

## Managing farm food safety risks

Food safety hazards identified on dairy farms must be controlled to ensure milk produced for human consumption is safe. This technical information note provides a summary of food safety risks associated with milk production on dairy farms and provides guidance for managing the risks.

### Food safety program

On-farm food safety programs are essential to demonstrate the effective management of the food safety risks associated with milk harvesting. The management of hazards from microbiological, chemical or physical sources must be documented in food safety programs and support programs incorporating good farm management practices. All food safety programs on Victorian dairy farms must be approved by Dairy Food Safety Victoria. Implementation of a food safety program is verified at audit as a condition of holding a dairy farmer licence. This and other conditions are detailed on the DFSV Dairy farmer licence certificate.

### Residue management

All chemicals on farm must be managed through practices that ensure production of safe milk on dairy farms.

#### *Agricultural and veterinary chemicals*

All agricultural and veterinary chemicals used on dairy farms must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's or a veterinarian's written instructions and be labelled and stored in a secure manner. Complete and permanent records of the use of all agricultural and veterinary chemicals must be made, and identify:

- the date of use
- who applied/administered
- the chemical/drug used
- the rate of application
- what was treated (e.g. cow ID, paddock number, silo etc)
- the withholding period/clearance date.

#### *Stockfeed*

All stockfeed brought on to the farm or produced on the farm must not pose a risk of contamination to the milk. Stockfeed containing any material derived from animals (with the exception of tallow, gelatine and dairy products) must not be fed to ruminants. All stockfeed brought on to the farm must be accompanied by a stockfeed declaration.

All declarations must include:

- the name of the supplier
- a description of the stockfeed
- the date (or period) of supply
- the chemical residue status
- any applicable withhold periods.

#### *Pest control*

Where pest control is achieved through the use of pesticides, the food safety program must describe how they are used. Pesticide use must not pose a risk of contamination to milk and be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Pesticides must be labelled and stored in a secure manner. Records for the use of pesticides must be kept and identify:

- the date of use
- who applied the pesticide
- the pesticide used
- the rate of application
- what area was treated.

### Milk cooling

Milk must be chilled to 5°C or less within 3.5 hours from the start of milking and kept at or below this temperature until collected. Records must be kept to demonstrate conformance to the cooling requirement and storage of chilled milk as specified in the food safety program.

If milk is collected above 5°C (for example, if the tanker arrives before chilling is complete) it is the dairy manufacturer's responsibility to ensure that temperature control procedures are validated and demonstrate equivalent control of food safety risks.

### Animal health

The health status of milking animals must be managed in a manner that prevents the introduction of hazards to the milk. Animals that show evidence of infectious diseases transferable to humans through milk must be segregated to ensure that their milk is not used for human consumption. It may be advisable to consult a veterinarian if animals are displaying unusual symptoms. Milk from animals treated with veterinary drugs must be withheld from supply until the stated withhold period has passed.



## Cleaning and sanitising

The surfaces that raw milk comes into contact with must be corrosion resistant and easy to clean and sanitise. Cleaning and sanitising chemicals must be suitable for their purpose and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. These chemicals must be labelled, handled, stored securely and disposed of in such a way that food safety is not jeopardised. The milk vat and milking equipment must be cleaned, disinfected, rinsed and drained, and the water used must not contaminate the milk. Hot water must be at a temperature sufficient for effective cleaning.

## Construction and equipment

The construction, maintenance and use of the milking shed, vat and equipment must protect milk from contamination during milking, storage and collection. All maintenance non-conformances identified in scheduled maintenance reviews must be rectified.

## Water

Water used on dairy farms must not put food safety at risk. Water for cleaning udder and teat surfaces must not contaminate milk. Stock must not consume or have access to contaminated water that is likely to cause disease or contaminate the milk with residues.

## Competency

To ensure accountability for food safety, the person/s responsible for implementation of the food safety program must be specified in the food safety program and have the appropriate authority and control to deliver the required outcomes. To ensure food safety is not jeopardised, people involved in activities such as milking, applying agricultural chemicals or administering veterinary treatments on dairy farms must understand how their actions may impact on food safety.

## Key points to consider

- Food safety hazards identified on dairy farms must be controlled to ensure milk produced for human consumption is safe.
- The management of hazards from microbiological, chemical or physical sources must be documented in food safety programs and records kept to demonstrate conformance.

- All food safety programs on Victorian dairy farms must be approved by DFSV.
- Implementation of a food safety program is verified at audit as a condition of the dairy farmer licence.
- To ensure food safety is not jeopardised, people involved in activities such as milking, applying agricultural chemicals or administering veterinary treatments on dairy farms must understand how their actions may impact on food safety.

## Further information

DFSV farm licensing information

Guides to Standard 4.2.4 Primary Production and Processing Standard for Dairy Products

DPI Victoria website

EPA – Dairy farms and water

Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Dairy Australia

Further food safety technical information is available at [www.dairysafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.dairysafe.vic.gov.au)

Or contact Dairy Food Safety Victoria on (03) 9810 5900 or [info@dairysafe.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@dairysafe.vic.gov.au)

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