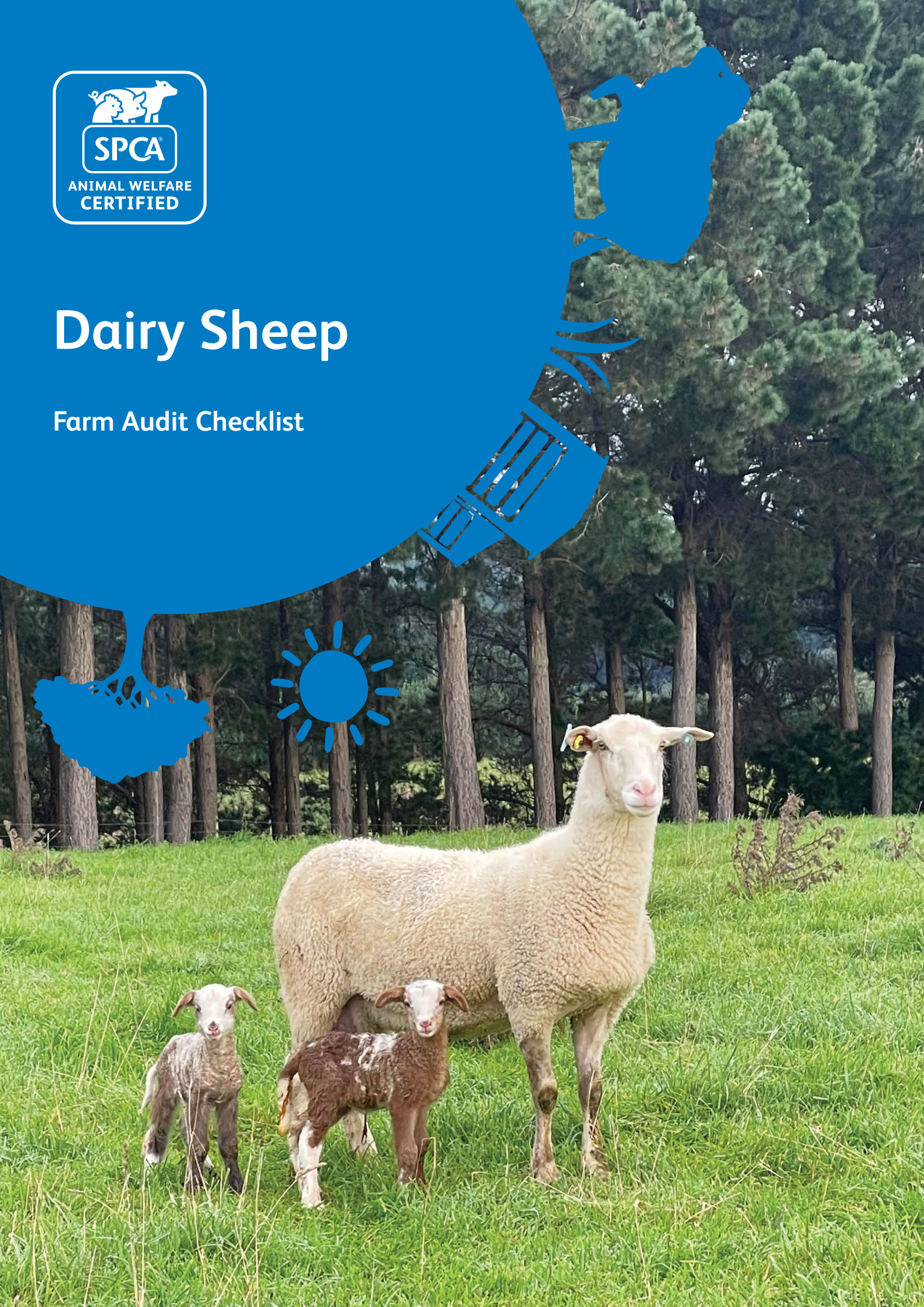




Dairy Sheep

Farm Audit Checklist



Farm Audit Checklist for Dairy Sheep

Version 1 – 2020



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Front Image: [Ferglen Farm](#)

Introduction

This Farm Audit Checklist for dairy sheep provides a summary of the relevant SPCA Certified standards and is intended to help members assess their farm and prepare for an audit.

It is not exhaustive and not intended as a replacement for the standards, which should be read and understood before this checklist is used.

In addition, while completing this checklist and addressing any problems it raises, will increase the likelihood of a successful audit, it is not a guarantee of success.

Please do not send this document to SPCA Certified. It is provided purely for your own reference.

IMPORTANT: If you are a sheep farmer, please use the separate 'Farm Audit Checklist for Sheep'.

Date of assessment:		Flock ages:	
Overall comments:			

Reference Standard	Summarised standard	Check (Y/N)	Comments
	Good Nutrition		
	Feed		
N1 – N3, N7	Sheep have unrestricted and non-competitive access to good quality feed of sufficient quantity. A written plan is provided for emergency situations, e.g. drought.		
N4 & N5	New feed is introduced gradually and all feed is stored safely.		

N6	A trace element supplementation programme is in place.		
	Water		
N8 – N12	Clean drinking water is freely available and accessible for sheep of all ages.		
N13 & N14	Troughs and the areas around them are kept clean and dry.		
N15	The water supplies for animals and the milking shed are tested and recorded.		
N18	An emergency water supply is in place.		
	Lambs		
N19	Adequate colostrum/substitute is fed to all newborn lambs as soon as possible after birth.		

N20 – N22	All lambs receive adequate colostrum, milk or replacer until weaning. No milk fed contains medication/antibiotics.		
N23 & N24	Fostering is done as soon as possible and according to a management plan.		
N25	Tube feeding is done or supervised by trained staff.		
N26	Equipment for feeding lambs is cleaned and disinfected regularly.		
N27	Lambs are given fibrous feed/pellets from three days of age.		
N28	All penned lambs with unhealed navels are navel sprayed.		

Reference Standard	Summarised standard	Check (Y/N)	Comments
	Good Environment		
	Site plans		
E1	A detailed site plan is in place.		
	Fencing		
E2 – E5	Fencing is safe and regularly inspected. No electrified barbed wire is used.		
	Shade and shelter		
E6 – E10	Suitable shelter and shade is provided and accessible for all sheep, especially those close to lambing or with newborn lambs.		
	Housing		
E11	Sheep are not permanently housed or prevented from accessing pasture during good weather.		

E12 – E19	Housing is clean, well lit and maintained, ventilated without causing draughts and has comfortable, dry bedding for all sheep to stretch out on.		
	Milking		
E21 & E22	Tracks are well maintained, encourage sheep movement and walking distances are minimised.		
E23 – E25	Holding yards have safe flooring, shade and shelter, and are an appropriate size for sheep to move comfortably.		
E26	Backing gates are not used to push sheep.		
E27 & E28	The milking shed and surrounding area is kept clean and feeding equipment inside the shed is safely sited and free from contaminants.		
E29	The milking shed water supply is safe and fit for human consumption.		
E30	The hot water supply is never used directly on animals.		

E31 & E32	All chemicals are securely stored and an electrical safety check is conducted at least annually.		
E33 & E34	The milking machine is tested at least annually and vacuum pumps have enough capacity to provide a stable vacuum at all times.		
E35 & E36	Teat liners are fit for purpose, regularly inspected and replaced when needed. Cups are placed and removed with care.		
E37	Milking equipment is thoroughly cleaned after use and a routine cleaning plan is in place.		
E38	Ewes are familiarised with the milking shed before their first lactation.		
E39	Oxytocin is not routinely used.		
E40	Sick or lame animals are recorded, marked and separated from the main flock, in order to prevent mixing of treated and untreated milk.		

	Feed-pads and standoff areas		
E41, E42 & E44	Areas must be comfortable and well drained, with drinking water provided.		
	Transport		
E45 & E46	Sheep are assessed for fitness for transport and no unfit animals are transported.		
E47 – E49	Sheep are rested before moving and are kept in comfortable, low stress, holding/loading facilities.		
E50 & E51	Sheep have free access to water, and are kept off green feed for 4-8 hours before transport.		
E52 – E54	Shade and shelter are provided, unfamiliar animals are not mixed and stationary periods are minimised.		
E55 – E58	All loading and transport equipment is safe, fit for purpose and well maintained.		

E59 & E60	Ramps do not exceed 20 degrees and sheep are loaded at normal walking speed.		
E61 & E63	Transport does not exceed eight hours from start to finish. A reason is given when the nearest slaughterhouse is not used.		
E62	Transport during extreme weather is avoided.		
E65 & E66	Accurate transport records are kept and transport operators have a detailed contingency plan in place.		
	Emergency preparedness		
E67	An emergency preparedness plan is in place and regularly reviewed.		

Reference Standard	Summarised standard	Check (Y/N)	Comments
	Good Health		
	Animal health plan		
H1 & H2	An animal health plan is in place and regularly reviewed.		
H3	A euthanasia plan is in place.		
H4	Compromised animals are monitored at least twice each day.		
	Ram management		
H5 – H7	Rams are in good condition, vet checked eight weeks before mating and monitored for lameness.		
	Breeding		
H8 – H10	A welfare orientated breeding programme is in place, is regularly monitored and does not use either pedigree sheep with known birthing problems or horned breeds.		

H12	Only natural breeding or laparoscopic AI are used for mating.		
	Pharmaceutical use		
H13 – H17	Staff are trained, antibiotics are used only on veterinary advice and up to date records are kept. Off-label use is accompanied by a veterinary declaration.		
	Surgical husbandry procedures		
H18 & H19	Procedures are done by trained personnel, who can recognise signs of pain and distress in sheep.		
H20	Procedures are not performed on animals less than 24 hours old.		
H21 – H23	Animals are humanely restrained/sedated, equipment is suitable for the task and pain relief is given according to veterinary advice.		
H24	No supernumerary teats are removed.		
H25 & H26	Detailed records are kept and animals are inspected twice during 24 hours post-surgery.		

	Castration		
H27 & H28	Lambs going to slaughter before sexual maturity are not castrated. All other castration is done between 24 hours and four weeks of age.		
H29 & H30	Surgical castration is not performed and pre/post pain relief is used for all other methods.		
	Tail docking		
H31 – H33	Docking is only done with SPCA Certified approval and pain relief, on lambs before they are six weeks old.		
H34	Tail stumps are long enough to cover the vulva (same length in males).		
	Shearing, crutching and dagging		
H35 & H36	Sheep are shorn at least annually by competent personnel.		
H37 & H38	Sheep are off feed for not more than 24 hours and off water for not more than 12 hours.		

H39	Shearing cuts are treated immediately.		
H40 & H41	Sheep are not shorn in very cold wet weather and are given food, water and shelter immediately after shearing at all other times.		
H42 & H43	Winter shearing is only done with SPCA Certified approval and no shearing is done within the last six weeks of pregnancy.		
	Lameness		
H44 & H45	Flock lameness is below 5 % and lame animals are treated as soon as possible.		
	Mastitis		
H46	Somatic Cell Counts are monitored regularly and kept below 800,000 for individuals and 500,000 for bulk milk.		
H47 & H48	Testing records are kept for three years and animals with clinical mastitis are immediately treated.		

H49	Udders are regularly inspected for dirt and teat damage.		
H50	A detailed drying-off plan is in place.		
	Inspection of animals		
H51 & H52	Sheep are regularly inspected by competent staff and compromised animals are appropriately treated.		
H53 – H55	Pre lambing inspections are done daily, with multiple birthing ewes being prioritised and brought closer to the farm.		
H56	Inspections are done daily during times of extreme weather.		
	Animal identification		
H57	Animal identification is done by trained and competent individuals.		

H58 & H60	Ear marking and notching are not done, and a maximum of two tags are placed in each ear.		
	Euthanasia and mortality		
H63	All deaths and euthanasia are recorded in the animal health plan.		
H64	Veterinary advice is sought where there are questions about euthanasia.		
H65 - H67	Euthanasia is done by competent people, using appropriate equipment and in a way that does not cause additional pain or distress.		
H68, H69 & H71	Sheep must be rendered insensible, using an appropriate method and staff must stay with the animal until death is confirmed.		
H72	Dead animals are disposed of in accordance with Council regulations.		
	Biosecurity		
H73 & H74	A biosecurity plan is in place and all sheep coming onto the farm are quarantined.		

H75	The use of lethal pest control is reviewed at least annually.		
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Reference Standard	Summarised standard	Check (Y/N)	Comments
	Appropriate Behaviour		
	Sourcing of sheep		
B1	Sheep are kept in stable social groupings throughout their lives.		
	Weaning		
B2 – B5	Lambs are kept with their mothers and once they have reached 13 kg, are weaned gradually, into an area with good pasture and shade/shelter.		
B6	Low stress weaning is used where lambs are not naturally weaned.		

	Handling and moving sheep		
B7 & B8	Facilities for handling/moving sheep are safe and low stress handling methods are used.		
B9 – B11	Sheep are not dragged or held on their sides/back and are moved only as fast as the slowest animal.		
B12	Sheep are never lifted or dragged by their wool.		
B13 & B14	Sheep are not mixed or separated unnecessarily and dogs are kept under control at all times.		
	Behavioural enrichment		
B15	Lambs kept indoors are given suitable environmental enrichment.		
	Managers, stock-keepers and other staff		
B16 – B18	All staff comply with the SPCA standards and policies are in place to report concerns and manage animal welfare breaches.		
B19	All staff are offered animal welfare/husbandry training.		

B20 & B21	Staff have a good working knowledge of sheep husbandry/welfare and can seek professional help if they have knowledge gaps.		
B22	Staff are not allowed to perform tasks unsupervised until they are properly trained and competent.		
B23	There are enough staff to look after the sheep humanely.		

END OF ASSESSMENT



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