Overview

The FARM Program Technical Writing Group, comprised of the following individuals, worked on reviewing the FARM Program Animal Care Manual and Evaluation Form between June 2015 and October 2015. Per Program policy, the FARM Program is reviewed every three years. The group had several in-person meetings to review the latest research, FARM Program data and feedback received from FARM Program Evaluators before breaking into small groups to re-write specific chapters in the Manual. The most significant edits were made to Chapters 6 (Animal Health) and 10 (Dairy Beef), while less significant edits were made to the remaining chapters. Below you will find a summary analysis of the new Phase One and Phase Two Priority Areas as well as a chapter by chapter summary for the FARM Program Animal Care Manual Version 3.0.
FARM Program Technical Writing Group

The FARM Technical Writing Group helps ensure that the FARM Program fosters a culture of continuous improvement and that the best management practices, which are the cornerstone of the program, evolve with the latest research on animal welfare and humane handling.

Current Technical Writing Group experts include:

1. Dr. Karen Jordan, DVM, Dairy Farmers of America Member, Producer
2. Antone Mickelson, Northwest Dairy Association
3. David Darr, Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
4. John Mahoney, Land O’Lakes, Inc.
5. Kevin Olson, Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.
6. Gatz Riddell, DVM, American Association of Bovine Practitioners
7. Nigel Cook, DVM, University of Wisconsin
8. Nina Von Keyserlingk, Ph.D., University of British Columbia
9. Cassandra Tucker, Ph.D., University of California-Davis
10. Marcia Endres, Ph.D., University of Minnesota
11. Josh White, National Cattlemen’s Beef Association
12. Branden Treichler, Select Milk Producers
13. Paul Humphrey, Foremost Farms USA
14. Keri Retallick, Praedium/Validus
15. Steve Maddox, Dairy Management, Inc. Board Member
16. Dr. Richard Doak, DVM; Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Assn.
17. Chase DeCoite, National Cattlemen’s Beef Association
18. Tim Raasch, Land O’ Lakes, Inc.

Phase One Priority Areas

- **Veterinarian Client Patient Relationship (VCPR)**
  - Official form signed by Veterinarian of Record
  - Sample will be available on FARM Website

- **Dairy Cattle Care Ethics and Training Agreement**
  - Signed annually by all employees with animal care responsibilities indicating:
    - Received training in stockmanship AND areas of responsibility
    - Will not abuse animals
    - Will report any abuse witnessed
  - Sample forms and training videos will be available

- **No tail docking after January 1, 2017.**
  - Farms should not be sending calves off dairies after this date to be docked.
  - Focused on routine tail docking NOT emergent issues.
  - Switch trimming recommended alternative.
  - Tail Docking Transition Document will be available on website later in year.
Phase Two Priority Areas

- **Herd Health Plan**
  - Protocols for newborn and milk-fed dairy calves.
  - Protocols for pain management.
  - Protocols and training for non-ambulatory animal management.
  - Protocols for euthanasia.

- **Animal Observations**
  - Lameness
  - Body Condition
  - Hock/Knee

Version 3.0 Priority Area Definitions

- **Phase One Priority Areas = Mandatory Corrective Action Plan**
  - Mandatory Corrective Action Plan (MCAP): Written plan agreed upon between the dairy producer and FARM 2nd Party Evaluator and/or Veterinarian of Record (VOR) that outlines necessary steps to comply with Priority I Animal Care Standards. Such MCAP requires re-evaluation not to exceed one year’s time. Failure to complete the MCAP may result in a Notice of Removal.

- **Phase Two Priority Areas = Continuous Improvement Plan**
  - Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP): A written proposal that identifies any area(s) for improvement in animal care. It specifies actions to make the improvement and a suggested timeline for completion.

Phase One and Two Priority Area Evaluator Decision Guide

- 14 Months -

- FARM 2nd-Party Evaluation
- Mandatory Corrective Action Plan
- Follow-up Evaluation to review MCAP
- MCAP failure triggers 60-day Probation
- Suspension from FARM Program

“No” answered to any Priority Two areas
“No” answered to any Priority One area
Continuous Improvement Plan
Animal Care Manual Edits

**Chapters 1 & 2:** Addition of several acronyms and definitions relating to animal care. Also included the proposed Action Plan information as contained in the FARM Program recommendations document.

**Chapter 3:** Updated information about the VCPR and training protocols; additional information about milking procedures/routine based on new research; addition of additional resources/references at end of chapter.

**Chapter 4:** Movement of paragraphs to improve flow of document; additional information about esophageal feeding and weaning; updated charts and diagrams; additional references/resources at end of chapter.

**Chapter 5:** Additional information on availability of water and added information about FSMA and Mycotoxins in feed section. Additional references/resources at end of chapter.

**Chapter 6:** Additional information about herd health plan components; pain management best management practices; disbudding information based on the latest research; additional information on BCS scoring, lameness scoring, hock/knee and hygiene. Additional references added to end of chapter.

**Chapter 7:** Additional information about heat/cold stress; minor additions to section on air quality; restructuring of section on “lying area” to improve flow of document; additional information/updated diagrams on housing space allowances; additional information on group housing based on latest research.

**Chapter 8:** Minor wording edits throughout chapter; addition of sidebar content around hot shots; additional references/resources at end of chapter.

**Chapter 9:** Minor wording edits throughout chapter; addition of sidebar on hip lifts; additional references/resources at end of chapter.

**Chapter 10:** Incorporation of resources from Dairy Beef Quality Assurance (DBQA) on culling decisions, record-keeping; cattle transportation and movement; additional references/resources at end of chapter.

**Chapter 11:** No changes.