

Purchasing and Caring For Your 4-H Dairy Feeder

Note: This list is not an endorsement. The list is provided by the Clark County 4-H & FFA Dairy Committee for your assistance in purchasing a dairy feeder project animal.

- Van Raay Dairy – 937-605-8823 – Ted
- Assin Dairy – 740-606-0460 - Peter
- Twin Oaks Dairy – 740-837-0359 – Tunes
- Jamison Farms - 937-430-7621 - Donnie
- Gary Metz - 937-207-1080 or Tim Metz – 937-215-3949

Fair or Acceptable Price: Consider current market value of the animal plus a premium for good conformation, healthy, productive, high quality animal. The older the calf the more you will pay, but there is a trade off in overall feed costs and health risks.

2015 Estimated Price for 4-H dairy feeder calves: \$3.00-\$3.50 per pound

Market Selections:

- ➔ Select an animal that is the right size and weight for the project and targeted finish or weigh date at the Fair. Selecting the appropriate beginning weight will help avoid “holding” an animal to make fair weight which is an unacceptable animal care practice. **Dairy feeders must weigh 300 to 650 pounds to show and sale in the Clark County Jr. Fair Auction.**
- ➔ Start by buying a purebred, single dairy bull calf (**HOLSTEIN or BROWN SWISS ONLY**) in February to Mid-March (80 to 120 lb. calf/few days old up to a week old) to meet ideal dairy feeder weight at July Fair Weigh-In (400 to 600 pounds). Purchasing calves, that are a few days old to a few weeks old, will likely increase success of already being on a bottle and/or a bucket. **NO AYRSHIRE, GUERNSEY, JERSEY or MILKING SHORTHORN CALVES ALLOWED at the 2015 Clark County Fair!!**
- ➔ At the May weigh-in, a third party dairy evaluator hired by the Fair Board will inspect every dairy feeder to determine if it is a **qualified single dairy breed castrated male using breed standard color markings as described in the attachment.** In addition, calves will be evaluated for absence of severe abnormalities (ie. Hernias) and desirable dairy confirmation traits. Any decision made by the dairy evaluator on a dairy feeder’s qualification as a single dairy breed of Holstein or Brown Swiss is FINAL! **Feeders must be castrated and dehorned by the May weigh-in!**



Average Daily Gain: 2.0 to 2.3 lbs. per day gain up to 13 weeks, 3.0 lbs. gain after that until Fair. If buying a 100 lb. calf to make a minimum of 400 lbs. at Fair Weigh-In in July – feed for 150 days.

- \$80 – 50 lb. bag of milk replacer, \$3 to \$5 for a bottle. Feed approximately 2 quarts, 2 times a day, at the proper temperature. Be consistent with the amount and blend of the milk replacer. If the weather changes and the temperature drops below 32 F., you may need to feed 3 times a day to supply your calf with additional energy to stay warm.
- Roughly ½ ton of feed will be fed to the calf during a 150 day period. Approximately \$225 cost in grain for the project. Calf starter - \$18 per 50 lb. (100 lbs. of starter), 650 lbs. - Calf Mixer Pellet and Shelled Corn – (70% shelled corn, 30% calf mixer pellet) - \$15 per 50 lb. **(All costs subject to change.)**
- Put feed in front of them on day one. Wean off milk re-placer when calf is eating 4 lb. of grain a day.
- Feed “handful” of hay each day to help keep the rumen operating. Feed good quality grass hay. Don’t feed high quality legume hays (alfalfa, clovers) or feed free choice, the calf will eat the hay instead of the grain. 5 to 7 bales of hay (50 to 60 lb. bales) during the course of the project will be needed.

Water: Provide plenty of clean, fresh water daily. Move the water around in the pen to encourage the calf to move around and seek water. Keep water buckets, tanks and containers CLEAN!

Shelter: Keep calf out of the weather. Protect from wind, rain, sun, and cold. Avoid drafty areas that will lead to respiratory problems in calves. However, make sure the calf's stall or pen is not stuffy – some air movement provides good ventilation and a healthier environment for your calf. Pen space should allow 25 to 30 sq. ft. per animal. Check Dairy Resource Handbook for Calf Hutch recommendations.

Bedding: Keep as dry as possible. Use shavings, straw or mulch.

Health:

- Take your calf's temperature (rectally) twice a day for two weeks after purchase. Record rectal temperature in the morning and again in the afternoon or evening. The average temperature should be 100 to 101.5F. The temperature may be slightly higher in the afternoon/evening.
- Visually inspect your calf daily and check for the following:
 - ☺ Calf appears alert and active.
 - ☺ Ears are not droopy
 - ☺ Nose is clear and free of mucus.
 - ☺ Breathing appears to be normal.
 - ☺ Tail is dry with no signs of diarrhea.
 - ☺ Feces in pen appears light brown in color, pasty, and void of blood.
 - ☺ Environment appears clean, dry and ventilated.
 - ☺ Naval area is dry and free of swelling.
- Feeders must be castrated and dehorned by the May weigh-in.** If not done by the dairy producer, expect to pay \$5 to \$10 for castration & \$10 to \$20 for dehorning plus vet trip charge. Castration should be done at less than 10 weeks of age and dehorning done at one month of age or just as soon as the horn buttons can be felt. **No calf may be shown or sold with any retained testicular tissue or visible horn tissue.** The fair vet will examine any calf in question and make a ruling for qualification.
- Feeders that have an umbilical hernia at the May Tag-In will not be tagged or weighed in. Feeders with an umbilical hernia or unsightly repairs may not show or sell.
- If a tagged feeder dies between the May Tag-In day and **June 1 or is ruled unqualified or has an umbilical hernia**, the exhibitor may replace the feeder with another feeder after receiving approval from the Junior Fair Dairy Committee. The replacement calf will not be eligible for Rate of Gain.



Calf is eating and drinking well!

Check with the dairy producer if calves have been vaccinated, if not contact your local vet for recommendations. All dairy feeder calves will be vaccinated at the **May 9, 2015 Tag-In, 8:00-11:00 AM, Clark Co. Fairgrounds, Cattle Arena and must be vaccinated again by a licensed veterinarian no later than July 1, 2015. Health papers must also be issued prior to July 1 indicating that the calf has had 2nd vaccination & is free of infectious & contagious diseases. Feeders will not be weighed in at the Fair with health papers or vaccinations given after July 1 of the current year and will be sent home with the exhibitor.**

- 2nd Vaccination & Health Paper Checks by Dr. Dana King or Dr. Greg Noll depending upon location**
 - ☞ Tuesday, June 9, 6:00 PM -7:00 PM, Greenon High School behind Vo-Ag Dept.
 - ☞ Wednesday, June 10, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM, Northwestern Middle School
 - ☞ Saturday, June 13, 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM, Clark County Fairgrounds
- Watch for common health related illnesses. Take Action!**
 - ☹ **Scours (Diarrhea)** Symptoms: looseness of bowels and thin feces that is foul-smelling. Look for a wet tail and tail head.
 - ☹ **Pneumonia** Symptoms: High temperature, coughing, rapid breathing, and generally slow actions of animal.

Daily observation, recording symptoms and taking your animal's temperature will be helpful when consulting with your veterinarian for treatment.

Tag-In & Weigh-In: You must tag & weigh in your dairy feeder on **Sat., May 9, 8:00 AM -11:00 AM, Cattle Arena, Clark Co. Fairgrounds.** Cost is \$7.00/feeder includes required vaccinations, de-wormer, implant, and tagging. **You may tag-in a maximum of 5 calves, show two and sell one at the Clark County Jr. Fair.**

Resources to Help You: Dairy & Beef Resource Handbooks, Dairy Feeder Project Book – Available at the Extension Office