



**Dairy Holdings Ltd**  
7B Sophia Street | P O Box 549 | Timaru, 7940 | New Zealand  
T: 03 687 9258 | F: 03 684 7965

E: [jan@dairyholdings.co.nz](mailto:jan@dairyholdings.co.nz) | [www.dairyholdings.co.nz](http://www.dairyholdings.co.nz)

## **DAIRY HOLDINGS LTD FARM SYSTEMS POLICY**

The farm system that Dairy Holdings Limited operates can be described as a DairyNZ System 2 with minimal feed used on the shoulders. The Company has a strong focus on pasture harvested while maintaining a low cost structure, the two strongest factors that influence profitability for New Zealand's seasonal dairy farming. This supports the Company's business goal of achieving a strong return for its shareholding while maintaining a sustainable business for the environment and the people that operate in it. The Company also requires a high level of animal welfare to be exercised (**refer Animal Welfare and Recording Policy**).

### **1.0 GRAZING MANAGEMENT AND ROTATION PLANNERS**

Achieving a high pasture eaten is accomplished by operating a higher comparative stocking rate to harvest feed grown, making timely decisions through very regular monitoring (quality management), and continuing to improve infrastructure and pasture species on farm to support higher seasonal production and quality (**refer to Grazing Management Policy**). The use of supplement is low and only put in when there is a clear pasture deficit.

To maximise pasture harvested and minimise the quantity of supplement required, farms are expected to use tools such as weekly farm walks, the pasture wedge, and spring and autumn rotation planners (**refer to the spring and autumn rotation plans in the Farm Manual and on the Company's website**). Each farm will have targets in place for cover and rotation lengths throughout the season to maximise pasture quality and quantity harvested.

Pasture maintenance and production is managed through **Agrinet Pasture Management** software which provides farms with a Pasture wedge from which weekly management decisions are made. It also provides seasonal growth information as well as annual pasture production across paddocks. It is expected that all farms will record individual paddock pasture covers on a weekly basis, but never more than 14 days apart.

The method of collecting pasture covers is up to the farm operator but the information used must be representative of the average cover in the paddock.

This information is then used to determine what areas need to be regressed and the method and timing required to achieve desired results (**refer to Agronomy Procedures**).

### **2.0 ANIMAL WELFARE**

DHL takes animal welfare very seriously and expects full compliance with its good farm practice policies in this area. Failure to do so will be serious misconduct.

DHL has a set of policies and protocols that set out its expectations in some key areas of animal welfare. This set out in the **Animal Welfare and Recording Protocol**. In this document there is a particular focus on stock tails. Last year the tails of all animals were scored. This is the base situation against which all re-assessments will be monitored to determine change.

Other policies relate to Bobby Calves.

All policies and protocols are closely aligned to all current official MPI Animal Welfare Codes referring to Dairy Cattle. Please use the following link to read the full most recent Animal Welfare Codes <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/animal-welfare>

### 3.0 MATING MANAGEMENT

When the Spring Rotation Planner (SRP) is adhered to and cover targets are met, this will ensure cows can be well fed leading up to and during mating. This, in combination with active management of the lighter condition cows in the herd through regular Body Condition Scoring (BCS) (**refer to BCS Policy**) and mating management practices (**refer to Mating Management Policy**) will contribute to a timely and compact calving pattern. Achieving a compact calving is central to maintaining a farm's ability to harvest pasture grown.

Dairy Holdings farms will typically AI mate for 4-5 weeks. The desired cow is a crossbred cow leaning slightly in favour of Friesian parentage (F8-F10).

Dairy Holdings uses no hormonal mating intervention, instead focusing on the fundamentals of Body Condition Score, active management of non-cycling cows, grazing management and ensuring cows are on a rising plane of nutrition to achieve a compact calving.

Dairy Holdings has a strict non Induction policy. Induction will only be considered where there is a formal vet opinion that animal welfare is at risk.

### 4.0 HERD IMPROVEMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF REPLACEMENTS

Achieving good reproductive success is paramount for herd improvement. Achieving a high proportion of AB bred young stock and ensuring they are well grown, sets up the next generation of cows to be milked on Dairy Holdings' farms.

The **Replacement Heifer & Bull calf Policy** and **Replacement Heifer Targets** detail the planned timing for supply of replacement heifers to the grazing blocks and the procedures to be followed.

The Company has a target that farms ideally supply at least 95% AB bred heifer calves and all farms supply a minimum of 80% of replacement heifer calves as AB bred. This information is able to be monitored on a daily basis where calving's are recorded through the **LIC Minda calving app**.

Information on the correct tagging of calves is detailed in the policy **Instructions for EID and Visual Tags**.

The Company will use its best endeavours to ensure that replacement heifers return to the farm of origin and at target weight for their breed. See **Dairy Replacement Heifer Targets**.

Herd testing is undertaken twice during the season during the same week in each region.

Company-wide, consistent data enables selection criteria to be established across herds by each farm supervisor to optimise the culling of poorer producing animals.

The culling of empty cows may commence as soon as the first pregnancy scanning has been completed depending on seasonal conditions. Please liaise closely with your farm supervisor and following the **NAIT and Silver Fern Farms** protocols regarding the transfer and supply of stock for

slaughter. Generally, Dairy Holdings will be culling cows that will not be milked in the subsequent season about six weeks before most other South Island dairy operations. This enables remaining cows to be milked longer and achieves premiums from meat processors.

All cull cows are to achieve a minimum slaughter weight of 145 kg carcass weight. It is expected that cull cows will be dried off and kept on-farm until this target is achieved. Penalties may be imposed where this target is not met or appropriate care has not been taken.

## 5.0 Milk Quality

Dairy Holdings farms have a history of excellent quality milk. Refer to **Milk Quality Management Plan** and the **Dairy Shed Chemical Policy** in the Farm Manual.

The Farm Operator and their Supervisor get immediate notifications of any milk quality issue. Farm Operators are expected to act on these immediately and notify their supervisor of their actions.

SCC data is also supplied to DHL head office and to Vetlife and published on the DHL web site each week. Where a farm has a persistent SCC problem Vetlife will be contacted by the Farm Supervisor to provide extra technical advice and support to solve the problem.

## 6.0 NUTRIENTS AND SOIL FERTILITY

The inputs and outputs achieved by each farm business will have financial and physical targets as well as environmental. The environmental targets are generally established by nutrient budgets set through Overseer and must be adhered to. Strong control of farm inputs while achieving high outputs will have a strong link to both N leaching and total farm profitability.

Predictive and actual nutrient budgets are prepared by Ravensdown. **Refer to the Fertiliser Policy.**

Nutrient targets are established through the budgeting process and are a function of stocking rates, production and bought-in feed. Quantities of purchased feed are detailed in the monthly farm financials and must be within budgeted levels if nutrient limits are to be achieved.

The importance of nutrient limits will vary by region and by the consents held by Dairy Holdings. It is important that you discuss with your farm supervisor how nutrient limits apply to your farm.

The Company has a strong focus on soil fertility and pasture renewal, such is the importance of pasture to the Dairy Holdings' operations. Soils that are below target will receive capital P and lime and are maintained once at optimum (**refer to the Fertiliser Policy**).

## 6.0 SUMMARY

To help farm operators achieve the above results you will be supported by your Farm Operations Manager/Farm Supervisor as well as the Company's Farm Practice Advisor.

Throughout the season regular **Discussion Groups** are organised by the Company and **DairyNZ**. Please ensure you are familiar with these events, details of which should always be available on the Company's website.

We encourage an environment of learning and support to facilitate the Company and individual operators to achieve their respective goals.