

Commitment to Animal Care and Wellness

Dairy Farmers of America is committed to maintaining consumer trust and continuing to build consumer confidence in the U.S. dairy industry. One important aspect of this commitment is the area of animal care and wellness.

Animal care and wellness are of the utmost importance to DFA and its dairy farmer members, as concern for animal care leads to production of high-quality milk. Nutritious diets, healthy living conditions and medical care are all essential for a healthy herd, and these are among the many animal care and wellness practices routinely encouraged by DFA and utilized by its dairy farmer members.

DFA emphasizes animal care and wellness through a number of vehicles, including individual dairy farm quality programs, the development of a DFA quality assurance program, and participation in dairy industry organizations established to address animal care standards for the dairy industry.

- In 2007, DFA established the Gold Standard Dairy Program. This program assesses, analyzes and provides feedback regarding on-farm practices, encourages continuous improvement and recognizes achievements. DFA is currently implementing a second round of the program, and has incorporated National Milk Producers Federation's Farmers Assuring Responsible Management Program (FARM).
- DFA is active in several national organizations that educate, promote and develop standards regarding animal care and wellness. A few of these organizations are: National Milk Producers Federation, National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative, National Institute for Animal Agriculture, National Mastitis Council, Animal Agriculture Alliance and National Council of Farmer Cooperatives.

DFA's Gold Standard Dairy Program and the FARM program are efforts to measure ethical obligations associated with dairy production. Guiding principles developed establish the framework for these programs include:

- **Nutrition:** Animals should have access to a nutritionally adequate diet and clean, fresh water.
- **Animal Health:** The health of all animals should be maintained through preventive care programs augmented by rapid diagnosis and treatment when necessary.
- **Management:** To promote animal care and wellness, animal caretakers should be adequately trained, follow protocols and have access to record systems to meet the requirements of their position.
- **Housing and Facilities:** Facilities should be designed, constructed and maintained to provide and promote animal health, comfort and safety.
- **Handling, Movement and Transportation:** All animals should be handled, moved and transported in a manner that reduced the risk of the potential for injury, discomfort or disease.

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Dairy Farmers of America, Inc. is a dairy marketing cooperative that serves and is owned by nearly 15,000 members on nearly 9,000 farms in 48 states. DFA is one of the country's most diversified manufacturers of dairy products, food components and ingredients, and is a leader in formulating and packaging shelf-stable dairy products. For more information, call 1-888-DFA-MILK (332-6455) or visit www.dfamilk.com.

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