

Managing bobby calf welfare

Care of calves is a high priority for the dairy industry. Animal welfare requirements apply to all calves born on farm, whether they are destined for the milking herd, reared elsewhere for beef, or marketed as bobby calves.

Refer to the Rearing Healthy Calves manual for information on industry agreed calf management practices.

A bobby calf is:

- Less than 30 days old.
- Weighs less than 80kg live weight.
- Is usually a dairy breed or cross.
- Is sold for meat or reared for dairy-beef.

Around 400,000 bobby calves are processed each year in Australia supporting local jobs and providing a valuable protein resource.

The dairy industry is working with calf buyers and transporters, saleyard agents and abattoir workers to ensure that everyone involved in the management, transportation, handling and marketing of bobby calves understands their responsibilities to protect calf health and welfare and meets the agreed standards.

The dairy industry is investing the welfare of bobby calves through:

- Training via the National Centre for Dairy Education (NCDE), to ensure farmers are aware of their responsibilities for the rearing and housing of all calves and guaranteeing fitness for sale.
- A joint project with processors and saleyards to train people that manage and handle bobby calves.
- A bobby calf traceability trial to verify whole-of-supply-chain responsibility for bobby calves.

More information Calf management across the supply chain

This report summarises significant achievements in addressing two principal issues of critical importance to the dairy industry and the wider community. They are:

- Everybody understands the calf supply chain commitment to responsible handling and care of calves.
- The calf supply chain maintains an excellent reputation for production of veal that meets required food industry standards. ■■



For more information, visit the Dairy Australia website www.dairyaustralia.com.au