

# North Star Veterinary Services Newsletter

June 2019

## FARM Program

Many of our clients sell their milk to milk processors and cooperatives that require that they follow the guidelines in the FARM program. We understand the frustrations that have come about with the implementation of this program. Showing proof of how we are caring for animals is very important to today's consumers. In order to continue to have consumers that trust their dairy products, we need to continue to evolve to maintain that trust. The FARM program is one way that has been proposed to gain and maintain that trust. Other examples that have developed are public farm visits, exhibits at fairs, and farmers using social media to reach consumers. Below are a few items that we wanted to highlight about the farm program.

- Veterinary Client Patient Relationship (VCPR) - This is a term used to describe the foundation that is needed to validate the working relationship between us (veterinarians), you (client) and your animals (patient). It is what we establish when we come to your farm and work with your animals. For the FARM program, in order to show that this relationship exists, the producer and the veterinarian sign the VCPR form provided by the milk processor or co-op. If we have not been to your farm within the last year we may require a visit to your farm before signing your VCPR.
- Tail Docking - The latest version of the FARM program establishes that tail docking is **NOT PERMITTED** on any cow born on or after January 1, 2017
- Dehorning/Disbudding - While not required, the FARM program recommends that all calves be dehorned before 8 weeks of age. The process is less painful and stressful for the calf when done before this time.
- Protocols - The FARM program recommends that protocols be written for newborn and milk-fed dairy calves, pain management, down cow management, and euthanasia. Many farms in our area only have one or two people working with the cows, so protocols do not seem necessary. However, the purpose of a protocol is not only a way for employees or other family members to know how the owner would like things done, but it also shows that you have a plan for a certain scenario. If you would like help with writing protocols, let us know, we would be happy to help. Additionally, writing down protocols and working with your vet to do so ensure you are following the best practices for your animals and farm.
- Treatment Logs - These are written records of what an animal is given along with milk and meat withhold dates. This not only helps you keep track of when the last time an animal was treated, but can help to make management decisions.

If you have any questions about the FARM Program or you need help with any of the requirements, please call us at 518-483-6223.

When contacting North Star call 518-483-6223