

Possible Risks Resulting In Welfare Issues

Dairy Cattle

The following is a list of possible common risks that dairy producers may face;

- Acute adult disease, especially metabolic, mastitis, nutritional and lameness
- Acute calf disease (respiratory, diarrhoea, parasitic etc.)
- Manager/staff leaving unexpectedly and lack of management or operational staff and stock supervision
- Nutritional & dietary conditions (e.g. rumen acidosis, lameness, left displaced abomasum, botulism etc.)
- Heat stress (adults and calves)
- Calving difficult
- Fire
- Flood
- Toxic plants or accidental poisoning (e.g. plant toxins; lantana, poison peach, mother of millions or e.g. lead, pesticides and herbicides etc.)
- Maltreatment (e.g. lack of staff training and inappropriate animal husbandry, underfeeding etc.)
- Preparedness for appropriate humane animal killing procedures
- Malicious animal harm or infrastructure damage and stock release (e.g. by disgruntled ex-staff)
- Power failure and milking machine failure
- Issues following routine procedures (e.g. infection and illness following disbudding, dry cow therapy etc.)
- Movement or transport of sick or injured animals or animals too poor from drought
- Accidents in transport (truck roll-overs or derailments)
- Cattle escaping onto roads
- Infectious diseases (e.g. black leg, pink eye, anthrax, botulism)
- Response to an exotic disease outbreak (e.g. Foot and Mouth Disease)
- Maltreatment
- Preparedness for appropriate animal euthanasia procedures (Staff training)

Risks with slower onset

- Nutritional issues and poor condition resulting in stress and secondary disease
- Inappropriate feeding and treatment of bobby calves
- Chronic adult and calf disease (e.g. lameness, respiratory, diarrhoea, metabolic etc.)
- Inability to implement management changes due to age, isolation, family crisis, illness, financial difficulty, etc.
- Drought, lack of water and lack of feed
- Lack of supervision/observation (loss of condition, disease, animal locked in yards/pens/paddocks etc.).
- Sudden loss of market or appropriate market price
- Parasite & disease (e.g. Bovine Johne's disease, gastrointestinal worms, Anaplasma, ketosis, buffalo fly, ticks etc.)
- Predators (e.g. wild dogs, foxes and pigs, especially attacking calves)
- Lack of staff training and poor animal husbandry outcomes
- Introducing diseased or carrier animals (Vendor declarations)
- Lack of staff training and poor animal husbandry outcomes
- Lack of accurate records and adverse health trend identification
- Lack forecast or prediction of extreme events (e.g. el Niño, fire or flood danger and lack of long range forecasting.)
- Introducing diseased or carrier animals, especially with lack of Vendor Declarations) (e.g. BJD, EBL, BVD, etc.)
- High staff turnover and poor access to often expensive remote training
- Personal values poorly aligned with increasing legal and best practices standards and community expectations
- Cattle owners have a small herd or own cattle as pets and do not fully understand the management skills required

Seek assistance if necessary, through;

- Local council
- Industry Organisations
- State Government, Departments of Primary industries (DPI, DAF)