept;
- pest control procedures in place and location of relevant equipment; and
- cleaning, sanitation, waste, and carcass removal procedures.

H79 Pest control programmes must employ humane control methods, including physical exclusion and limiting access to food and nesting sites by maintaining sheds and the area around sheds in a clean and tidy condition.

Trapping and the use of poisons should be a last resort. Where necessary, traps that have passed standardised welfare performance testing must be used in preference to other traps and poisons.

Where lethal control is used, the extent of the pest problem must be assessed at least annually to determine if lethal control is still warranted and if so, that it meets the requirements of the relevant regulatory authority.

To minimise the risk of disease, it is recommended that farms operate as a closed herd, with no incoming animals and no shared pastures or facilities. If this is not possible, then strict quarantine and record keeping is essential.

A plan to discourage non-targeted animals from engaging with traps and poisons, if used, should be in place.

A list of traps that have passed standardised welfare performance testing is available on Bionet.NZ (under Welfare Performance of Traps).

Appropriate Behavioural Interactions

Provide sufficient space, proper facilities, congenial company, and appropriately varied conditions.

Low stress handling of cattle

B1 All cattle operations must have access to equipment and/or facilities for the safe handling, restraint, treatment, segregation, loading and unloading of cattle. This includes facilities (e.g. external races) for the safe conduct of artificial insemination, veterinary interventions/ procedures, and painful husbandry procedures, which are separate from the milking platform/bail area.

B2 Facilities must be constructed, operated, and maintained in a way that minimises the risk of illness, injury, or distress to both cattle and staff. This includes ensuring that noise from equipment or other workers is kept to a minimum during handling and movement.

B3 Low-stress handling and husbandry techniques must be used, ensuring cattle are handled, restrained, and moved in a calm and gentle manner, taking cattle behaviour into consideration.

B4 Newborn calves being removed from their dams must be handled gently, as this is their first point of human contact.

B5 Cattle must be moved at the pace of the slowest animal and must allow them to adopt a 'head down' posture so that they can see where their feet are placed.

B6 The use of electric prodders or goads, twisting tails, and using physical contact with vehicles to move cattle is prohibited.

B7 Cattle must never be handled roughly or be dragged/pulled by any part of their body.

B8 Dogs must not be used to manage dairy cattle.

> ***To mitigate stress, SPCA Certified recommends the use of maternal bovine appeasing substance (appeasing pheromone) prior to stressful events (e.g. familiarising heifers with the milking shed, transport, weaning).***

Social environment

B9 Sourcing or selling cattle, including calves, through saleyards is prohibited.

B10 With the exception of calves kept with their mothers, cattle must be kept in stable groups with others of a similar size/age/stage of production.

B11 Unnecessary mixing of cattle must be avoided. Where movement between groups is unavoidable, pairs or small groups of animals must be moved, rather than individual animals.

> ***SPCA Certified recognises that it is sometimes necessary to sell animals to manage the farm effectively, however, as a guiding principle, SPCA Certified would prefer to see all cattle only leaving the farm at the end of their productive lives.***

Physical environment

B12 Cattle must have access to comfortable and dry areas so they can lie and rest comfortably for as long as they choose to.

If cattle are temporarily kept on crops, please refer to N4.

B13 Calves must be provided with enough space to allow them to exhibit play behaviour (e.g. jumping, bucking).

Behavioural enrichment

B14 All pastures must contain objects on which cattle can scratch or groom themselves (e.g. trees, brushes, posts, or scratching frames). See standard E25 for enrichment requirements in housing.

B15 Prior to and during weaning, calves that are not kept with their mothers must be provided with access to a dry teat to provide an outlet for any non-nutritive sucking that may occur.

B16 Calves that do not have access to a paddock must be given palatable forage in racks (e.g. chopped hay) in addition to their bedding material.

B17 Calves must be provided with effective enrichment opportunities to encourage play behaviour (e.g. stationary brushes, hay bales, hay nets, balls, or food treats).

Managers, stockpersons, and other staff

B18 Cattle's needs must be met by all stockpersons in a compassionate and respectful manner.

B19 Manager(s) must ensure that all staff directly involved with dairy cattle have access to, are familiar with, and adhere to the relevant legislation, Codes of Welfare, and the most recent version of the SPCA Certified standards for dairy cattle.

B20 Formal animal welfare, health, and husbandry training (e.g. technical training programmes and workshops) must be offered for up-skilling staff. Staff must also be trained in low-stress animal handling procedures.

Training records must be available to view on request.

B21 Staff who are undergoing training must work in conjunction with fully trained, competent, and experienced stockperson(s) until they are fully competent themselves. Staff or external workers must not carry out tasks that they have not been trained in or are not competent in performing.

B22 The farm must have a written animal welfare complaints policy that

- states the actions to be taken should an employee be found to have been negligent in their role and responsibilities in relation to animal welfare;
- encourages employees to report any concerns they have regarding actions or situations that negatively impact cattle health and welfare; and
- outlines that an immediate investigation will be conducted where concerns are raised to ensure problems are rectified without delay.

The initial and continued training of staff working with cattle is important in promoting a high standard of animal welfare, as is the ability to demonstrate and practice positive and compassionate animal handling.

Training opportunities are available through DairyNZ and other sources.

<END OF STANDARDS>

Appendices

Appendix 1: Records required

Records	Standard(s)	Description
Seasonal		
Body Condition Score	N10 & N11	Score at least four times each year. Note areas of concern and remedial action taken.
Lameness Scoring	H55	Score at least four times each year. Note areas of concern and remedial action taken.
Daily		
Inspections	H6	Record all abnormalities and action taken during daily herd inspections.
Annual		
Animal health plan	H1 & H2	Record: • a preventative disease and parasite management plan (e.g. vaccinations and drench programmes); • provisions for segregation and care of sick and injured animals; • a pain management plan; • a procedure for dealing with down cows; • early identification of cull cows and end of life management; • monitoring of mineral status; • management plan for scouring calves; • management plan to minimise lameness incidence; • biosecurity precautions; • management of all common diseases/disorders; and • monitoring of issues associated with parturition, reproduction, and weaning.
Animal health plan	H3	Review annually and update as necessary
Biosecurity plan	H78	Review annually and update as necessary.
Breeding plan	H19	Record number of assisted calvings and review programme if needed.
Electrical safety test	E38	Certificate of compliance for milking shed equipment.

Emergency preparedness plan	**E65**	Review annually and update as necessary.
Feed supply plan	**N3**	Plan in place and available for inspection.
Pest control programme	**H79**	Review at least annually where lethal control options are used, otherwise keep for inspection if requested.
Tail Audit	**H12**	Conduct whole herd tail audit once a year. Note areas of concern and remedial action taken.
Teat liner checks and replacements	**E40**	Record inspection and replacement dates.
Trace element supplementation programme	**N9**	Review annually and update as necessary.
Water clarity	**N17**	Clarity test using water clarity card for each watering point. Retain results and relevant actions for inspection.
Every three years		
Water quality	**N18**	Salinity, bacteria, and mineral content. Retain lab reports for inspection.
Other		
Animal welfare complaints policy	**B22**	Policy in place.
Bull management	**H17**	Record corrective action taken for any bull with problems during mating or because of bullying.
Calving issues (every occurrence)	**H10 & H19**	Record all calving issues that occur.
Calf weaning	**N32**	Calf weaning records including • weaning weights; • dates weaning started; • dates weaned.
Drying-off plan	**H51**	Plan in place and available for inspection.
Euthanasia & mortality (every occurrence)	**H75 & H76**	Record: • animal ID; • reason and method; • time and date; • time of death; • vet advice (if given); • staff involved; and • any restraint used. For mortality, record cause of death if known.

Euthanasia plan	**H4**	Plan in place and available for inspection.
Equipment servicing reports	**H70**	Report available for inspection where service undertaken.
Feed declaration	**N7**	Statement of compliance regarding absence of mammalian, avian and fish by-products/proteins.
Heifer familiarisation plan	**E42**	Plan in place and available for inspection.
Stand-off area use (every occurrence)	**E11**	Record: • date; • duration; • number of animals; • reason; and • date stand-off ended.
Housing of cattle without pasture access (every occurrence)	**E67**	Record: • date; • duration; • number of animals; • reason; and • date housing ended.
Inductions (every occurrence)	**H25**	Record: • date; • time; • vet attending; • reason; • number of animals induced; and • the outcome of treatment.
Mastitis records	**H50**	Herd test results at least twice each year. Provide results of RMT/culture tests, where available.
Treatment records	**H45 & H56**	Retain records for mastitis and lameness treatment and management.
Off-label drug use (every occurrence)	**H27**	Retain veterinary declaration for each off-label use.
Pharmaceutical use (every occurrence)	**H29**	Record: • drug name; • administration method; • dose; • reason for treatment; • date(s) of treatment; • result of treatment; • withholding period; and • animal ID.

Site plan	**E1**	Must be available for inspection.
Staff training (every occurrence)	**B20, B21, H31 & H54**	Record: • name of staff member; • date and type of training; and • any qualification received. • Retain training records for inspection.
Painful procedures (every occurrence)	**H35**	Record: • name of procedure; • date; • animal ID; • name (and signature) of operator; and • the reason for performing the procedure.
Transport records (every occurrence)	**E59**	Record: • name and address of destination/ slaughterhouse; • name of transport company; • number and age of cattle; • time when feed/water was withdrawn; • time of yarding and loading; • number of animals unfit for transport (and reason why); • time of departure; and • arrival time where possible.
Transport contingency plan	**E60**	Requested from transport operator and copy must be available for inspection.

Appendix 2: Water Clarity test

Where troughs are used, the water clarity card must be easily read whilst submerged 15-25cm below the water surface in three areas. In large troughs select three separate/distinct areas to check. If all three areas are readable, it is acceptable.

Small amounts of feed, algae along the bottom or sides are acceptable. Algae floating on the surface and fecal contamination need to be rectified.

Water Trough Score Card

Hold 15-25 cm below the water surface

If you can easily read all these directions

The trough cleanliness is acceptable

Adapted from the PAACO Dairy Welfare Auditor Training – PAACO Example Audit 2023

Appendix 3: Calf Assessment – Nesting score

Bedding should provide adequate thermal insulation (no bare concrete). The table below helps to evaluate the ability of the calf to nestle into bedding when lying.

Score	Description
1	Most of calves appear to lie on top of bedding with legs exposed.
2	Nestled slightly into bedding, part of legs visible above bedding.
3	Nestled deeply, legs not visible.

Adapted from Lago et al., 2006[3].

[3] Lago, A., McGuirk, S.M., Bennett, T.B., Cook, N.B., and Nordlund, K.V. 2006. J. Dairy Sci. 89:4014-4025

Appendix 4: Cleanliness Scoring

Please visit DairyNZ for more information on cleanliness scoring for housed and pastured cattle and a Cow Cleanliness Score Card.