



Keeping Your Farm In Tip-Top Shape

How to protect your farm from an animal rights organization attack.

Do the right thing. Above all else, make sure your farm is exceeding all expectations for animal care, cleanliness and environmental responsibility whether there is a camera on you or not.

Hire the right people. Do background checks, reference checks and ask for actual Social Security cards. Put new hires on probation and watch them closely. If it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. And if a potential hire is suspicious, share that information with other farmers.

Empower your farm workers. Let them know of their importance as a team member in caring for the cows properly, protecting your farm, and that you expect them to immediately report any strange behaviors or actions, or if they suspect any undercover activity.

Report animal abuse. Establish a culture in which employees feel comfortable reporting any willful acts of mistreatment to you. Any animal abuse should be reported to the appropriate local authorities. Signage posted around the farm to remind employees of acceptable actions.

Partner each new hire with a trusted employee. The new employee will learn best practices for your farm, and you'll benefit from another set of eyes watching them closely. Don't be shy about asking other employees about the new worker, too.

Set expectations for animal care. If you don't have them, establish animal care protocols and train your employees. Require ANY farm worker that handles animals to sign a document stating that they understand your animal care expectations, and ask them to immediately report any actions that do not comply. Example protocols, dairy cattle care and ethics agreements, training records and more resources can be found at www.nationaldairyfarm.com

Stay in touch. If you are suspicious of any activity, contact your cooperative or milk processor and local/regional dairy check off organization immediately.

Onboarding Employee Tips

- It is legal to ask a potential employee if he or she is a member of, or if they support an animal rights organization. Ask during the interview or on the employment application.
- Ask if the prospective employee is living in transient housing; ask how long they have been living in the area; ask if they have experience working in agriculture.
- Require employees to sign a non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement. The agreement should include a clause for liquidated damages for taking or distributing photographs or video. If the employee violates the agreement, they may be subject to legal action and damages.
- Verify previous employment. Ask prospective employees for references then contact them to verify previous employment.
- Check social media/Google. Search for prospective employees on Google, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. See what kinds of things they have posted and also look at the pages they like or follow.

The National Dairy FARM Program does not tolerate any willful acts of animal abuse. Animal abuse of any kind should be reported immediately. If credible evidence of willful animal abuse is found on a farm participating in the FARM Animal Care Program, the Willful Mistreatment Protocol will be inacted. For more information on the protocol, visit www.nationaldairyfarm.com

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