

Down Cow Protocols Manual

For

Farm name: _____

Last revision

Reviewed by

Dairyland Veterinary Service

Dr. _____

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Down Cow Philosophy

1. When a cow cannot get up, it can cause damage to her muscles.
2. The longer a cow is down without care, the harder it is for her to get up.
3. A down cow is an emergency.
4. Make sure the cow has water and feed available.
5. The goal is to move a down cow, without hurting her more, to a place where she can be treated.
6. Down cows are not to be dragged.
7. Our people need to understand the movement a cow needs to make to get up.
8. Our people need to complete training for down cow care.
9. Recording down cow incidents can help us prevent them.
10. We have the responsibility to treat cows in a humane and safe manner.
11. We need to give our cows the best care available.

Procedure for handling down cows

1. Evaluate the situation that caused the cow to go down.
2. Place lime or sand on the ground around the cow to improve her footing.
3. Put pressure on the cow with your knee to encourage her to get up.
 - a. If she gets up, evaluate whether she needs hobbles put on to prevent further injury.
 - b. If the area does not allow for proper lunging, move her to an area where she can lunge.
4. If she cannot get up, contact a person that has been trained to move her to a treatment area.
 - a. Put a halter on her and tie it to her leg so that she does not hurt herself during the move.
 - b. OPTION #1 - Move her with a payloader.
 - c. OPTION #2 - Move her with a skid.
5. Do not drag a cow by her legs.
6. Hiplifts are to be used only to stabilize a cow when assisting her to get up.
 - a. Do not put the full weight of the cow on the hiplift.
 - b. Do not use hiplifts for extended periods.
7. Record the downer cow event.
 - a. List date
 - b. List cow number
 - c. List place where the cow went down
 - d. List the reason the cow went down, if known
 - e. List who was responsible for moving her to the treatment area if necessary
 - f. List the results of her care

Contact Information for Down Cow Care

Name & Phone # of people who are trained to move down cows:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Name & Phone # of people to contact if a cow needs to be euthanized:

- 1.
- 2.

Notes:

1. Have a plan so that cows get immediate care. Involve a veterinarian to make sure a treatment plan is in place.
2. Decide who should be contacted if the animal needs to be euthanized, who is going to do it, and how it will be done. This should follow AABP guidelines.
3. Record all cows that go down. Some cows will get up only to get sore later and be unable to rise. Knowing where and when cows fall can help prevent it from happening.
4. Documenting your down cow procedure and training employees ensures they respond faster in an emergency.