

Drying Off

Farm Fitness Checklist



Checklist for Milk Quality adapted
from Dairy Australia's Our Farm
Our Plan program

Key contacts

Dairy Australia's regional teams are the people to contact about what's happening in your region. Contact them to find out about 'Our Farm Our Plan' and other training, workshops, events and resources that are available.

Gippsland

03 5624 3900

info@gippsdairy.com.au

New South Wales

1800 004 377

info@dairynsw.com.au

South Australia

1800 004 377

southaustralia@dairyaustralia.com.au

Tasmania

03 6432 2233

tasmania@dairyaustralia.com.au

Through the Regional Teams Dairy Australia supports farmer groups, including discussion groups, Young Dairy Network groups and others. Contact them about 'Our Farm Our Plan' group activities and other programs that your group might benefit from.

Murray

03 4811 6008

murray@dairyaustralia.com.au

Subtropical

0431 197 479

brad@subtropicaldairy.com.au

Western Australia

1800 004 377

westernaustralia@dairyaustralia.com.au

Western Victoria

03 5557 1000

info@westvicdairy.com.au

DairyNZ has kindly given permission for Dairy Australia to adapt their QuickPlan and Farm Fitness Checklist resources for use by the Australian dairy industry. This is much appreciated and is another example of Trans-Tasman collaboration providing benefit to Australasian dairy farmers.

dairynz.co.nz

Our Farm Our Plan has been developed with support from the Gardiner Dairy Foundation, reinforcing the value of the dairy industry working together.

gardinerfoundation.com.au



Milk Quality – Drying off

Farm Fitness Checklist

This resource has been developed using the Our Farm Our Plan approach. It is designed to provide a detailed appraisal of your drying off practices and help you identify and prioritise improvements that are tailored to your farm and business.

Instructions

Work through each row of the checklist and rate how you feel your business is performing. This is designed to prompt your thinking about different aspects of your drying off practices and identify opportunities for improvement. It's a 'self-assessment' and there are no right or wrong answers. Your job is to identify areas that might be a priority for you by ticking the box that best describes where you are at for each question.

Yes, we've nailed it	Ok, but we could do better	No, and we should do something about it	No, and it's not relevant to us
✓	✓	✓	✓

It is also recommended that you complete the quick SWOT. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, like the farm team, staff turnover, training, infrastructure, and location. Opportunities and threats, by contrast, are usually external factors, like milk price, beef prices, feed price and adverse weather.

Try scanning through the checklist before you start ticking so that you have an idea of what's included. The aim is to identify and focus on a small number of areas that will move you forward significantly.



In each section of the checklist there is also list of resources that you might find useful. Many of these can either be found on Dairy Australia's website dairyaustralia.com.au, ordered in hard copy or will be provided at Milking and Mastitis Management workshops. Information and support are also available from your Dairy Australia Regional Team. They are your local connection point to Dairy Australia (see contact information at left).

Now, where, how?

Completing the checklist will give you a good sense about where your drying off management is currently. You will work through getting your 'where and how' down on paper together with the support of your experienced Countdown consultant. However, you can also use this checklist by yourself or together with your farm team.

Our Farm Our Plan

If you have not yet done so, it is recommended you consider attending an Our Farm Our Plan program which steps you through a similar process for all aspects of your farm business. Our Farm Our Plan is a program designed to assist farmers to use the plans that are often in their heads to develop a clear understanding of their long-term business and personal goals.

Drying off

	Yes, we've nailed it	Ok, but we could do better	No, and we should do something about it	No, and it's not relevant to us
	✓	✓	✓	✓
Our bulk milk cell count (BMCC) is generally less than 150,000 cells/ml	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less than 5% of mature cows get clinical mastitis in the first 14 days after calving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less than 5% of heifers get clinical mastitis in the first 14 days after calving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We cull cows that have had three cases of clinical mastitis in a lactation regardless of quarter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We cull three titters if they continue to get mastitis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We use herd test data to cull cows that have had high cell counts for two consecutive lactations with dry cow treatment in the dry period in between	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We undertake early pregnancy diagnosis and use these records to decide when cows should be dried off	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most cows calve after a dry period of at least 8 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our cow ID is sufficient to enable accurate and easy pregnancy diagnosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most cows are dried off when they are producing between 5 and 12L per day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If cows are producing more than 12L per day, we modify their diet to reduce production. We do not alter milking frequency before drying off	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We use selective (part-herd) dry cow therapy in our herd, and we have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one individual cow cell count (ICCC) for each cow within at least 80 days of planned drying off date • Complete and accurate clinical case records • Less than 25 clinical cases of mastitis per 100 cows (25%) within the last 12 months • No <i>Streptococcus agalactiae</i> based on PCR testing and individual cow milk cultures. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes, we've nailed it	Ok, but we could do better	No, and we should do something about it	No, and it's not relevant to us
We use teat sealants in first-calving heifers 30 days prior to calving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All staff have received third-party training in correct dry-off technique within the last three years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cows are marked and recorded prior to any dry cow treatments being administered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean gloves are always worn when drying off cows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teat ends are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected with 70% alcohol prior to tube insertion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only the tips of tubes are inserted into the teat orifice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teat disinfectant is applied as soon as possible after administration of dry cow therapy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cows are dried off immediately after their last milking for the lactation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No more than 20 cows are dried off per person per hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cows go into a clean, dry area immediately after drying off	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cows are checked daily for at least a week after drying off for clinical mastitis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We use a mastitis focus report to review our drying off and mastitis control practices at least annually	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Quick SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Our action plan

Reflect on the ratings you have given yourself. Note the areas you want to focus on or could see opportunities in improving. List below two to three actions you plan to take.

Our actions	By who	By when	Priority		
			High	Medium	Low

Resources

Visit the Milk Quality and Mastitis section of dairyaustralia.com.au to access the following resources:

- Countdown Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control*
- Countdown Shed Guides*
- Milk Quality Checklist
- Quick Guide: To Reading Your Countdown Mastitis Focus Report
- Countdown Mastitis Focus Report User Guide
- Milking and Mastitis Management

*Also available in hard copy from your Regional Team.



1800 004 377
dairyaustralia.com.au

Disclaimer

The content of this publication is provided for general information only and has not been prepared to address your specific circumstances. We do not guarantee the completeness, accuracy or timeliness of the information.

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