



## California Dairy Quality Assurance Program

# Dairy Welfare Evaluation Guide

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### Introduction

The California Dairy Quality Assurance Program is taking the first step in assuring proper care and handling of animals on California's dairies with the development of this voluntary assessment and education program. The program is designed to accurately evaluate well-being of dairy animals on facilities of all sizes and geographical locations throughout California. The program consists of two parts: **Assessment of the Dairy Facility** and a **Technical Guide**, which provides science-based information on best management practices. To assure consumers of proper animal care and well-being, future certification and audits of dairy facilities for animal welfare may be desirable.

The **Assessment of the Dairy Facility** is designed to objectively evaluate the major areas of welfare on the dairy, including management policies, health care, facilities and environment, feed and water, handling and transport, and management of calves. The **Technical Guide** provides detailed information on topics related to animal welfare, assisting the dairy management in improving current policies and procedures for these specific areas. Additional expertise should be utilized as needed to assure animal welfare.

The **Dairy Welfare Evaluation Guide** was developed from the Animal Care Series: Dairy Care Practices (University of California, 1998), Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle (Agriculture Canada, 1990), and Caring for Dairy Animals (Agri Education, Inc., 2002) to meet the objectives of the California Dairy Quality Assurance Program.

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**Published by:**

**Cooperative Extension, University of California, Davis**

**June 2004**