




# Dairy Cow Welfare Strategy

## Evidence table for industry progress to date (November 2012)

Key:	
	On target
	Work in progress
	Need to start activity

Priority	Action	Target	Evidence
Priority 1: Better on-farm recording and use of aggregate data	Increase in the number of farmers recording production, health and welfare 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	<p>From April 2010 Red Tractor Assurance Dairy Scheme (RTA Dairy) has required the recording and collation of these criteria by all assured dairy farms, which account for around 95% of the total in GB.</p> <p>The updated DairyCo document <b>“Managing herd replacements - rate and costs”</b> encourages producers to record the reasons for culling and thus aid with gaining an understanding of 'issues' on farm. <b>MilkBench+</b> also asks producers to record the reasons for culling.</p> <p>A number of the retail aligned contracts have or place welfare recording requirements on their suppliers.</p> <p>See also DairyCo Mastitis Control Plan (priority 2) and DairyCo Healthy Feet Programme (priority 3) progress.</p>
	Development of a national system to collate dairy cow production, health and welfare trends and measures	Data set analysed in 2011	<p>A national system to collate data (by Egenes) on dairy cow production, health &amp; welfare trends and measure is still in development phase. The milk recording organisations participating in national genetic evaluations (CIS, NMR and UDF) have given permission for interrogation of their combined data. A database has been procured and a restricted website established which can be interrogated for some data, but work is ongoing on this extremely complex and data intensive approach.</p> <p>DairyCo, as part of their new research partnerships (2011) noted the lack of a centralized national database. It was realized that data currently available are fragmented, collected and summarized at different levels of aggregation, suffer from some geographical/industry biases, and are subject to different restrictions as a result of data ownership issues. Over the last year work has involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a series of discussions with key people involved in management or use of existing databases in GB took place. These discussions helped to clarify fluxes of data and the scope of each database.</li> <li>• researching and reviewing the situation in other EU countries in terms of understanding how data relevant for their dairy industries are being routinely collected, merged and analysed as well as aspects of data ownership.</li> <li>• a workshop with key industry players was held to identify and rank key health conditions for which having accurate and up to date prevalence/incidence estimates is important for the GB dairy industry. Nottingham University and the Royal Veterinary College as project partners are now investigating if these measures are contained within existing databases within GB.</li> </ul> <p>The next stages include carrying out fieldwork to collect data that will complement what is already available in other industry databases. This data should be available for analysis in approximately 18 months.</p>
Priority 2: Mastitis: Improvement in recognition, treatment, prevention & control	Expansion of the DairyCo Mastitis Control Plan or similar	750 farm plans by 2012	<p><b>DairyCo Mastitis Control plan</b> exceeded target with 970 farms on the plan by 2012.</p> <p>The final report of phase one of this project showed that where actions had been focused on the area identified as the 'diagnosis' then reductions of up to 20% (10 - 15% average) in mastitis incidence can be gained.</p> <p>The plan has now entered a new phase with an industry steering group engaged to ensure that the plan addresses the needs of the producer and takes account of latest findings in the field of mastitis and milk quality.</p>

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Priority 3: Lameness: Improvement in recognition, treatment, prevention & control	Develop and launch DairyCo Mobility programme	2011 launch	<p><b>DairyCo mobility score</b> developed with industry and is now viewed as industry standard.</p> <p><b>DairyCo Healthy Feet Programme</b> launched with free resources available to encourage reduction in lameness in dairy cattle across GB. So far over 140 farms have been registered on the programme covering more than 37000 cows.</p> <p>Mentors - vets and current category 1 foot trimmers work with producers, farm staff and those involved with the foot care of the herd to help identify the main causes of lameness within the herd. As it is a team approach to tackling the issues, the communication of findings and actions across all involved with the herd is key.</p>
	Increase in the number of qualified foot trimmers	200 foot trimmers on NACFT website	<p>Total registered foot trimmers has increased from 79 (2011) to 123 (2012). Category 1 foot trimmers increased from 23 (2011) to 56 (2012).</p> <p>The NACFT voted at the 2012 AGM to amend the categorization of trimmers. Now the self-regulating body will issue licenses to trim to those who have fulfilled set criteria and are members of the association. Those who do not fulfil this will be 'unlicensed'.</p> <p>NPTC levels of training for both stockman and professionals have been updated and the <b>knowledge/assessment criteria</b> is now published on line.</p>
Priority 4: Understanding infertility	Lead an advisory campaign on understanding fertility problems	Campaign / programme to be scoped and developed by 2012	<p><b>DairyCo's pd+</b> fertility improvement programme is being updated to be released late 2012.</p> <p>BCVA is engaged with issue of fertility. CPD for vets in practice has been commissioned and delivered in parts of country and a new programme for recent graduates is also being delivered.</p> <p>DairyCo breeding+ research indicates a halt in decline of female fertility, indeed the trend is now starting to increase. Contributing to this successful turnaround is implementation of new technology for better bull selection and breeding on farm together with use of the National Fertility index.</p> <p>No advisory campaign/programme scoped to date.</p>
Priority 5: Cow nutrition	Increased use of cow body condition scoring	10% of British dairy farmers regularly body condition scoring their herds	<p>DairyCo have produced <b>Body Condition Scoring (BCS)</b> guidelines and a laminated picture guide - in similar format to the mobility score information. These are used both within group meetings and as a resource for attendees at the Planning for Profit workshops where BCS is discussed in relation to nutrition and fertility.</p> <p>RTA Dairy assesses presence of dedicated ration plans and their effectiveness in maintaining cows in a body condition appropriate to their production status.</p>
	Increased farmer guidance on feeding the modern dairy cow	10% of dairy farmers attending DairyCo Feeding + events by 2012 (or similar)	<p>DairyCo addressed approximately 1,200 farmers on some aspect of <b>feeding+</b> through either discussion groups or open meetings by the end of 2011. 3000 copies of DairyCo feeding+ manual distributed by mid 2011. An update of the feeding+ programme in 2012 has seen a further 400 copies sent out.</p> <p>DairyCo are also interpreting DEFRA funded research, completed by ADAS, in relation to increasing Feed Conversion Efficiency (FCE) on farm. This work also links into the DairyCo Research Partnerships work on improving rationing of dairy cattle, the outputs from this will see the tweaking of rationing programs and in turn a truer picture of FCE on farm.</p> <p>22% of the DairyCo Research &amp; Development budget is currently being spent on nutrition related projects.</p>

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Priority 6: Addressing welfare through Farm Assurance	Ensuring conformance with RTA Dairy standards are maintained at all times	Reduction in number of farmers classified as high risk by RTA Dairy	Initially these additional measures are being focussed on the 5% of farms with the highest levels of non-conformance at their routine assessments. Producers are assessed on an 18 month cycle hence only 30% have been assessed since the introduction of the new measures in April 2012.
	Future standards to incorporate welfare outcome measures	Incorporation of welfare outcomes measures in future review	<p>The new measures have been developed through the ASSURWEL project funded by Tubney Trust. Core partners in the project are the RSPCA (implementing measures from September 2012), Soil Association and the University of Bristol. The Red Tractor Dairy Scheme are also heavily involved with the project and developing these measures ready for implementation to their scheme in 2013. The measures look at key aspects of dairy cow welfare including mobility, body condition, lying comfort and the response of the animals to the stockperson.</p> <p>DairyCo work (which looks at the practical application of welfare indicators) will be considered as part of the integrated review that the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme undertakes at regular intervals. An example of this is the investment in a PhD programme by DairyCo at Exeter University investigating the importance of a cow's social position within a herd relates to herd health, productivity and welfare. This PhD is due to complete in December 2014.</p>
Priority 7: Improving welfare through breeding programmes	Promoting breeding as a tool for improved welfare	All farmers aware of Breeding+	<p>Uptake of the genetic indices produced continue to grow and monitoring of the average genetic merit of sires used on farm showed an increased trend and exceeded the target. Profitable Lifetime Index (PLI) increased by 20 points against a target of 15.</p> <p>In 2011/12 genomic indexes (DNA analysis, like screening for different diseases in humans, that provides a more accurate assessment of a young animal's genetic merit than has previously been available – ensuring that we produce animals with the most robust qualities more quickly) for UK bulls have been launched. DairyCo has informed farmers of this progress through the media, and via a direct mail of information to all dairy farmers. The headline document for farmers is '<a href="#">Your guide to genomic evaluations</a>'</p> <p>DairyCo has actually increased its investment in the past year in genetics on the understanding of the important role that they play in increasing the welfare of the dairy cow. Approximately 15% of DairyCo's Research and Development budget is currently being spent on genetics.</p> <p>Breeding+, the resource for producers, has been amended to take account of the changing world of genetics and sire selection. The more concise document <a href="#">Breeding Briefs</a> has been used as a resource at numerous industry meetings, meaning that over 1900 have been handed out this year alone. This in turn raises the awareness of the tools of Breeding+.</p> <p>A series of DEFRA funded meetings around the country, organised by ADAS, with breeding specialists speaking from the Dairy Group and DairyCo were attended by over 250 farmers. The events looked at cow longevity and the role of breeding.</p> <p>DairyCo has run approximately one meeting per month on profitable lifetime index (PLI) which incorporates health and welfare traits, breeding impact and selection of bull type. There are more planned for the autumn 2012.</p>

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<p>Priority 8: Informing and educating the consumer</p>	<p>Promotion of consumer facing website on British dairy farming</p>	<p>Website promoted by all stakeholders</p>	<p>DairyCo has continued its investment in a proactive programme of consumer-facing activity to inform consumers about dairy farming part of which aims to drive traffic to its <a href="#">This is Dairy Farming</a> website.</p> <p>DairyCo has worked closely with the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) to provide a suite of educational resources (also available in Welsh) available at <a href="http://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk">www.foodafactoflife.org.uk</a> launched February 2011. There have been over 90,000 downloads of dairy specific resources.</p> <p>Research conducted by DairyCo and completed in April 2012 has identified that following use of the resources there has been a 20% positive attitudinal shift of school children towards dairy farming. DairyCo has also developed a series of initial teacher training workshops with Farming and Countryside Education (FACE) to ensure that newly qualified teachers are delivering the credible information about dairy farming to children.</p> <p>In 2012 the NFU launched a new campaign for the general public '<a href="#">Farming delivers for Britain</a>' which highlights the invaluable contribution that farming makes to the economy and how farmers take their roles seriously to ensure high standards of animal welfare.</p> <p>AHDB (Agriculture &amp; Horticulture Development Board) in February 2012 launched the AHDB education strategy. The Strategy's key goal is to extract greater value from the long term educational activities currently being implemented by the sector divisions and to better align these with other education programmes in the industry.</p>
	<p>Consumer-facing dairy welfare literature and point of sale information</p>	<p>Improvement in consumer knowledge of dairy farming</p>	<p>DairyCo works with farmers and industry partners to proactively promote information and stories through media and websites about dairy farming to British consumers to improve their knowledge of dairy farming. This is done through an ongoing campaign of proactive PR stories.</p> <p>DairyCo provides consumer facing literature highlighting the industry agreed key dairy farming messages to proactive dairy farmers who open their farm gates and exhibit at agricultural shows.</p> <p>Consumer awareness of the Red Tractor logo on assured food continues to grow with the logo now featuring on products with an annual retail sale value of £12 billion. Awareness &amp; understanding of the logo has increased significantly over the last 12 months with the latest YouGov survey showing a jump from 55% to 60% and 1 in 6 primary shoppers backing the logo. Importantly two thirds of shoppers (64%) are now positively influenced and support the Red Tractor logo when food shopping, a rise of 9% on 2011.</p> <p>The NFU continues to issue its consumer friendly dairy welfare leaflet which is being used by farmers at Open Farm Sunday events, school visits, farm shops and agricultural shows. The NFU has used several hundred copies of the 'British Dairy Farming &amp; Cow Welfare' leaflet in 2011/12 and a number of these were used on farms participating in this year's LEAF Open Farm Sunday Event. Once again the leaflets have also been used to promote dairy farming and cow welfare through the NFU 'Let's Talk Farming Roadshow'. The NFU Roadshow has this past year attended over 40 events including school visits, farm open days and agricultural shows. An update of the NFU's dairy cow welfare leaflet is planned for 2012/13.</p> <p>All retailers are promoting the way they are helping their milk suppliers improve welfare through on pack labelling, in store promotions, online articles and retailer magazines.</p>

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Priority 9: Preparing for the future	PR protocols for dairy farmers	Clear protocol in place for farmers and industry on dealing with welfare and other sector issues	DairyCo is building a contact list of dairy farmers who are able to talk publically about dairy farming. So far this contact book has 40 farmers around GB. All those farmers are provided with full support from DairyCo. The NFU has a similar contact list and farmers are briefed and provided with media training as required.
	Programme of welfare focused farm walks	Two briefing days annually in addition to current industry events	Within the DairyCo research partnership a series of KT (knowledge transfer) events are being run to disseminate the results of the research, in the first instance while research is on going these events have focused on differing aspects of dairying including welfare. To the end of July four of these events have been held. RABDF organised five National Youngstock Association Health & Welfare focussed farm walks across the country attended by over 750 delegates. Meetings have also been run by retailers, processors and the Regional Development Agencies.
	Farm Welfare Champions	As required	Both DairyCo and NFU have a contact list of dairy farmers who can be called upon as required. See also PR protocols for dairy farmers above.
Priority 10: Industry co-ordination	Develop industry inventory on welfare activity	Annual report published	This is the second of the annual updates and the evidence of industry collaboration on this important subject is demonstrated by the organisations' logos on the front of the Progress against targets document. In 2012, CHAWG will publish the first GB Cattle Health and Welfare Report that will highlight the current situation of the current state of Beef and Dairy Cattle Health and Welfare based on a combination of industry, surveillance and research data. It is envisaged that this will be an annual report that can be used by the industry to better plan and invest resources to address identified issues. CHAWG continues to monitor industry health and welfare activities to facilitate a more focused and co-ordinated approach with the aim of continued and measurable improvement. 26% of DairyCo Research & Development budget is currently being spent on Health & Welfare projects.
	One voice for dairy welfare	Issue statements to be reviewed regularly, and new issues identified	DairyCo has continued to maintain a series of statements addressing issues around dairy farming which have been agreed between DairyCo, Dairy UK and the NFU. Dairy Cow Welfare is one of the areas covered by the Dairy Communications Group, a group of the major dairy processors, RABDF, NFU and NFUS, Red Tractor Assurance, Dairy UK, the Dairy Council & DairyCo. The Group's aim is to have an industry agreed statement on any dairy farming issue that may hit the media spotlight.

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

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For more detailed information about the further work and progress of this group, visit our website at [www.chawg.org.uk](http://www.chawg.org.uk)