

Job Description – Dairy Herd Manager

Summary Description:

Responsible for the overall management of the dairy herd including milking, herd health and assisting with the breeding program. Coordinating and sharing duties and responsibilities with the owner. Making decisions pertaining to the day-to-day operations, such as when an animal needs to be bred, treated, etc.; Decide when veterinarian or service personnel need to be called; decide when a tank of milk must be tested for possible contamination. Discuss herd nutrition issues with owner. Develop and implement standard operating procedures (SOPs) for staff working in the dairy to ensure current Australian OHS legislative requirements are met.

Duties and Responsibilities

Key performance areas:

1. Herd & Facility Management

- Collect and record data on cows, heifers and bulls
- Observe all livestock for signs of illness or distress (several times daily)
- Monitor maternity area and assist with difficult births
- Monitor and assist with care of fresh cows and newborn calves
- Keep all animals visibly & electronically identified
- Recommend culling decisions
- Communicate management decisions with owners
- Upkeep of facilities, grounds and equipment
- Ensuring adequate supply of feed (including pellets hay and silage)
- Develop and implement SOPs to ensure staff operating in the dairy are carrying out their duties in a safe and efficient manner
- Ensure animal welfare meets the 5 freedoms principles
- Report management decisions to owners

2. Milking Management

- Carry out standard operating procedures (as advised by Dairy Focus Consultants) for milking and training milking technicians
- Monitor herd somatic cell count (SCC) and thermoturics and bactoscan.
- Where there is an issue implement measures to address herd cell count. Communicate measures taken to the owners.
- Insure correct operation of milking equipment
- Check parlour supplies
- Monitor cleanliness of parlour, milk room and equipment room
- Report management decisions to owners.

Job Description – Dairy Herd Manager

3. Herd Health Management

- Observe cows, heifers and bulls for health problems
- Treat and care for sick animals; record treatments in cow health records
- Assist with pregnancy checks or other veterinary visits
- Dry off cows as required
- Maintain mastitis and dry cow treatment programs
- Maintain herd vaccination program
- Ensure animal welfare meets the 5 freedoms principles
- Report management decisions to owners

4. Reproductive Management

- Observe cows and heifers for heat and isolate for breeding program
- Artificially inseminate cows and heifers and record data
- Monitor & assist with difficult births
- Ensure animal welfare meets the 5 freedoms principles
- Report management decisions to owners

5. Young Stock Management

- Monitor health and growth of young stock
- Identify, move, group and treat heifers and bulls
- Carry out existing vaccination program and ensure vaccines are administered appropriately
- Dehorn calves, remove extra teats, administer wormer, castrate, etc.
- Ensure animal welfare meets the 5 freedoms principles
- Report management decisions to owners

6. General Farm Work

- Construction and replacement of general fencing including maintaining and repairing electric fencing
- Repair and maintenance of general farm infrastructure including sheds and yards
- Checking and maintaining water supplies including troughs, pipelines, pumps and tanks
- Cleaning and general maintenance (e.g. tyre pressures, oil levels) of farm machinery including Polaris rangers. (Mechanical repairs will be carried out by an authorised repairer)
- Noxious weed control
- Other duties as directed by the owners

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Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required

- Understand the general operation of the entire dairy
- Knowledge of standard milking procedures
- Knowledgeable of disease and injury treatment and calf pulling
- Able to give injections to cows: SC, IM & IV.
- Trained in artificial insemination (prefer appropriate certification and experience)
- Knowledgeable in dairy nutrition
- Ability to motivate employees
- Ability to work with all types of people
- Ability to communicate with a broad spectrum of individuals
- Knowledge in weed and pasture species identification
- Ability to mix and apply appropriate chemicals to control weeds of pastures (spot spraying) in accordance with label recommendations.
- Ability to work in a safe, efficient manner, and where appropriate set up SOPs (standard operating procedures) to ensure all staff are complying with appropriate Australian OH&S legislation.

Interpersonal Attributes

- Dependable honest and accountable
- Be neat, clean and organized
- Has motivation and willing to work towards team goals
- Resourceful, creative, and able to use common sense
- Able to effectively communicate and work with all types of people
- Ability to motivate and discipline employees
- Enjoy working with and around animals
- Calm and consistent manner when working with cattle

Professional Development

Read industry trade journals

Stay informed on dairy market information

Stay current on technology, research, etc. (continuing education)

Interact with dairy professionals, consultants, advisors, contacts, etc.