



The
**Co-operative
Difference**



The Co-operative Difference

Animals Factsheet

We are proud of the care we show our animals throughout their lives. It's also important that the practices we use on farm are aligned with the expectations of our customers, consumers and communities.

What do I need to do:

To meet the Animals achievement, you need to have and implement an Animal Wellbeing Plan developed with and signed by your veterinarian that addresses each of the following topics at a minimum:

- Nutrition – strategies to ensure cows reach body condition targets
- Health - mastitis, lameness, mortality, and minimising antimicrobial resistance
- Environment - planning for extreme weather events and development of management strategies for heat stress
- Behaviour - discussion about current and future herd improvement strategies through genetics, for example the use of polled and/or thermally tolerant genetics

This plan needs to be reviewed annually and must be current during the season.





Why

Animals are the heart of every dairy farm and their welfare is of critical importance to our farmers. Our customers and consumers increasingly require that food producers demonstrate that animals are healthy, productive, contented and treated with respect throughout their lives.

This achievement is designed to ensure that the relationship between our farmers and their vets is strong and that animal wellbeing is actively planned for on our farms. When we get these things right, we see improved animal wellbeing.

Verification

Whilst the plan must address the topics outlined above, ultimately, it's up to you and your veterinarian to determine the format, content and the right actions for you to take on your farm. The Farm Dairy Assessor will check that you have a current plan in place, that it is signed by your veterinarian, and that it covers the required topics.

Meets the achievement
An annual plan developed with and signed off by your vet. The plan can be in any format, so long as it addresses the required topics and is no older than 12 months.
Examples that will not meet the achievement
A plan that has not been signed off by a veterinarian.
A plan that was developed more than 12 months ago that has not been reviewed.
A plan that does not cover the relevant topics.
A verbal plan developed after a chat with the vet.

Support

Your veterinarian should be your first call for any issues relating to animal wellbeing.

You'll also find guides, tools and support material on the DairyNZ website: <https://www.dairynz.co.nz/animal/>

If you have questions about The Co-operative Difference, you can contact your Area Manager or the Farm Source Service Centre on: **0800 65 65 68**

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q. I developed my plan with my vet before the season started, is it still valid?

Yes, as long as it meets the requirements of the achievement and is for the coming 12-month period. Remember to get it renewed after 12 months to remain eligible.

Q. I developed my plan with my vet prior to the announcement of the new achievement. It doesn't include the latest topic areas, is it still valid?

Yes, if it was developed prior to 1 April 2021 and it meets the requirements of the 20/21 season it will remain valid until the 12 month anniversary of the plan, at which time it will need to be updated and include the new topics.

Q. Why is Fonterra dictating what genetics I can have in my herd?

You do not need to change your breeding plan to meet this achievement. Genetics may play a useful role in addressing animal wellbeing concerns in the future and these genetics are improving all the time. Including discussion of those options in the Wellbeing Plan will allow farmers to be better prepared to take full advantage of these genetic tools in the future."

Q. Do I need a certified body condition scorer to meet this achievement?

No, the achievement requires that body condition scoring is discussed as a management tool for the herd, but this is not required to be with a certified body condition scorer.

Q. Vets will charge me for this, why is Fonterra adding this extra cost?

The benefits of this type of review and planning far outweigh the costs. If by having this discussion you can prevent one cow death or a couple of lameness cases, it's more than paid for itself. For many farms, this is already a standard practice because they've seen the benefits that can be gained.

Q. I've got years of experience farming and caring for animals, can I prepare the plan myself without using a vet?

No, the plan must be developed with a veterinarian.

Q. I already have an extensive Animal Wellbeing Plan that covers all of these topics and more, and now you're telling me I need another plan?

No, if your plan covers the relevant topics, has been reviewed in the last 12 months and has been signed off by your vet, you do not need to create another plan to meet this achievement.