

28 July 2016

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New Bobby Calf Regulations out

This notice covers the new Bobby Calf Regulations, and general information about calving and slinks. Because you're busy, we'll try to keep this short. Remember, everyone plays a part in caring for all calves, including bobbies.

BOBBY CALVES

The new Bobby Calf Regulations have been signed off in Parliament and some of the rules come in now (1 August 2016), and some in 2017.

The new Regulations that will affect farmers now state that, from 1 August 2016 bobby calves must be:

- At least four days old before they can be transported. You will need some sort of system to make sure your staff know this so they don't send the bobbies away early.
- Healthy for transport. A healthy bobby has bright eyes and upright ears and no visible disease or deformity.
- Fit for transport, which means:
 - Able to stand and bear weight on all four limbs and move about freely
 - Have firm hooves
 - Have a dry navel
 - A vet certificate may be required to declare that the calf is fit for transport
- If you do need to euthanase calves, we recommend you use a firearm, a captive bolt or get the vet to do it for you via an injection. It is now illegal (except in emergencies) to use blunt force trauma to kill calves. A fine for a person convicted of this can be up to \$3,000.

Because preparing your bobbies is not just about the Regulations, here is a reminder of what else you need to do:

- Bobbies need the same care as your replacement calves
- Find out what time the bobby truck is coming and tell your staff so that they can feed the bobbies in preparation for the journey
- Feed your bobbies at least half the day's ration of colostrum (or colostrum substitute) as close to transport as possible and no more than two hours before pick-up (Dairy Cattle Code of Welfare).
- Bobbies must not be fed any colostrum or milk from cows that have been treated with antibiotics and where the withholding period still applies, as carcasses are tested at the works and the penalties are high if residues are found. Residues affect New Zealand's market access and your pocket.
- We ask that you keep bobbies in a sheltered place away from public view. This is to keep the calves warm and dry and to protect you from the eyes of the public.
- Make it easy for the bobby calf truck to pick them up.

We've had recent reports about more bobby calf 'rescues' from members' farms. People cannot turn up on farm without authorisation and [our advice](#) is to ask the people to leave immediately.

SLINKS

Talk to operators who will be collecting slinks. Make sure they understand the sensitivity surrounding this issue – no one likes to see dead calves in a pile at the road side or being transported in open, uncovered trailers and utes. See if you can come to some sort of operating standard with them now, at the beginning of the season.



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CALVING

Calving is here and now for some of you, while for others it is just around the corner. Having processes in place before the calves start arriving is helpful.

- Check the use-by dates on your antibiotics – if they are past this, throw them out
- Make sure all drugs are stored correctly. Keep only those drugs used in lactating cows in the dairy shed – all other drugs must be kept elsewhere.
- Leave clear instructions in the right place on what to do with colostrum, antibiotic milk, treated cows etc
- Label taps and switches if that makes things easy at busy times
- Check the quality of silage, both your own and that which you have bought in. Mouldy silage will cause real problems for you and your cows.

FOR LATER:

Regulations that will come into place on 1 August 2017

- **Loading facilities:** If the height of the vehicle deck of the bobby calf truck is 900mm or greater from the ground, you will need some sort of facility that allows calves to walk onto the truck by their own action. You will still be able to lift and place the calf on the truck if the calf won't walk on by itself. If you transport your calves on something lower like a ute or a trailer, you won't need a loading facility.
- **Shelter** for bobbies waiting to be picked up

Regulations that affect the transporters and processors include: stock fit for transport (in force 1 August 2016); prohibition of sending calves across Cook Strait (in force from 1 August 2016); shelter on the truck and at points of sale/slaughter (in force from 1 August 2017); maximum time off feed before slaughter (in force from 1 February 2017)

More information can be found [here](#) on DairyNZ's website.