

## Animal Welfare Industry Program Summary

Update: As of September 16, 2016

AW Inspections for Code of Practice compliance	March 2015 to Sept 16, 2016
Total on-farm first inspections	79*
Compliant at first inspection	58
Non-compliant at first inspection; corrective actions required, which may or may not include SOPs, and/or subsequent follow-up inspections	21
Producers brought into compliance with one or more of the following actions completed successfully: corrective actions, which may or may not include SOPs; follow-up inspection(s)	21
Compliance rate at 1 <sup>st</sup> inspection	73% (58 farms)
Compliance rate at 2 <sup>nd</sup> inspection and/or SOPs/corrective actions	90% (71 farms)
Compliance rate at 3 <sup>rd</sup> inspection and/or SOPs/corrective actions	100% (79 farms)#
<p>* This total does not include follow-up inspections carried out. In some cases, an individual farm may have been visited multiple times to monitor progress on corrective action plans.</p> <p># In other words, 8 farms required additional follow-ups beyond the 2<sup>nd</sup> inspection and/or its corrective actions submission required revisions as recommended by AWIRC.</p>	

### Objective of Animal Welfare Industry Program

Ensure that dairy cows are being well-taken care of in BC.

### Operational means to achieve the objective

Implement animal welfare standards as an “incident of orderly marketing.”<sup>1</sup> Since the national standard in Canada for dairy cattle welfare is the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle* (2009) (the Code), the BC Milk Marketing Board (the Board) made the on-farm requirements of the Code mandatory for all BC producers.

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<sup>1</sup> The “orderly marketing” of milk in BC is one of the key responsibilities of the BC Milk Marketing Board.

## **Structure**

In October 2014, the Board made the on-farm requirements of (the Code) mandatory for all BC dairy farmers. The Board consulted with industry stakeholders on the mandatory Code and its subsequent inspection program. BC dairy farmers are supportive of animal welfare standards and have cooperated with the Board in adapting their practices when needed to be in compliance with the Code.

The Board established an Animal Welfare Inspection Review Committee (AWIRC) to review and make recommendations to the Board concerning producer checklists. AWIRC members currently include the Chief Veterinary Officer for BC, the UBC NSERC Industrial Chair in Dairy Cattle Welfare, a retired dairy animal veterinarian, a BCMMB Board member, an independent animal welfare inspector and the BCMMB staff lead on animal welfare.

The Board also established an Animal Welfare Policy Working Group (AWPWG), which includes representatives from the BC dairy industry, including processors and the Dairy Farmers of Canada, as well as representation from the Ministry of Agriculture and the BC SPCA. This policy working group makes recommendations to the Board concerning its animal welfare policies and procedures.

## **Inspection Types**

The Board contracts with independent animal welfare inspectors to perform animal welfare inspections for: randomly-selected farms, new producers/Graduated Entrant Program (GEP) candidates, and to follow-up on complaints regarding animal welfare issues at dairy farms as may be required.

## **Challenges**

A key goal of the Board's inspection program, like the DFC proAction® program, is to emphasize continuous improvement, rather than just compliance with the Code.

Because the Board focused on the education of producers with the new program, rather than on non-compliance actions (penalizing producers), producers have been cooperative with both the inspector and the Board when follow-up was required to ensure compliance and improve on-farm animal care practices.

The education aspect and the process of ensuring fairness and expert interpretation of the Code (through AWIRC) meant that the process was time-consuming. However, the fact that producers, AWIRC members and other dairy industry stakeholders were all working towards the same goal: improved animal care, reminded everyone to be patient with the process.

## **AW Inspector Credentials**

The Board mainly contracted with one independent AW inspector, although it did use a number of other inspectors at various times. The primary AW inspector for 2015/2016 is

an agricultural sciences university graduate (Animal Science), who completed the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPPF) FARM Program to become a Certified Dairy Welfare Evaluator. She also completed the Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) course offered by Praedium, which qualifies her to train second party evaluators of dairy animal welfare.

### Transition to proAction®

The proAction® animal care module is based on the Code. In July 2015, the Dairy Farmers of Canada proAction® program was adopted by all provinces. In November 2015, the BC Dairy Association (BCDA) began implementation of the proAction® animal care module with training and validation of BC farms. proAction® in BC will validate approximately 250 farms per year on the food safety program and the animal care program. In February 2016, the Board announced its intention to transition its inspection program to proAction®. AWPWG will be consulted regarding the transition process.

### The Board's authority

However, the Board, as the regulatory body, will continue to maintain its authority to ensure compliance with the Code, under its orders. Furthermore, if any severe violation of the Code or suspected animal cruelty is found at any time on a dairy farm in BC, the Board would immediately implement its protocol to suspend milk pick-up and possibly cancel the producer's licence. A 3<sup>rd</sup> party animal welfare auditor would be sent to the farm to assess animal welfare (and make recommendations to the Board) as soon as possible in such circumstances. Other authorities would also be notified: the BC SPCA and the BC Ministry of Agriculture.

### Background to the implementation of the Animal Welfare Industry Program

Timeline	Animal Welfare Industry Program
June 26, 2014	Dairy industry meeting consensus input: mandatory <i>Code of Practice</i>
August 1, 2014	BC FIRB directs the BCMMB to adopt enforceable animal welfare standards for orderly marketing
October 1, 2014	AO 16 effective date; <i>Code</i> now mandatory for all BC producers
December 4, 2014	Fall producer meeting; producer input provided to Board on policy implementation
Jan-Feb 2015	Input to Board from the Animal Welfare Policy Working Group meetings
March 2015	Further consultation with producers at Spring producer meetings; processor meetings; producers support inspections program
March 2015 – March 2016	The Board's focus is on education and ensuring producer compliance; farms are randomly selected for inspections, plus complaint-driven inspections
March 2016 - onwards	Stakeholder input and transition to <i>proAction</i> ® animal care program. Animal Welfare Transition Committee is formed to oversee transition from BCMMB program to national DFC <i>proAction</i> ® animal care program, administered by BCDA