

ANIMAL WELFARE UPDATE

GUIDE TO RECENT CHANGES

The Australian dairy industry supports farmers to implement new animal health and welfare policies on-farm that reflect best practice and changing community expectations.

As the peak industry body, the Australian Dairy Farmers develops policies which set the expectations of the industry on a range of issues such as animal health and welfare.

Peak bodies seek technical advice from Dairy Australia, vets and other industry professions as they implement these policies.

Over the last 12 months, new or amended policies have been developed by industry that go beyond legislation and the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Cattle.

Euthanasia

A stronger industry policy has been implemented on emergency euthanasia.

In May 2019, the Australian Dairy Farmers National Council passed recommendations which state:

- 1 Dairy farmers must create provisions for on-farm euthanasia through the use of a licensed firearm or captive bolt device, and provide training as required
- 2 Euthanasia by blunt force trauma should not occur on Australian dairy farms, except in emergency situations, which are defined by the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Cattle as 'the calf is under 24 hours old and the calf is in severe pain or distress and there is no other practical alternative'.

Euthanase Livestock courses are routinely offered by every Regional Development Program, equipping farmers with the tools and knowledge they need to remain compliant with best practice and industry policies on-farm.

For more information, visit: dairyaustralia.com.au/euthanasia



HOW TO REMAIN COMPLIANT

- 1 Ensure access to a licensed firearm or captive bolt device for on-farm euthanasia
- 2 Provide training to staff as required
- 3 Only use blunt force trauma in emergencies, and if there is no other practical alternative, the calf is under 24 hours old, and in severe pain or distress.

Calving induction

A new target has been set for a complete phase out of calving induction practice on Australian dairy farms by 2022.

While the industry first committed to phasing out calving induction in 2015, new targets have now been set to reduce calving induction to:

- 8 per cent in 2019
- 6 per cent in 2020
- 5 per cent in 2021
- 0 per cent in 2022.

The Australian dairy industry is continuing to support farmers by providing comprehensive information on best practice calving and fertility practices, as farmers work actively to phase out calving induction.

For more information, visit: dairyaustralia.com.au/calvinginduction

HOW TO REMAIN COMPLIANT

Cease using calving induction by 1 January 2022.

Pain relief for disbudding

The practice of providing pain relief for disbudding has been endorsed by the Australian Dairy Farmers National Council.

The best way to reduce pain and stress caused by disbudding is to perform the procedure at between two to six weeks of age using hot iron cautery alongside sedation, local anaesthesia and long-acting anti-inflammatories at the time of disbudding.

New topical anesthetic products are available, which are gels sprayed onto the disbudding site after the procedure. This provides up to 24-hour pain relief, as well as antiseptic properties to the site.

For more information, visit: dairyaustralia.com.au/disbudding

HOW TO REMAIN COMPLIANT

Perform disbudding between two to six weeks of age using pain relief.

Bovine Johne's Disease

A revised Johne's Disease Dairy Score was released in 2019 and developed by the Australian Dairy Farmers.

The new score was developed in consultation with industry veterinarians, Animal Health Australia and State Dairy Farming Organisations to:

- Provide an easily interpreted score for dairy farmers to profile their risk of BJD
- Enable farmers to introduce or sell dairy animals with some assurance as to their BJD status
- Clarify how vaccination can be used to control and reduce risk of BJD.

Bovine Johne's Disease (BJD) has been managed through various control programs in Australia. Since 2016, BJD has been voluntarily managed.

For more information, visit: dairyaustralia.com.au/bjd