

DAIRY FARM MANAGEMENT BASICS

A Farm Management Course by
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Herd Additions and Biosecurity - Article 28

When bringing new herd additions onto the farm your goal should be

- Protect the herd from diseases brought in with new additions
- Protect new additions from diseases they will be exposed to when entering your herd
- Don't buy herd health problems

Exercise caution when adding new cattle to the herd

- They can be a source of new diseases and problems
- The best precaution is to maintain a closed herd
- Buying non-lactating cattle or cows in late lactation is preferred to buying close-up cattle or cows in early lactation. There are better able to handle the stresses associated with moving, and there is less risk of jeopardizing their immune system.
- To be safe, consider all new additions to be infected. Isolate them for a few weeks to
 - Observe them closely before commingling them with the herd
 - Have a chance to run tests and get test results back
 - Properly immunize them before commingling them with the herd
- Protect your present herd from problems that may be carried in by incoming cattle, and protect incoming cattle from problems they will be exposed to in your herd.
 - Maintain an effective vaccination program for your herd
 - Vaccinate incoming cattle with 2 shots (see previous article), preferably before they arrive at your farm.
- Preg check cows, even if they have been preg checked prior to arrival.
- Culture cows for mastitis organisms. Milk them last until they are known to be free of contagious mastitis, or use a separate milker

Exercise the same caution when you send cattle away to another farm, where they may be co-mingled with cattle from other farms, and then bring them back to your farm again

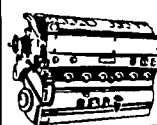
Diseases can be spread in many ways, some of which are manure, dirty equipment that contaminates feed or feeding areas, people with contaminated boots walking in feed alleys, direct contact of animals with each other, poor quality air, contaminated feeds, contaminated water and streams, needles, hoof trimming and dehorning equipment, vehicles, birds, dogs, flies, etc. To help prevent the spread of diseases, consider the following biosecurity measures

- Insist that visitors sanitize their footwear before entering your barn and provide a place where it can be done. Keep them out of feeding areas
- Locate breeding charts and herd records in a convenient place, OTHER THAN in the feed alley
- Use different equipment for handling feed and manure, and keep manure-contaminated equipment out of feed areas
- Separate young calves and heifers from older cattle. Don't let young calves and heifers graze on pastures grazed by older cattle, the pastures may be worm infested
- Purchase cattle from healthy herds, preferably from as few different herds as possible, and preferably without having them go through a livestock auction facility. Don't rely on the health papers, they may or may not be accurate. You may want to do your own testing and vaccinating so you know for sure what has been done. Your herd is too valuable to take too many chances
- Isolate new infected cattle and new herd additions from other cattle in the herd
- Provide good ventilation and air exchange
- Test suspect feeds (home grown or purchased) for toxins and infectious microorganisms
- Fence cattle away from swamps, streams, ponds and other potentially contaminated pools of water
- Use individual needles for individual cows
- Sanitize needles, dehorning and hoof trimming equipment between cows
- Haul cattle coming into your herd on clean, sanitized vehicles. Have one place where cattle trucks load and unload animals, and one loading pen for animals leaving or entering the herd. Don't let the trucker walk through the barn
- Protect cows and cow feed from birds
- Dispose of carcasses in a sanitary way. Don't let dogs lick cows or have access to dead animals
- Keep premises clean and dry to help prevent the buildup of infectious organisms and to reduce fly breeding activity. Implement a fly control program

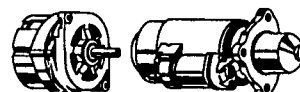
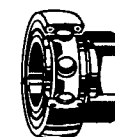


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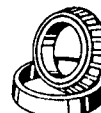
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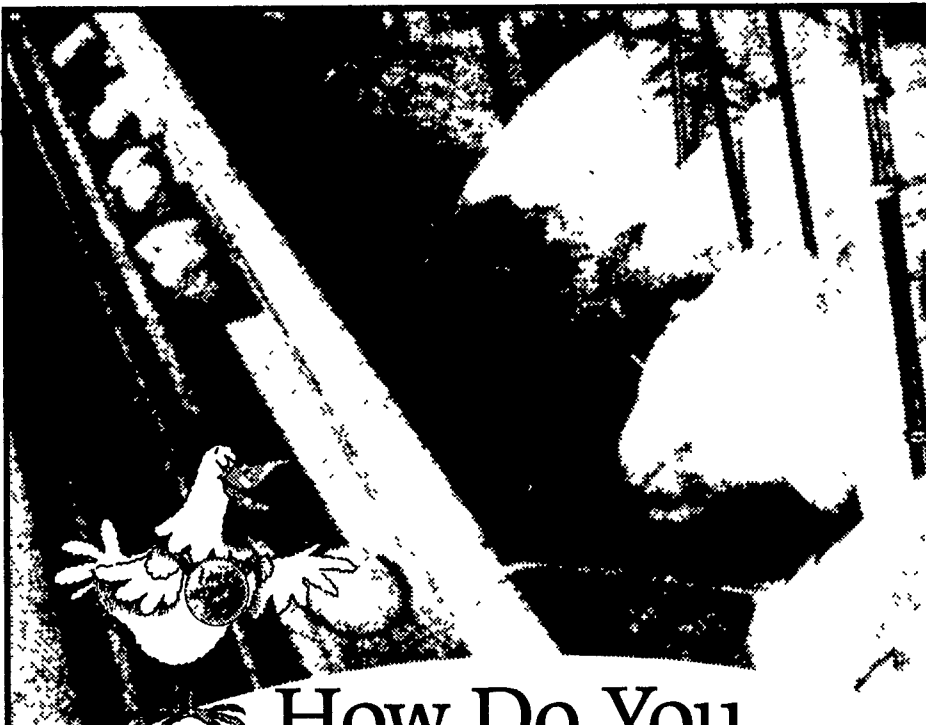
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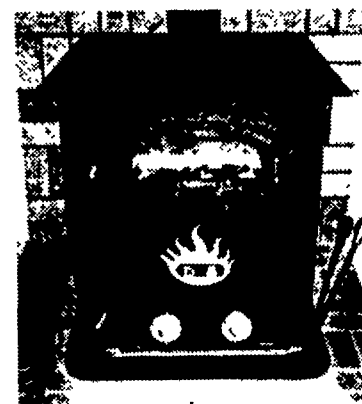
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