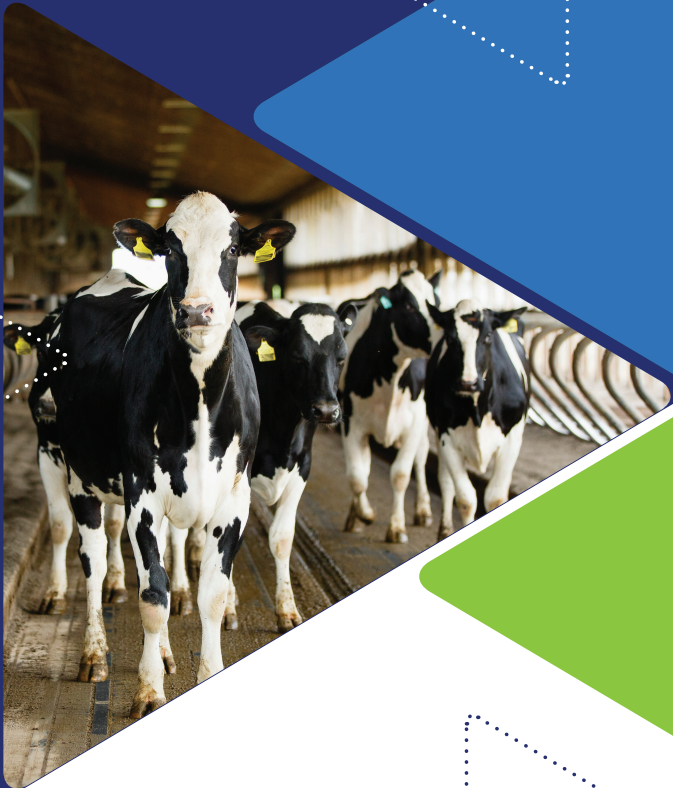


ANIMAL CARE EVALUATION PREPARATION GUIDE

▶ VERSION 5



July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2027

▶ ABOUT FARM ANIMAL CARE

The National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (**FARM**) Program is open to all farms, milk processors and cooperatives, and helps ensure the success of the entire industry by demonstrating to customers and consumers that U.S. dairy farmers are committed to producing the best milk with integrity.

National Milk Producers Federation (**NMPF**) with support from Dairy Management, Inc. (**DMI**), established the FARM Program in 2009. Through the **Innovation Center for US Dairy**, the dairy community has aligned behind FARM as the industry-wide, on-farm social responsibility program. Over the years, the FARM Program has expanded to provide resources and guidelines in five program areas: Animal Care, Antibiotic Stewardship, Biosecurity, Workforce Development and Environmental Stewardship.



The FARM Animal Care Program demonstrates that dairy producers are committed to taking excellent care of their animals and producing safe, wholesome milk by:

- Detailing science-based animal care guidelines that evolve with the latest dairy research;
- Providing on-farm evaluations by trained and certified Evaluators who work with farmers to identify strengths and, if necessary, outline improvements;
- Ensuring the integrity of the program with third-party verification by qualified dairy experts who evaluate a representative percentage of farms each year to demonstrate that FARM is working as intended.

FARM Animal Care **DOES**:

- Create a framework and foundation for on-farm animal care
- Create a culture of continuous improvement
- Act as a snapshot of farm management practices
- Require producer monitoring, oversight and active on-farm participation
- Rely on science, and is facility and size neutral

▶ FARM ANIMAL CARE GOVERNANCE

The National Dairy FARM Animal Care Program standards are formally revised every three years through a rigorous process. Those involved in the developing and revising of standards include:

Farmer Advisory Council

Dedicated dairy farmers who provide guidance and input for consideration in FARM's ongoing and future development. Members work to champion FARM within other organizations, communities and throughout the industry.

Animal Care Taskforce

Dairy farmers, Farmer Advisory Council chairperson and vice chairperson, animal welfare scientists, veterinarians, and cooperative and processor staff members comprise the Animal Care Taskforce, which reviews the latest research and aggregated FARM Animal Care Program data and provides recommendations to the NMPF Animal Health & Well-Being Committee and NMPF Board of Directors.

NMPF Animal Health & Well-Being Committee

Members are appointed by National Milk Producers Federation member cooperatives. The committee coordinates NMPF's participation in animal health contingencies, including development of animal health research priorities, and provides oversight for the FARM Animal Care Program.

NMPF Board of Directors

The NMPF Board of Directors, made up of representatives from all NMPF Member cooperatives, votes on the final standards and recommendations set forth by the Animal Health and Well-Being Committee.

Scan the QR code to learn more.

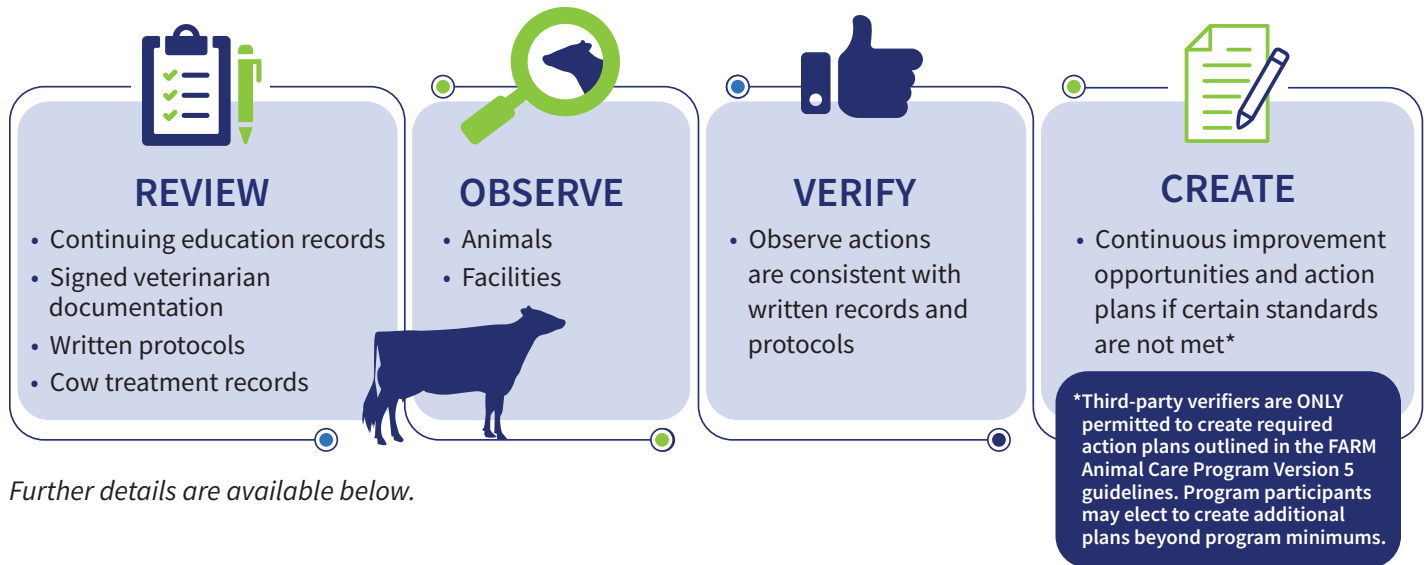


FARM Animal Care **DOES NOT**:

- Ensure a certain on-farm culture
- Replace supervision and management of employees
- Guarantee perfection or that best management practices are followed
- Eliminate challenges
- Eliminate threats to consumer trust



EVALUATOR AND VERIFIER RESPONSIBILITIES



SECOND-PARTY EVALUATION

A Second-Party Evaluation is an external review and assessment of on-farm animal care practices for a participating dairy farm facility based on the National Dairy FARM Program guidelines. Facilities participating in the FARM Animal Care Program must undergo a Second-Party Evaluation at least once every three years. Evaluations are not to be conducted unannounced.

Which Farms Complete Second-Party Evaluations?

Second-Party Evaluations are conducted on each dairy farm with lactating dairy cows that is a member, patron, contractor or direct shipper of any organization that has signed a FARM Animal Care Participation Agreement.

Who Conducts Second-Party Evaluations?

Second-Party Evaluations are conducted by certified evaluators who complete and pass annual in-person training. Evaluators support and offer guidance to the farm in preparation for the Second-Party Evaluation or Third-Party Verification, as well as conduct any necessary follow-up.

Before attending a training, Second-Party Evaluators are required to meet minimum prerequisites, including a combination of five years of education and/or on-dairy farm industry experience, a written application and completion of an in-depth interview. Additionally, Evaluators participate in routine shadow evaluations to ensure consistent program implementation. To read more about the Evaluator certification process, visit the FARM website: nationaldairyfarm.com.

THIRD-PARTY VERIFICATION

All facilities that have had a Second-Party Evaluation are subject to Third-Party Verification. Contracted with the FARM Animal Care Program, Third-Party Verifiers conduct Verifications on a representative percentage of participating farms each year to provide statistically valid data regarding adherence to FARM Program guidelines. Recognizing the relationship that most Second Parties have with the farms they are evaluating, Third-Party Verification allows for a purely objective and unbiased evaluation comparison of a statistically significant number of farms. Third-Party Verifiers conduct their assessment using the same standards as Second-Party Evaluators. Verifications are not to be conducted unannounced, and the farm's Second-Party Evaluator is encouraged to be present.

On Which Farms Are Third-Party Verifications Conducted?

Every six months, a random sample of all eligible farms is selected from a pool of the farms that were evaluated during the previous six months.

Who Conducts Third-Party Verifications?

The National Dairy FARM Program contracts with an auditing firm to facilitate the FARM Animal Care Program verification process. Individuals approved to conduct verifications must meet the same outlined requirements for Second-Party Animal Care Evaluators in addition to having an extensive auditor background. All Third-Party Verifiers must complete annual in-person training and cannot consult or offer advice in order to remain an objective third party.

AFTER THE EVALUATION OR VERIFICATION

Evaluation or Verification Feedback

The FARM Program values feedback from the dairy community, as it influences future standards and programmatic processes. After participating in a Second-Party



Evaluation or Third-Party Verification, all dairy producers and managers are encouraged to complete a feedback form found on the FARM Program website: nationaldairyfarm.com/evaluationfeedback.

FARM Database Access

All dairy farms have access to review their completed Evaluations, Verifications, and any active or past corrective action plans within the password-secured FARM database. Farm representatives who need to create an account within the FARM database should reach out to their FARM Second-Party Evaluator.

Completing Action Plans

If any corrective action plans were created during an Evaluation or Verification, dairy farm representatives should work closely with a Second-Party Evaluator and their network of trusted advisors to address the areas for improvement within the designated timelines.

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Dairy Producer

- Adhere to outlined FARM Animal Care Program standards
- Sign Pledge of Participation during Second-Party Evaluation, establishing an understanding of standards and verification process
 - Required for good standing
- Provide necessary written protocols and records for Evaluator or Verifier to review
- Assist Evaluator or Verifier as needed in completing the evaluation
- Complete any areas for improvement within the identified timeline(s)

Evaluator and Verifier

- Follow all safety guidelines and employ proper biosecurity protocols set forth by the FARM Animal Care Program as well as the individual producer
- Maintain and safeguard the confidentiality of the dairy facility's information

- Properly communicate evaluation expectations to producers
- Assist the dairy facility in completing any areas for improvement
- Coordinate scheduling between producer and Verifier
- Evaluators should attend Third-Party Verifications, if possible
- Be polite, courteous and respectful
- Evaluators should follow up and resolve action plans

FOOD INDUSTRY OUTREACH FOCUS

The National Dairy FARM Program assists FARM Program participants (dairy cooperatives and processors) in providing necessary aggregated data and proof points to dairy customers (e.g., retail, food service, packaged goods) to enhance and maintain confidence within the dairy supply chain. Examples of data points include how many farms have an established veterinarian-client-patient relationship and percentage of farms that conduct annual employee continuing education. Farmer privacy is of the utmost importance, which is why individual farm data is never shared unless clearly authorized by the farmer.

FARM develops multi-level relationships and provides impactful business materials to dairy customers to ensure the dairy industry's proactive responsibility programs are top of mind when customers have questions about on-farm production practices and in the development of any procurement policy or sourcing guidelines. The program demonstrates the dairy community's commitment to stewardship and social responsibility through event-based dialogue and supply chain support.

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Scan the QR code for more information and answers to Animal Care Program Frequently Asked Questions



FARM ANIMAL CARE PROGRAM VERSION 5 STANDARDS

Documentation The following will be reviewed during a Second-Party Evaluation or Third-Party Verification:

- Unmet standard results in an Immediate Action Plan
- Unmet standard results in Mandatory Corrective Action Plan
- Unmet standard results in a Continuous Improvement Plan

Signed Cow Care Agreements ●

- ☐ All family and non-family employees 18 years or older with animal care responsibilities have an annually signed cow care agreement.
- ☐ **Non-Family Employees:** One signed agreement from each employee who is 18 years or older with animal care responsibilities documented annually.
- ☐ **Immediate Family Employees:** One signed agreement from each employee who is 18 years or older with animal care responsibilities documented annually OR a document signed by a family representative taking responsibility for explaining animal care expectations to remaining family members who are 18 years or older.
 - Immediate family member is defined as a grandparent, parent, in-law, spouse, partner, sibling, child or grandchild of the legal guardian(s) or legal owner(s) of the dairy operation.

Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) ●

- ☐ VCPR to be signed annually by facility representative and Veterinarian of Record

Continuing Education Records ●

- ☐ Job-specific continuing education for non-family and family employees if they have animal care responsibilities that include:
 - ☐ Stockmanship
 - ☐ Pre-weaned calf care
 - ☐ Determining animals are fit to transport
 - ☐ Non-ambulatory animals
 - ☐ Euthanasia

Permanent Written or Electronic Drug Treatment Records Are Maintained ✦

Records should include:

- ☐ Date of treatment
- ☐ Treated animal identification
- ☐ Name of treatment
- ☐ Disease/condition being treated
- ☐ Dosage administered
- ☐ Route of administration
- ☐ Duration of treatment
- ☐ Specified withdrawal/withhold times for milk and meat to ensure food safety
- ☐ Records are available for veterinarian review

Reviewed Protocols and Verified Effective Actions The facility will be evaluated for the presence of the following written protocols as well as their effectiveness in action.

HERD HEALTH PLAN

The written Herd Health Plan is reviewed annually by the Veterinarian of Record ●

The written Herd Health Plan has protocols for the following:

- ☐ **Pre-Weaned Calves Protocol including:**
 - ☐ How calves are moved ●
 - ☐ Volume, quality and timeliness of colostrum ●
 - ☐ Quality and quantity of milk or milk replacer ●
 - ☐ Water and starter feed are provided by day three ●
 - ☐ Disbudding of calves prior to 8 weeks of age using cautery or paste only ●
 - ☐ **Disbudding Protocol including:**
 - ☐ Method: cautery or paste ●
 - ☐ Pain mitigation is provided ●
 - ☐ **Difficult Calving (Dystocia) Protocol**
 - ☐ **Lameness Prevention and Treatment**
 - ☐ **Milking Procedure Protocol**
 - ☐ **Vaccination Protocols** (if applicable)
 - ☐ **Non-Ambulatory Animals Protocol including:**
 - ☐ How non-ambulatory animals are moved ●
 - ☐ What prompt medical care is provided ●
 - ☐ Outlines that non-ambulatory animals are provided with access to feed, water, protection from heat and cold for typical climatic conditions, isolation from other ambulatory animals and protection from predators ●
 - ☐ **Fitness to Transport Protocol including:**
 - ☐ Definition of animals that are eligible to be transported ●
 - ☐ Outlines adherence to milk and meat withdrawal times ●
 - ☐ **Euthanasia Protocol including:**
 - ☐ Criteria for the identification of animals to be euthanized ●
 - ☐ Euthanasia techniques that follow the approved methods of AABP and/or AVMA ●
 - ☐ How carcass disposal is conducted using an appropriate method ●
 - ☐ Identification of method to confirm death ●
 - ☐ At least a primary and secondary identified individual to conduct the practice ●
 - ☐ **Emergency Action or Crisis Plan**
 - ☐ Examples: employee injury, biosecurity, natural disasters, temperature extremes, contagious disease outbreak, power failure, manure spills, etc.
 - ☐ **Treatment of Common Diseases**
 - ☐ Diarrhea
 - ☐ Displaced abomasum
 - ☐ Ketosis Mastitis
 - ☐ Metritis
 - ☐ Milk fever
 - ☐ Pneumonia
 - ☐ Any additional routinely occurring diseases identified by the veterinarian
 - ☐ **Biosecurity Protocol**
 - ☐ **Pest, Fly and Parasite Control**
 - ☐ **Branding Protocol** (if applicable)
 - ☐ Pain mitigation provided
 - ☐ **Castration Protocols** (if applicable)
 - ☐ Pain mitigation provided
- ☐ All written protocols are translated as needed, into the languages understood by all family and non-family employees with assigned animal care responsibilities

ANIMAL OBSERVATIONS

During the evaluation, the following animal observations will be conducted by the Evaluator.

PRE-WEANED CALVES (heifers, bulls, steers 3 days of age and older)

Benchmark to meet:

☐ HYGIENE

90% or more of observed animals score 2 or less on the FARM Hygiene Scorecard

☐ BODY CONDITION SCORE (BCS) ♦

99% or more of observed animals have a BCS of 2 or more on the FARM BCS Scorecard

POST-WEANED HEIFERS

Benchmark to meet:

☐ HYGIENE

90% or more of observed animals score 2 or less on the FARM Hygiene Scorecard

☐ BCS ♦

99% or more of observed animals have a BCS of 2 or more on the FARM BCS Scorecard

PRE-FRESH COWS AND HEIFERS/DRY COWS

Benchmark to meet:

☐ HYGIENE

90% or more of observed animals score 2 or less on the FARM Hygiene Scorecard

LACTATING COWS

Benchmark to meet:

☐ HYGIENE

90% or more of observed animals score 2 or less on the FARM Hygiene Scorecard

☐ BCS ♦

99% or more of observed animals have a BCS of 2 or more on the FARM BCS Scorecard

☐ HOCKS ♦

95% or more of the lactating herd score 2 or less on the FARM Hock Scorecard

☐ LOCOMOTION ♦

95% or more of the lactating herd score 2 or less on the FARM Locomotion Scorecard AND

80% or more of the lactating herd score 1 or less on the FARM Locomotion Scorecard

☐ KNEES ♦

95% or more of the lactating herd score 2 or less on the FARM Knee Scorecard

☐ INJURED TAILS ♦

95% or more of lactating animals do not have injured tails

OTHER ANIMAL OBSERVATIONS:

☐ No routine tail docking ■

☐ Each animal is identified with a tamper-resistant individual animal ID

- Unmet standard results in an Immediate Action Plan
- Unmet standard results in Mandatory Corrective Action Plan
- ♦ Unmet standard results in a Continuous Improvement Plan

Please reference your Second-Party Evaluator, FARM Animal Care Program Manual and/or FARM website to confirm if any continuing education, documentation, protocol or action meets the outlined standard.

FACILITY OBSERVATIONS

During the evaluation, the following facility observations will be conducted by the Evaluator.

☐ Posted Emergency Contact Information

☐ Facility Design

- ☐ Segregation area of weak and/or injured animals
- ☐ Clean, soft, dry, well-lit and well-ventilated calving area
- ☐ Method of daily exercise for all age classes
- ☐ Protection from heat and cold for typical climatic condition
- ☐ Housing allows all age classes of animals to easily stand up, lie down and have visual contact with other cattle without risk of injury
 - Pre-weaned calves can turn around easily
- ☐ Resting area for all age classes of animals that is clean, dry, provides adequate cushion at all times and does not pose risk of injury

☐ Facilities designed to prevent injuries, slips and falls of animals

☐ Facilities have adequate lighting for animal observation and safety of family and non-family employee with animal care responsibilities

☐ Facility provides proper ventilation throughout all housing facilities that reduces odors, dust and/or noxious gas

☐ Facilities are designed to prevent unnecessary contact with electrical currents

☐ All age classes of animals have access to water and sufficient quantities of feed ●

▶ CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

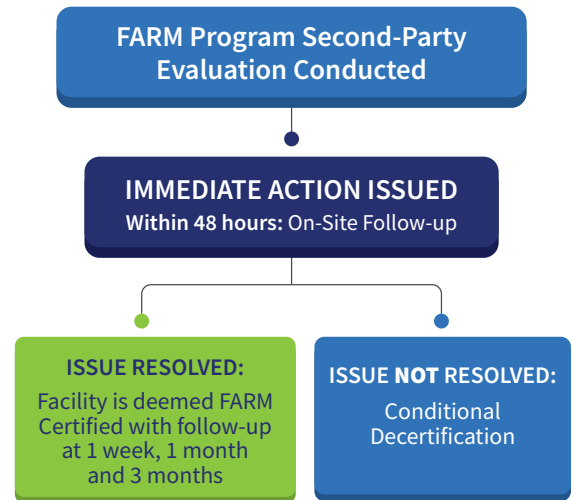
Failing to meet certain FARM Animal Care Program Version 5 standards will trigger one of the following resolution pathways:

Immediate Action Plans | IAP ■

Standard must be met immediately

Immediate Action Plans require that the standard is met immediately. Failure to meet this standard will result in the farm being placed on Conditional Certification for up to 48 hours for the standard to be met. If after the 48-hour Conditional Certification the farm continues to not meet the standard, the farm will be Conditionally Decertified until the standard is met.

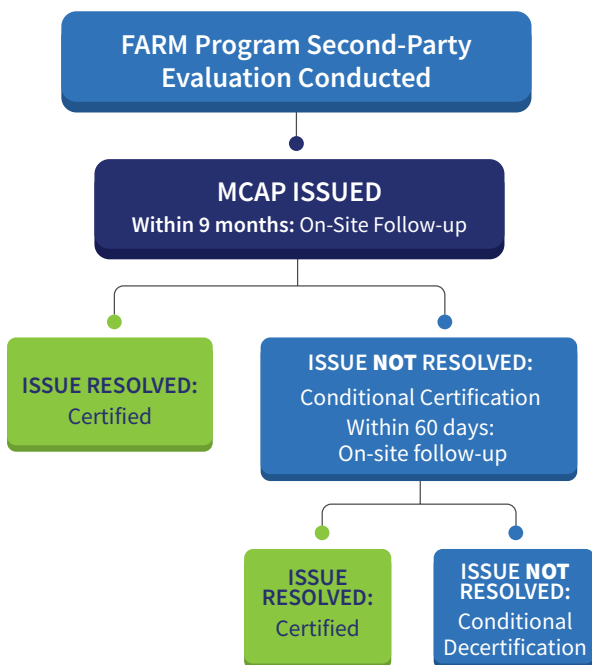
The program participant (the co-op or processor through which the farm is participating) will be delisted from FARM if they continue to procure milk from a Conditionally Decertified facility. If the facility is placed on Conditional Certification for an IAP, there is the expectation that the Second-Party Evaluator follows up with the farm at one-week, one-month and three-month intervals to ensure the standard is met.



Mandatory Corrective Action Plans | MCAP ●

Requires that the standard is met in nine months or less

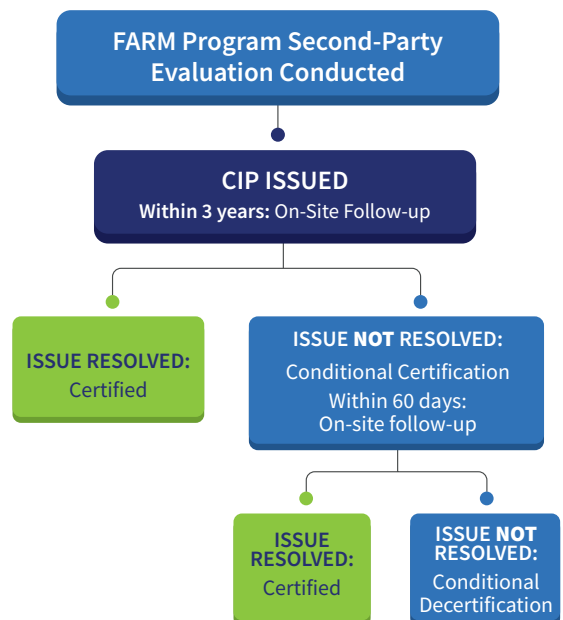
Mandatory Corrective Action Plans require that the standard is met within nine months or less, as determined by the program participant. Failure to meet these standards within the timeframe specified in the plan will result in the farm being placed on Conditional Certification and can ultimately lead to Conditional Decertification if standards are still not met after the designated timeframe. The program participant (the co-op or processor through which the farm is participating) will be delisted from FARM if they continue to procure milk from a Conditionally Decertified facility.



Continuous Improvement Plans | CIP ✨

Requires that improvement toward meeting the standard must be met in three years or less

Continuous Improvement Plans require that action has been taken to meet the standard within a minimum of three years or less, as determined by the program participant. Failure to meet the standard or make progress toward meeting the standard within this allotted timeframe will result in the farm being placed on Conditional Certification and can ultimately lead to Conditional Decertification if standards are still not met after the designated timeframe. The program participant (the co-op or processor through which the farm is participating) will be delisted from FARM if they continue to procure milk from a Conditionally Decertified facility. FARM Animal Care Program Evaluators may create CIPs for additional areas beyond the Version 5 standards if deemed necessary.



RESOURCES

The National Dairy FARM Program works closely with industry stakeholders to curate and develop on-farm animal care resources in order to meet FARM Animal Care Program standards.

- ▶ Documentation templates
- ▶ Protocol templates and posters
- ▶ Continuing education opportunities

To learn more about the FARM Program, access protocol templates or training aids, visit the FARM website: nationaldairyfarm.com.

