

# **MILKING AND MASTITIS MANAGEMENT**

On-farm Coach – Session 1

## SESSION 1: BRINGING IN THE COWS (MUST DO)

### Instructions:

Complete “Bringing in the cows” online module on Enlight.

Print this page for use during the second on-farm coaching session – use the below to as a guide for your coaching.

### Setting up the dairy for milking and keeping safe

- Walk around the dairy and show the important parts and any hazards. Examples of hazards may include:

Slip/trips	Chemicals
Hot water	Low bars
Slippery surfaces	
- Demonstrate how to set up the dairy (including gates, vat connection and turning vat on) ready for milking.
- Show where written instructions for dairy set up can be found.

### Milking start times and how long needs to be allowed to bring the cows in

- Outline AM and PM milking start times and how long it takes to bring cows in.
- Discuss possible variations to how long it may take to bring cows in (e.g. location, hot weather).

### Using vehicles to bring in the cows calmly and safely

- Demonstrate safe use of vehicle used to bring cows in, including:
  - Induction to farm Standard Operating Procedure(s) (SOP)
  - Safety equipment required (e.g. helmets)
  - Speed limits
  - Hazards (e.g. inclines, humps, bumps, holes).
- Point out any areas on the track where cows might slow down.
- Demonstrate use of cows’ flight zones to direct them towards the dairy.
- Demonstrate use of vehicle at an appropriate distance from the cows.
- Observe cows walking at comfortable pace with heads down.

### The milking process (watching the team in action)

- Provide them with any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required for milking (e.g. rubber boots, apron, milking gloves)
- Allow employee to observe milking process from a safe location.

## SESSION 1: COACHING QUESTIONS (OPTIONAL)

The following are some suggested discussion points from the online module to have with your employee.

Questions	Suggested answers
Why don't cows want to be by themselves?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cows are prey animals and feel safer in a group</li> <li>• They become distressed if forced to be by themselves</li> <li>• Can become dangerous and unpredictable if left alone</li> </ul>
What are some examples of negative behaviour to avoid?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hits with poly pipe or anything else</li> <li>• Slaps</li> <li>• Tail twists</li> <li>• Quick or sudden movements</li> <li>• Shouting or other loud noises like banging pipe</li> </ul>
What are some examples of positive behaviours to encourage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pats and strokes</li> <li>• Hand resting on the cow's back</li> <li>• Talking quietly</li> <li>• Slow and deliberate movement</li> </ul>
Why do we want to bring cows in slowly/calmly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid foot damage and lameness (cows can see where they are placing their feet)</li> <li>• Minimise mud/manure splashing onto teats</li> <li>• Better milk let down (giving of their milk)</li> </ul>
What is a flight zone?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance at which a cow shows avoidance to humans</li> <li>• Usually 3-5 metres in commercial herds</li> <li>• Smaller for docile cows; larger for more flighty cows</li> <li>• Enter flight zone from behind to move cow forward</li> <li>• Enter from front if you want the cow to turn away from you</li> </ul>
When would you expect cows to go slower when bringing them in?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot weather or rain</li> <li>• When cows are very full (i.e. not hungry)</li> <li>• Tracks being used have exposed rocks</li> <li>• When cows are heavily pregnant</li> <li>• When there is anything new</li> </ul>
What else can you do to fill in time after the cows' have all turned to head back towards the dairy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up gates for next paddock</li> <li>• Check water troughs (empty, leaking or overflowing)</li> <li>• Checking for hazards or repairs (e.g. broken fences)</li> <li>• Move strip-fence</li> <li>• Checking for any missed or down cows</li> </ul>
What would indicate to you that you are pushing the cows too fast?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heads up instead of preferred lowered position</li> <li>• Cows bunching up at the back of the group not wanting to go past other cows in front</li> </ul>