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# Animal Care Training

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## Why is Training Important?

Training employees with animal care responsibilities in basic animal handling, stockmanship and their area of responsibility, ensures not only that the basics of low-stress animal handling and a zero-tolerance for abuse are understood, but will also clearly convey job expectations and establish the dairy's culture. Training should encompass care expectations for particular circumstances, such as how to move cattle or what to do in cases of emergencies, as well as general expectations, such as how to implement the expected milking procedure. Humane handling and animal care should be part of the daily culture on the dairy. Humane animal handling and animal care expectations should be reinforced throughout job expectations and daily functions.

## Examples of Potential Training Opportunities

The following is a list of potential training opportunities and programs that can be utilized for employee training:

1. On-farm dairy industry stakeholder specialists
  - a. Veterinarians
  - b. Nutritionists
  - c. Technical Service teams (Pharmaceutical, Reproduction, Milk Quality, etc.)
  - d. University and Extension faculty and staff
  - e. Beef Quality Assurance State Coordinators
2. Attendance of Dairy Industry Meetings
3. Formal Dairy Employee Training Programs
  - a. [Merck Dairy Care 365](#)
  - b. [HR Mobile](#)
  - c. [Dairy Coach](#)
4. Job Shadowing with Management
  - a. Example: A new milker has been hired and he job shadows milker shift supervisor for a period of time. Management confirms with milker shift supervisor that the new employee is appropriately trained and can begin milking independently.
5. Formal education
  - a. Example: Animal husbandry class at university/college
  - b. Continuing education class offering by dairy industry led program i.e. U.S. Dairy Education and Training Consortium, Penn State Online Dairy Production and Management
6. Print and digital media training

- a. Example: FARM has a stockmanship training video available in the resources section of the website. Employees, over lunch break, watch the video in 5-10 minute segments throughout the month.
- b. Example: A new calf feeder has been hired for weekend feedings. There is a new article in Dairy Herd Management on proper feeding techniques and nutritional requirements that she reads and demonstrates to management that the process is fully understood.

This is not an exhaustive list of training opportunities so if there are questions as to if a certain type of opportunity is an acceptable form of training, please contact the FARM Animal Care Program at [dairyfarm@nmpf.org](mailto:dairyfarm@nmpf.org) or 703-243-6111.

### **FARM Expectations**

- All employees with animal care responsibilities should be retrained at least annually.
- All training should be documented and dated in the form of a training log, notebook, binder or electronic system
- Training should be conducted in the language that is understood by the employee. Photographs and other visual aids may be helpful when training.