

**CLEANLINESS ASSESSMENT FOR DAIRY COWS****1. PURPOSE**

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To provide animals with a clean, dry, and comfortable environment and to minimize the incidence of mastitis and the spread of disease. Cleanliness of udder, hind legs, flanks, and hips are all indicators of stall cleanliness and bedding and bedding quantity. Depending on what part of the cow is soiled, it is possible to determine what areas of the barn have an inadequate level of cleanliness; therefore, appropriate corrective action can be taken.

**2. RESPONSIBILITY**

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- 2.1 Trained and qualified personnel
- 2.2 Herd Manager
- 2.3 Veterinarian

**3. GENERAL**

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Cow cleanliness is an important indicator of cow comfort. Frequent and strategic cleaning of the alleys and stalls will reduce the amount of manure on cows and reduce the amount of manure tracked into the stalls. On the other hand, dirty legs suggest manure splashing in the alleys. Dirty flanks and udders are a result of animals lying in dirty and/or poorly bedded stalls.

When the lying area is wet, cows reduce their lying time.

Large areas of dried caked manure on cows indicate a long-term build-up of manure and highlight weaknesses in the cleaning routine of the alleys and/or stalls.

**4. PROCEDURES**

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- 4.1 Assess all the cows within the herd.
- 4.2 Monitor the animals regularly for cleanliness throughout the day and scrape down as needed.
- 4.3 Record the identification number of the cow.
- 4.4 Assess the cleanliness of the Udder, legs, and flank: Refer to Tables 1 and 2 for the scoring locations and descriptions of the Udder, legs, and flank to assess cleanliness.



❖ **The udder must be assessed before milking**

- 4.5 Assign a cleanliness score (0 to 3) using the matrix scale shown in Tables 2 and 3. Any areas scoring above 2 require immediate corrective action.
- 4.6 Record the results of the assessment on the [Herd Health Scoring Record \(Appendix DC-A-6A\)](#) or the [Cleanliness Assessment Record for Dairy Cows \(Appendix DC-A-6D\)](#).



❖ **Any areas scoring above 2 require immediate corrective action.**

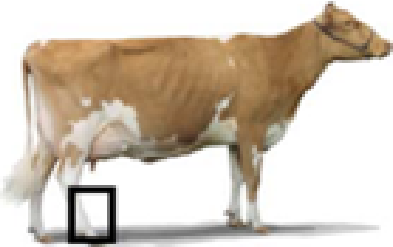


- 4.7 Corrective actions:

Check and/or address the following as required:

- Increase the frequency of flushing and/ or scraping holding areas and alleyways.
  - Ensure stalls and pens are routinely bedded and raked out.
  - Verify the appropriateness of the stall dimension.
  - Increase the amount of bedding.
  - Clip udder hair.
  - Brush the cows to help keep them clean.
  - Manure consistency.
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4.8 Consult with the veterinarian as part of corrective action whenever needed.













**Table 1:** Location and Description of Areas to be scored.

Area	Location	Description
LEG		The leg is defined as from the top of the claw (coronary band) to the middle of the hock
UDDER		The udder is defined as the lower 50% of the udder excluding the teats. View the udder from the back.
FLANK		The flank is defined from the middle tarsal joint to a virtual line between the hook bones

**Table 2:** Detailed description of each of the flank cleanliness scores.

Classification	Description
<b>1 - LIGHT</b>	Contamination of <b>FRESH SPLASHES OF MANURE FOR &lt;50%</b> of the area. The flank may have several areas of fresh manure, but each individual manure area is smaller than one sheet of letter paper.
<b>2 - MODERATE</b>	Contamination of <b>FRESH SPLASHES OF MANURE FOR &gt;50%</b> of the area. The flank has at least one area of fresh manure which is larger than one sheet of paper.
<b>3 - HEAVY</b>	Contamination of <b>DRIED CAKE AND FRESH MANURE FOR &gt;50%</b> of the area. The flank has at least one area of dried caked manure which is larger than one sheet of paper.
<b>4 -VERY HEAVY</b>	Contamination of <b>ENTIRE FLANK AREA AND BELLY WITH DRIED CAKED MANURE.</b>

**Table 3: General Description of Cleanliness' Score**

	<b>SCORE 0</b>	<b>SCORE 1</b>	<b>SCORE 2</b>	<b>SCORE 3</b>
<b>UDDER</b>				
	<b>LIGHT</b> Contamination of fresh splashes of manure for <50% of the area	<b>MODERATE</b> contamination of fresh splashes of manure for >50% of the area	<b>HEAVY</b> contamination of dried caked and fresh manure for >50% of the area	<b>VERY HEAVY</b> contamination of entire area with dried caked manure
<b>LEG</b>				
	<b>LIGHT</b> Contamination of fresh splashes of manure for <50% of the area	<b>MODERATE</b> contamination of fresh splashes of manure for >50% of the area	<b>HEAVY</b> contamination of dried caked and fresh manure for >50% of the area	<b>VERY HEAVY</b> contamination of entire area with dried caked manure
<b>FLANK</b>				
	<b>LIGHT</b> Contamination of fresh splashes of manure for <50% of the area	<b>MODERATE</b> contamination of fresh splashes of manure for >50% of the area (may have some caked spots)	<b>HEAVY</b> contamination of dried caked manure for >50% of the area	<b>VERY HEAVY</b> contamination of entire flank area and belly with dried caked manure

## 5. REFERENCES

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- 5.1 Dairy Farmers of Canada, proActionReference Manual.2023. Retrieved from [https://www.milk.org/Corporate/pdf/proAction/Program%20Requirements/\(2\)%20DFC%20Reference%20Manual%20and%20Workbook/english/proAction-Reference%20Manual-FINAL-Jul2517-EN.pdf](https://www.milk.org/Corporate/pdf/proAction/Program%20Requirements/(2)%20DFC%20Reference%20Manual%20and%20Workbook/english/proAction-Reference%20Manual-FINAL-Jul2517-EN.pdf)
- 5.2 Dairy Farmers of Canada, proAction. Animal Outcome Measurement Protocols: Injury, Cleanliness, Body Condition, and Lameness. Retrieved from: <https://www.dairyresearch.ca/animal-comfort-tool.php>
- 5.3 National Farm Animal Care Council. Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle.

### Document Status and Revision History

DATE	NEW VERSION
7-Feb-2018	Version 01: Mac Campus FACC approved
15-Sept-2023	Version 02: Mac Campus FACC approved