

DRY COW MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

Compare your situation with the standards that follow. When making this evaluation I like to use these scores: 1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = often, 4 = usually, and 5 = almost always.

- _____ 1. For free stall dry cow housing, I have no more than one cow per stall. Every 10 percent increase over 80 percent stocking results in 1.6#/day decrease in milk production during at least the first 80 days.
- _____ 2. For bedded pack dry cow housing, I have at least 100 square feet of resting space per cow.
- _____ 3. I have a contingency plan for dry cow housing overcrowding.
- _____ 4. For a feed bunk with lockups, they are spaced for at least 2.5 feet per cow.
- _____ 5. For a feed bunk with lockups, I have at least one lockup for each cow.
- _____ 6. For a feed bunk without lockups, I have at least 2.5 feet of bunk space per cow in the pen (3' is actually better).
- _____ 7. I have a contingency plan to prevent dry cow bunk space overcrowding.
- _____ 8. When doing pregnancy checking I provide the veterinarian with alternative breeding dates when applicable.
- _____ 9. When doing pregnancy checking I record and use information on "twin" pregnancies.
- _____ 10. I have rectal exams done on cows before drying off to avoid drying off open and short-bred cows.
- _____ 11. I periodically check particle length in my dry cow TMR.
- _____ 12. My hoof-trimming program sends cows into their dry period with well-trimmed hooves.
- _____ 13. I observe for and treat cases of hoof rot and heel wart among dry cows.
- _____ 14. All cows requiring an approved dry cow mastitis product receive it by an accepted procedure at dry off.
- _____ 15. I have a written whole herd vaccination program that is implemented 100 percent of the time with approved vaccines.

Penn State University has published a 51 minute webinar, "Dry Cow Management for a Better Start." Paste this URL into your web browser: <https://extension.psu.edu/animals-and-livestock/dairy/nutrition-and-feeding/shopby/dry-cows/webinars> and scroll down to this title.