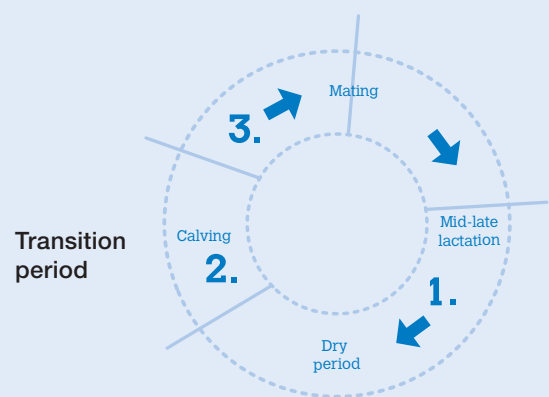


**ARE ALL THE BOXES
 TICKED ON THIS FARM?**

Checklist for Transition Cow Management



**1. Mid-lactation to early dry period:
 Up to 3-4 weeks before calving**

Animals	Feed
<p>Length of time cows are dry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cows are dried off so as to have a minimum 6-week dry period (8 weeks preferred) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early pregnancy test for accurate dry off dates • Cows to be induced are identified and dried off at least 5 weeks before induction commences 	<p>Managing dry cows' body condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cows are fed to maintain or gain body condition during dry period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test supplementary feeds for nutritional value • If high-quality forages (>9MJ ME/kg DM) are in limited supply or too expensive, consider feeding grain / concentrates to dry cows, ensuring all cows have equal access • Aim for a total of 100-120 MJ intake per cow per day • Manage cows so they don't calve in BCS >5.5 • Consider separating thin cows (<BCS 4.5) at dry off and feeding them preferentially
<p>Mastitis risk management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cows are given appropriate dry cow treatment at dry-off, including teat sealant after seeking vet advice <input type="checkbox"/> Heifers are given teat sealant 3 weeks before expected calving date if more than 5 cases of mastitis per 100 heifers in the first month in previous years 	
<p>Monitoring dry cows' body condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cows' body condition score is monitored during dry period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body condition score cows at dry-off (and again when enter transition program) 	
Infrastructure	People
<p>Feeding infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Troughs / self feeders are available for feeding far-off dry cows grain / concentrates if necessary 	<p>Roles and responsibilities / work routines / training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written standard operating procedures have been prepared for farm team and are being complied with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember the 'keep it simple' rule <input type="checkbox"/> Farm team members who have new roles, responsibilities and work routines have had the necessary training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider an in-house training activity

2. Transition period: Last 3-4 weeks pre-calving

Animals	Feed		
<p>Length of time on transition diet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cows (including those to be induced) and heifers are fed transition diet for 21 days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early pregnancy test for accurate due calving dates 	<p>Sourcing transition feed ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> All forages are suitable for transition diet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test for DM, ME, CP, NDF, DCAD, Ca, Mg and P before buying, ensuring wet chemistry method is used for mineral analysis, not NIR <input type="checkbox"/> Fodder purchases are planned in advance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy a single consignment of suitable hay / silage from one source and dedicate it to transition cows 		
<p>Heifers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Heifers are put in with the transition cows for 21-28 days to help them adapt their rumens, get extra minerals and socialise with older animals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If springers are fed in the dairy, also run the heifers through the dairy. This gets them used to the dairy and helps harden their feet <input type="checkbox"/> Heifers are early pregnancy tested to get accurate due calving dates 	<p>Diet formulation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Diet includes all nutritional components required for a well integrated transition diet, but is not over-complicated <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100-120 MJ ME (approx. 11 MJ ME/Kg DM) • >36% NDF DM • 14-16% crude protein DM • DCAD <80 (ideally zero) • Ca <0.6% DM, P <0.4% DM </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mg >0.45% DM • Micro minerals – as reco'd • Rumen modifier – use same as in milker diet • Low DCAD buffers only (do not use sodium bicarbonate) </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100-120 MJ ME (approx. 11 MJ ME/Kg DM) • >36% NDF DM • 14-16% crude protein DM • DCAD <80 (ideally zero) • Ca <0.6% DM, P <0.4% DM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mg >0.45% DM • Micro minerals – as reco'd • Rumen modifier – use same as in milker diet • Low DCAD buffers only (do not use sodium bicarbonate)
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<p>Group size:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cows are grouped to control dominant behaviour and help ensure all cows have access to enough feed 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Lead feed product used is nutritionally sound and used as intended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider if use professional formulation or DIY • Consider whether use lead feed pellet, grain mix, loose mix or liquid supplement. Use same form before and after calving, e.g. grain mix, pellets • Check that DCAD potency is appropriate for reco. per cow feeding rate <p>Feeding out times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Timing of feeding each day is regular and cows have 8 hours access per day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you lead feed in late afternoon, cows are more likely to calve in daytime 		
<p>Mastitis risk management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teats are sprayed if feeding in the dairy <input type="checkbox"/> Any cows or heifers that develop marked udder oedema or begin dripping milk are milked <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calves from these cows need to receive colostrum from another cow or stored colostrums 	<p>Access to pasture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cows' access to pasture is carefully restricted to less than 2 kg dry matter per day to minimise milk fever risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure pasture cover in springer paddock is enough to assist hygiene but not too much. Strip graze as necessary • Do not graze effluent or potassium supplemented pastures <p>Water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Stock water supply is cool and fresh, with pH close to neutral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If considering using bore water, check for pH and total dissolved salts • If supplying Mg Cl in water, use dispenser to control dilution and check daily cow consumption 		

Infrastructure	People		
<p>Springer paddock / feedpad:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Springer paddock / feedpad configuration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider whether to use a springer paddock which includes hay feeders +/- lead feed troughs, or a separate springer paddock with a simple feedpad adjacent to it • Ensure springer paddock / feedpad are an adequate size for number of cows using them at peak times • If lead feeding in dairy, ensure springer paddock / feedpad is close by 	<p>Roles and responsibilities / work routines / training:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Written standard operating procedures have been prepared and are being complied with by farm team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember the 'keep it simple' rule <p><input type="checkbox"/> Farm team members who have new roles, responsibilities and work routines understand the benefits of good transition management and have the necessary training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a training course 		
<p>Mastitis risk management:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Springer paddock / feedpad are clean and dry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ANY reduction in exposure to fresh cow pats reduces mastitis risk • Prepare well compacted and sloped surfaces for feeding area / feedpad • Scrape manure with blade regularly • Set up 2-3 springer paddocks that you can rotate regularly 	<p>Safety:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Staff have identified and minimised the risks to cows and people</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Staff know what to do if something goes wrong</p>		
<p>Feeding infrastructure and equipment:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cows have equal and free access to transition diet</p> <p>If lead feeding in dairy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure feeding system is well calibrated and delivering a consistent quantity of grain / lead feed per bail • If using a herringbone, check that an even quantity of feed is dropped along all bails on each side (individual bales are preferred to a continuous trough) <p>If lead feeding in springer paddock:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not feed lead feed on ground, use troughs. Consider second hand troughs or tractor tyres • Provide >0.75 metre trough space per cow • If using hay feeders, ensure they are adequate for the number of cows and low waste <p><input type="checkbox"/> Feeding infrastructure and equipment saves labour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy, store and handle lead feed in bulk versus bags • If lead feeding in the dairy, consider installing an extra feeding system (if herringbone dairy) or feed head (if rotary dairy) • If feeding in the paddock, use a FEL, a feed hopper with auger on a trailer, or a mixer wagon to put out lead feed / PMR in troughs • Use troughs which are easy to clean • Consider a dedicated lead feed silo 	<p>Monitoring:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Record cows' body condition score as they enter the transition program</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The transition program is regularly monitored for effectiveness and efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure each individual cow is receiving and consuming its transition diet • Record all cow health problem events and treatments around calving 		
	Health problem	Target	Seek help if
	Milk fever	1% (old cows > 8yrs: 2%)	>3%
	Clinical ketosis	<1%	>2%
	Abomasal displacements	<1%	>2%
	Mastitis	<5 cases / 100 cows / first 30 days	>5 cases / 100 cows / first 30 days
	Lameness	<2% with > Score 2 out of 5	>4% with > Score 2 out of 5
	Grass Tetany	0%	1 case
	RFM (>24 hrs after calving)	<4%	>6%
	Vaginal discharge after 14 days	<3%	>10%
	Assisted calving	<2%	>3%
	Lactic acidosis	0%	1%
* Based on the following data sets: Morton, Curtis, Beckett, Moss, Stevenson.			

3. Calving and early lactation

Animals	Feed
<p>Fresh cow management:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh cows are given special attention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the feasibility of running a separate fresh cow herd for cows up to 4 weeks post-calving 	<p>Sourcing milker feed ingredients:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Forage used is high quality with adequate NDF and physically effective fibre
<p>Monitoring cows' nutritional status:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Quick checks are used to identify any nutritional problems which may lead to too much body condition loss between calving and joining <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check grain / concentrate left in bails • Check milk composition (protein and fat percentages) • Check pasture residuals, rumen fill, cud chewing, lameness, manure consistency 	<p>Diet formulation:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Diet for fresh cows (first 4 weeks post-calving) includes all nutritional components required by fresh cows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 160 MJ ME (approx. 11.5-12 MJ ME/Kg DM) • >32% NDF DM • 16-19% crude protein DM • DCAD >250 • Ca: 0.8-1.0% DM, P: 0.4% DM, Mg: 0.3% DM • Micro minerals • Rumen modifier – use same as in pre-calving transition diet
<p>Mastitis risk management:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh cows are handled quietly and not rushed during moving and milking <input type="checkbox"/> All quarters are milked out for the first 8 milkings, using good technique and a consistent routine	<p>Grain feeding rate:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Grain feeding rate of each freshly calved cow is ramped up gradually over first 5-7 days post calving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider installing an individual cow ID feeding system
Infrastructure	People
<p>Mastitis risk management:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Calving area / facilities are clean and dry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a separate 'close-up springer paddock' (possibly with shelter from wind and rain) for cows in last 4-5 days before calving 	<p>Roles and responsibilities / work routines / training:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Written standard operating procedures have been prepared for farm team and are being complied with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember the 'keep it simple' rule <input type="checkbox"/> Farm team members who have new roles, responsibilities and work routines have had the necessary training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a training course
	<p>Monitoring:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> The calving / fresh cow program is regularly monitored for effectiveness and efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records all cow health problem events and treatments around calving (see previous page)

For more feeding recommendations, go to www.dairyaustralia.com.au/Pastures-and-Feeding.aspx

For more advice on mastitis, go to www.dairyaustralia.com.au/countdown

For more about clarifying job tasks, go to The People in Dairy website www.thepeopleindairy.org.au

Disclaimer

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