

Dairy Standards Technical Advisory Group Meeting Summary Notes

10:00 am Friday 15th December 2023

Meeting I

Food and water

The Group discussed diet and feed space/provision. Some clarifications in the standards were requested and will be actioned in the next publication.

Environment

Housing and buildings were discussed, including loose housing and cubicles. Free access to pasture and buildings was also discussed, although the practicalities need to be investigated further. The Group considered the definition of free-range, the specific number of days on pasture, and pasture quality. The welfare of bulls and the importance of social companionship was explored.

Management

The Group discussed the welfare benefits of encouraging more hauliers, abattoirs and collection centres to join the RSPCA Assured scheme.

Health

The use of the cascade and VMD updates were highlighted.

Calves

Milk provision for calves, calf weight and gradual weaning was discussed.

10:00 am Friday 19th January 2024

Meeting II

Health

The contingency plans around safely aiding downer-cows were discussed. The importance of emergency slaughter equipment and training was emphasised.

Slaughter

The Group discussed the potential for cattle abattoirs to be encouraged to join the RSPCA Assured scheme, and the welfare benefits of this.

Calves (part II)

Teat feeding vs bucket feeding was raised. The space requirements and range access for calves was also discussed.