

Lion Dairy & Drinks Animal Welfare Policy

Last Updated: April 2016

Summary

Lion Dairy & Drinks (Lion) places significant importance on the welfare of the animals that supply our raw milk. We have measures in place with our dairy suppliers which require them to implement and monitor animal welfare standards and practices.

In addition to federal and state animal welfare legislation, Lion has a detailed Milk Supply Policy which forms parts of our contracts with all dairy suppliers. As such, the requirements in our Milk Supply Policy are contractual obligations. Set out below are extracts from that policy:

Extract from Lion's Milk Supply Policy:

The Australian dairy industry has in place a National Dairy Industry Animal Welfare Strategy (NDIAWS). The NDIAWS supports the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy which was developed by the Federal Government with the vision that the welfare of all animals in Australia is promoted and protected by the adoption of sound animal welfare standards and practices.

The team at Lion works closely with Dairy Australia and other industry bodies to ensure that our suppliers are fully aware of any welfare issues and recommended best practice on farm.

Our suppliers are expected to have on-farm animal health and welfare practices of the highest standard.

Animal Welfare Concerns

Lion has no tolerance for animal cruelty. It is each supplier's responsibility to ensure that they meet and comply with all relevant State and Federal animal welfare laws, standards and practices.

Lion may suspend the collection of milk if Lion reasonably suspects that there may be material animal health or welfare issues with respect to the supplier's milking herd or other livestock.

Good animal health and welfare is central to successful and sustainable dairy farming. Customers and consumers are increasingly interested in knowing that a high standard of animal welfare is maintained throughout the supply chain of products they purchase.

Bobby Calves

Lion is committed to working with all stakeholders including Dairy Australia and State and Federal government bodies to ensure that all animals, including bobby calves, are treated humanely. Lion fully supports and complies with the NDIAW and all State and Federal laws governing the treatment of animals.

Our suppliers are expected to have on-farm animal health and welfare practices of the highest standard and the team at Lion works closely with Dairy Australia and other industry bodies to ensure farmers are fully aware of any welfare issues and recommended best practice on farm.

Animal Health and Welfare

Lion is committed to ensuring responsible animal welfare practices are maintained by its suppliers in accordance with the relevant laws, regulations, industry guidelines and animal welfare codes of practice. Lion requires its farmers to adopt practices consistent with those laws and regulations, including the following:

- Calf management – calves need to be managed across the supply chain to meet agreed industry codes of practices and welfare standards;
- Tail docking – the Australian dairy industry does not support tail docking. If any supplier is reported to be tail docking Lion reserves the right to suspend milk collection immediately pending an investigation, and reserves the right to cease collection on a permanent basis;
- Disbudding – Lion’s view is that disbudding of calves’ horns should be practised in preference to dehorning older cattle. Disbudding is best done under the age of 8 weeks using methods approved under industry guidelines and welfare codes of practice;
- Lameness – farmers should seek to minimise lameness through the adoption of practices for prevention, early detection and effective treatment on-farm. Lion recommends that all suppliers have a written lameness improvement plan. Examples, tools and assistance can be found on the Dairy Australia website; and
- Calving induction – It is Lion’s expectation that sound farm management practices will be developed and implemented on farm in order to reduce any perceived requirement for calving induction. Induction drugs should be used if required during calving to ensure the welfare of the cow and/or calf, rather than as a practice to regulate milk production. Any use of induction drugs should be done under the supervision of a vet.

Notification of Disease, Death or Milk Safety Hazard

The safety of milk for consumers is essential. Cows must be managed in a manner that prevents the introduction of hazards to the milk. If dairy suppliers notice unusual symptoms such as dramatic shifts in production, skin lesions, sudden deaths, downer cows etc. they must immediately remove and isolate any potentially affected cows showing unusual signs or symptoms from the milking herd. It is the farmer's responsibility to contact his or her veterinary officer and report any incident of concern to the Lion Farm Services team immediately.

Milk collection may be suspended while any investigation is ongoing if recommended by either a veterinary officer or the State Dairy Authority.

Milk will not be picked up from herds infected with notifiable diseases unless it is deemed safe by the local State Dairy Authority.

Issues that may affect Lion's ability to pick up milk include but are not limited to:

- Pesticide and chemical poisoning;
- Botulism;
- Anthrax; and
- Foot and Mouth disease.

Vaccinations for diseases such as Botulism, Three Day Sickness, and Leptospirosis etc. are recommended as best practice in order to minimise the occurrence of such diseases on farms.

In the event that a supplier does not notify or delays notifying Lion of an incident we may cease milk collection immediately. Lion also reserves the right to cease collection on a permanent basis.

Enzootic Bovine Leucosis (EBL) and Bovine Johnes Disease (BJD)

Suppliers must comply with individual state legislation relating to EBL and BJD testing.

Raw milk is collected from herds certified by the relevant authority to be free from Johnes disease. Raw milk may be accepted from other farms provided evidence is provided of active participation in an approved control program.

Raw milk supplied to Lion shall be EBL free (Monitored Free). If a breakdown occurs, suppliers are required to follow the state EBL Testing Protocol. If a herd contains over 200 cows sub sampling will be used in line with State guidelines. Lion has the right to ask suppliers to supply evidence of their current EBL status. New suppliers must submit evidence of EBL status to Lion before their application to supply milk will be accepted.

Other Diseases

Raw milk must be free from Bovine Tuberculosis, Leptospirosis, Anthrax, Brucellosis and Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis (BSE).

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