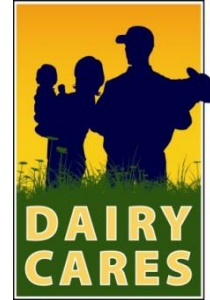


Funding provided by:



Dairy Cares Newsletter

August 2012

DairyCares.com

Dairy families maintain commitment to consumer trust and animal care

The recent temporary closure of a meat processing plant in Hanford, California prompted a national discussion on issues concerning farm animal handling, care and well-being. It serves as a reminder of the importance of maintaining a food system in which consumers can continue to place their trust.

It is crucial for consumers to know that California dairy farmers strongly support the fundamental value of humane animal treatment and care throughout the life of dairy animals. Animal abuse and neglect, whether it occurs on the farm, in transport of animals or at meat-packing facilities, is wrong and unacceptable. Consumers need to know that dairy families also support proper training for all those who handle animals, and measures to prevent animal suffering.

Unfortunately, the actions of a few always risk tarnishing the good work the rest of our state's dairy families do toward caring for animals and bringing nutritious, affordable dairy products to the tables of millions of consumers. Dairy farmers know actions, not words, build and maintain trust with the public. Here's just a small sampling of the actions California dairy families take on their farms to ensure their animals are well cared for:

- Dairy farmers work closely with licensed veterinarians to assess, maintain and enhance individual cow and herd health. Vaccinations are administered for disease prevention, and health records are maintained for each animal to assist in care and management decision-making.
- Dairy farmers work with licensed nutritionists to formulate calf and cow feed to provide the nutrients and minerals necessary for maximizing health.
- Dairy farmers take steps to minimize heat and cold stress by providing sunshades, sprinklers, misting fans, dietary alterations and windbreaks.
- Dairy farmers refresh individual bedding materials on a routine basis so cows have a clean, dry and comfortable place to rest.

Dairy farmers take a host of other steps to provide for their cows health, safety and well-being. They take these steps not just because it's good business practice, but because they're the right thing to do.

Many dairy farmers have also opened the barn door (so to speak) by providing tours and interviews to show that they really do care for and take care of their animals. Click [here](#) to see interviews with dairy farmers and the team of animal caregivers they work with on a daily basis.

As part of their commitment, the dairy community also began implementation of the National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) Program in 2010. The program includes onsite evaluation by trained experts according to a set of animal care guidelines developed by veterinarians, animal scientists and dairy farmers. More information about the FARM Program is available at www.DairyCares.com or www.NationalDairyFARM.com.

Dairy Cares members remain committed to promoting the sustainability efforts of California dairy families, including animal well-being issues, environmental stewardship and building stronger communities. By working together, we can assure that consumers continue to place their trust in a food system that provides hundreds of thousands of jobs for California communities and affordable, high quality and delicious dairy products for millions of American families.

Dairy Cares is a statewide coalition supporting economic and environmental sustainability and responsible animal care. Our members include Bar 20 Dairy Farms, California Cattlemen's Association, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Campaign, California Dairy Research Foundation, California Farm Bureau Federation, Dairy Farmers of America-Western Area Council, Dairy Institute of California, GHD, Inc., Hilmar Cheese Co., Joseph Gallo Farms, Land O'Lakes, Merck Animal Health, Milk Producers Council, Ruan Transport Corp., Western United Dairywomen, Yosemite Farm Credit and others. For information, visit DairyCares.com or call 916-441-3318.