

## **BODY CONDITION SCORING POLICY**

### **OBJECTIVE**

This protocol is designed to bring about consistent and reliable results for assessing body condition score (BCS) across dairy holdings cows.

### **TIMING OF ASSESSMENTS**

Four assessments are to be conducted annually to provide operators with timely information for decision making. Assessments shall be performed pre-calving, pre-mating, early-autumn and late-autumn prior to wintering.

### **PLANNING**

Supervisors are to be notified of BCS assessment dates at least a week ahead. This will allow sufficient time for supervisors to communicate with their operators. The assessor will get in contact with the farmers 24 hours prior to organise times and encourage operators to be present.

### **BCS PROCEDURE**

All cows are to be scored in the paddock in accordance with DNZ BCS procedure. The first herd scored each day should be assessed using the DNZ BCS booklet to maintain consistency of scoring.

A minimum of 70 cows in each herd will be scored to ensure accuracy. The assessor should walk through the majority of the herd with understanding that lighter or fatter cows can congregate. The number of animals in each herd will need to be gathered from the operator to ascertain correct percentages.

### **REPORTING**

All figures will be collated and made available for viewing via the Dairy Holdings website within a week of completing field assessments.