



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Updated Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle Released

(Lacombe, AB) 30 March 2023 – The National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) and Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) are pleased to announce the release of the updated *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle*. The updated Code is now available at www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/dairy-cattle. It replaces its predecessor, developed in 2009, effective April 1, 2024 (unless indicated otherwise in Requirements with a later phase-in date). The 2009 dairy cattle Code will remain in effect until March 31, 2024.

"Canadian dairy farmers already follow some of the most stringent standards in the world, and the new Code of Practice will help them continue to provide the best in animal care while staying consistent with our industry's history of continuous improvement," says Pierre Lampron, President of DFC. "This commitment to quality and care means dairy farmers are always looking to stay ahead of the curve and improve their practices, reflecting the most recent science on the welfare of their animals."

A *What We Heard and How We Addressed It* report from the Code Development Committee is also available [here](#). The report summarizes how input from the public comment period, and from a 2019 [top-of-mind survey](#), was considered in finalizing the Code. Committee members thank everyone who contributed their feedback, which led to several improvements in the final Code. While not all concerns could be addressed, the Code Development Committee worked hard to balance producer achievability, available research, and stakeholder viewpoints in the Code's development.

"The new Code provides important updated standards for the welfare of dairy cattle in Canada," said Dr. Jeffrey Rushen, Humane Canada representative on the dairy cattle Code Development Committee. "The requirements and recommendations are science-informed and will evolve the welfare practices of dairy farmers to better meet the needs of their animals."

"Canadian dairy farmers care about protecting the health and welfare of their farm animals. This updated Code of Practice will help them continue to enhance the care and handling of animals while boosting consumer confidence that our food system is meeting the highest standards," said the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Canada's Codes of Practice provide critical guidance for the care and handling of farm animals. They serve as the foundation for ensuring that farm animals are cared for using sound management and welfare practices that promote animal health and well-being. Codes are used as educational tools, reference materials for regulations, and the foundation for industry animal care assessment programs.

NFACC's Code development process is a unique consensus-based, multi-stakeholder approach that ensures credibility and transparency through scientific rigour, stakeholder collaboration, and consistency. The development of the Dairy Cattle Code was led by an 18-person Code committee that includes participants from across Canada including dairy farmers, animal welfare and enforcement representatives, processors, researchers, veterinarians, and government representatives.

Aiding in their work was a five-person Scientific Committee that included animal science and veterinary expertise in dairy cattle behaviour, health, and welfare. A public comment period was held from November 29, 2021 – January 27, 2022 to allow the public and all stakeholders to provide input.

Canada's Codes of Practice are a powerful tool for meeting rising consumer, marketplace and societal expectations relative to farmed animal welfare. Codes support responsible animal care practices and keep everyone involved in farmed animal care and handling on the same page.

The Dairy Cattle Code was the first Code of Practice to be updated through NFACC's Code process in 2009 and has now undergone its second update utilizing this process. For more information on the Codes of Practice and NFACC's Code development process visit www.nfacc.ca.

The project was funded in part by the Government of Canada under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership's AgriAssurance Program.

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About the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC)

NFACC is a collaborative partnership of diverse stakeholders created in 2005 to share information and work together on farm animal care and welfare. It is the national lead for farm animal care issues in Canada and operates as a Division of [Animal Health Canada](http://AnimalHealthCanada.ca). For more information on NFACC, visit www.nfacc.ca.

About Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC)

Dairy Farmers of Canada is the national policy, lobbying and promotional organization representing Canadian dairy producers. DFC strives to create stable conditions for the dairy sector in our country. It also seeks to maintain policies that promote the sustainability of Canadian dairy production and promote dairy products and their health benefits. Dairy farmers have set a goal of net-zero emissions from farm-level dairy production by 2050. For more information, visit www.dairyfarmers.ca.

- Jackie Wepruk, Division Director, National Farm Animal Care Council, 403-783-4066, nfacc@xplornet.com
- Lucie Boileau, Director of Communications, Dairy Farmers of Canada, 613-220-1724, lucie.boileau@dfc-plc-ca