

Virginia Custom Dairy Heifer Rearing Survey

Basic Information

Name	
Address	
City, State Zip	
County	
Telephone Number	
Recorder	
Date	

General Herd Description

1. Which of the following best describes your heifer rearing enterprise?
 - A I contract with dairy producers to raise heifers for them. (The dairy producer retains ownership of the animal.)
 - B I purchase heifers, raise them, and then resell them. (Heifers may be sold to the original owner or to other dairy producers.)
 - C Combination of A and B.

2. Is raising dairy replacement heifers your principal occupation?
 - A No
 - B Yes
 2a. If no, what is your principal occupation? _____

The following questions apply to growers who contract with dairy producers to raise heifers for them.

3. Who are the producers for whom you raise heifers? (Check all that apply)
 - A family
 - B friend
 - C neighbor
 - D business associate

4. At what age are heifers acquired?
 - A pre-weaning
 - B weaning-5 months of age
 - C 5-9 months of age
 - D 10-15 months of age
 - E other _____

5. What is the basis of payment for heifers which you are under contract?
 - A per diem
 - B per head
 - C per pound of gain
 - D other (explain) _____

6. What is the rate that you charge? _____ / _____ (\$/unit)

7. Contract considerations - who is responsible for the following items? (Check the appropriate party.)

ITEM	GROWER	OWNER	NOT APPLICABLE
Breeding			
Breeding services			
Semen & breeding supplies			
Sire selection			
Heat detection aids			
Pregnancy checking			
Heat detection			
Veterinary			
Deworming			
Dehorning			
Hoof trimming			
Emergency health care			
Medications			
External parasite control			
Autopsy			
Vaccinations			
Feed			
Forage			
Grain			
Protein supplement			
Mineral			
Salt			
Feed additives			
General			
Bedding			
Identification			
Insurance			
Death loss			
Trucking			
Growth monitoring			

8. Is there a third party to resolve conflicts or assign fault in case of death loss or poor performance?

- A No
- B Yes

8a. If yes, who is this person?

- A veterinarian
- B consultant
- C other _____

9. What type of agreement exists between you and your dairy producers?

- A verbal agreement
- B written contract
- C other _____

The following questions apply to growers who purchase heifers, raise them, and then resell them.

10. At what age are heifers acquired?

- A pre-weaning
- B weaning-5 months of age
- C 5-9 months of age
- D 10-15 months of age
- E other _____

11. Where do you acquire heifers for your custom rearing operation?

- A local dairy producers
 B dispersal, reduction, or consignment sales
 C out-of-state dairy producers
 D livestock market
 E other _____

12. Where do you market heifers when you are ready to sell?

- A local dairy producers
 B consignment sales
 C out-of-state
 D other _____

13. If heifers are purchased from a producer, does the producer have first option to buy them back?

- A No
 B Yes
 C Not applicable

The remaining questions apply to all growers.

14. Heifer Inventory

Age (months)	# Head	Age (months)	# Head	Age (months)	# Head
0-2		10		18	
3		11		19	
4		12		20	
5		13		21	
6		14		22	
7		15		23	
8		16		24	
9		17		>24	

15. How many groups are there for heifers on your farm? _____

16. How are the groups determined?

- A Age
 B Size
 C Number of animals in groups
 D Other _____

17. What percentage of the heifers in the herd are identified with a known sire, dam, and date of birth?

- A 0% E 61-80%
 B 1-20% F 81-99%
 C 21-40% G 100%
 D 41-60%

18. What percentage of the heifer herd is registered?

- A 0%
 B 1-20%
 C 21-40%
 D 41-60%
 E 61-80%
 F 81-99%
 G 100%

19. In the last 12 months, how many heifers died...
 less than 4 months of age? _____
 4 to 12 months of age? _____
 over 12 months of age? _____

Records

20. What type of management record keeping system are you using for your heifer enterprise?
- A Computer record system (spreadsheet or database)
 - B DHI Heifer Management Option
 - C Written records
 - D Other (specify) _____

21. Labor Used in the Heifer Enterprise

Name	Relationship	Full- or Part-Time?	Hours/Week	Major Responsibilities

Pre-Weaned Calves

22. At what age do you start feeding grain (starter or other grain) to calves?
 ____ days
23. Do you feed forage to calves before weaning?
- A No
 - B Yes
- 23a. If yes, at what age did you start? ____ days
24. Do calves have access to drinking water before weaning?
- A No
 - B Yes
- 24a. If yes, at what age did you start? ____ days
25. What are the major types of pre-weaned calf raising facility(s) that you used in the winter and the summer of last year? (Check appropriate ones)
- | | Winter | Summer |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hutches (individual) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Group pens (outdoors) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Group pens (indoors, in dairy barns) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Group pens (indoors, in separate barns) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Elevated stalls - wood (in dairy barns) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Elevated stalls - wood (separate barns) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Elevated stalls - metal (in dairy barns) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Elevated stalls - metal (separate barns) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Individual pens (in dairy barns) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Individual pens (in separate barns) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tied | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

26. What is the primary type of bedding used in your calf raising facility (where applicable)?

- A Straw/hay
 B Sand
 C Sawdust/wood shavings
 D Newspaper
 E Corn cobs/stalks
 F Other (specify) _____

27. How old are calves when you usually wean them?

_____ weeks

28. How do you decide when to wean calves? (Check all that apply.)

- A Size
 B Age
 C Grain intake
 D Other (specify) _____

Replacement Herd Health

29. What is the predominant disease problem with calves less than 3 months of age in your herd?

- A Digestive
 B Respiratory
 C Other (specify) _____

30. Listed below are some of the vaccinations you might have used with your calves and heifers in the past year. For each measure, check the appropriate answer.

<u>Vaccinations</u>	No	Yes	Frequency Before Calving
Brucellosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
IBR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
BVD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
PI3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
BRSV	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Leptospirosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Virus calf scours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Other (list) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

31. Did you worm heifers during the past year?

- A No
 B Yes

31a. If yes, when and which product did you use? _____

32. Do you use a coccidiostat or coccidiocide for coccidiosis control?

- A No
 B Yes

32a. If yes, what product do you use?

- A Bovatec
 B Corrid
 C Deccox
 D Rumensin
 E Other (specify) _____

32b. If yes, how is the product fed?

- A free choice mineral
 B grain mix
 C liquid

Nutrition and Feeding

33. How often do you have forages tested for nutrient content?
 _____ times/year

34. How often do you have heifer rations balanced?
 _____ times/year

35. How do you have rations balanced? (NOTE: Please provide a copy of your most recent rations if available.)

<input type="checkbox"/> A feed company nutritionist	<input type="checkbox"/> D extension agent/specialist
<input type="checkbox"/> B private consultant	<input type="checkbox"/> E yourself or family member
<input type="checkbox"/> C veterinarian	<input type="checkbox"/> F don't have rations balanced

36. How often are feeds weighed?

<input type="checkbox"/> A daily	<input type="checkbox"/> D yearly
<input type="checkbox"/> B weekly	<input type="checkbox"/> E never
<input type="checkbox"/> C monthly	

37. How are concentrates delivered to heifers? (Check all that apply.)

Method	Weaning to 5 mo.	6 to 12 Months	Breeding Group	Pregnant Heifers
Total Mixed Ration				
Top-Dressed				
Free-Choice Feeder				

38. What percent of forage needs does pasture supply during grazing months (April - September)?

Percentage	Weaning to 5 mo.	6 to 12 Months	Breeding Group	Pregnant Heifers
0				
1-20				
21-40				
41-60				
61-80				
81-99				
100				

39. What supplements are used for heifers during grazing months? (Check all that apply.)

- A grain _____ lbs/head/day
- B hay
- C silage
- D total mixed ration
- E free choice mineral
- F no supplementation
- G other _____

40. What management practices are followed concerning management of your pasture? (Check all that apply.)

- A rotational grazing
- B fertilization program
- C reseeding in last 5 years
- D annual mowing
- E soil testing
- F other _____
- G pasture not used

41. Please check all of the feedstuffs that you are currently feeding based on the heifer groups listed below.

Feedstuff	Pre-Weaning	Weaning to 5 mo.	6 to 12 Months	Breeding Group	Pregnant Heifers
1:1 mineral					
2:1 mineral					
16% Concentrate					
18% Concentrate					
20% Concentrate					
Alfalfa hay					
Alfalfa silage					
Alfalfa-OG hay					
Alfalfa-OG silage					
Barley					
Barley hay					
Barley silage					
Broiler litter					
Calf grower					
Calf starter					
Clover hay					
Corn					
Corn distillers grain					
Corn hominy feed					
Corn silage					
Corn stover					
Cottonseed hulls					
Cottonseed meal					
Dry brewers grain					
Ear corn					
Earlage					
Fescue hay					
Milk					
Milk replacer					
Mineral w/ ionophore					
Molasses					
Oats					
Orchardgrass hay					
Pasture					
Peanut hulls					
Peanut meal					
Peanut skins					
Rye silage					
Salt					
Sorghum					
Sorghum silage					
Soybean hay					
Soybean hulls					
Soybean meal, 44%					
Soybean meal, 48%					
Soybean silage					
Timothy hay					
Wet brewers grain					
Wheat					
Wheat midds					
Wheat silage					
Whole cottonseeds					

Monitoring Heifer Growth

42. How often do you monitor heifer performance by weighing and/or measuring wither heights?

- A Never
 B Every ___ weeks
 C When the veterinarian visits
 D Whenever groups are being handled for other purposes
 E Other (specify) _____

43. When measuring growth, which of the following tools do you use? (Check all that apply)

- A Electronic scales
 B Balance scales
 C Weight tape
 D Wither height measuring stick

44. What if any form of animal restraint is available in your heifer housing (raising) areas? (check groups where answer is yes)

	Newly Weaned Calves	Yearling Heifers	Bred Heifers
Single Headgate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fenceline Headlocks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stanchion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reproductive Management

45. What is your average age at first breeding?
_____ months

46. What determines when you decide a heifer is ready to be bred for the first time?

- A Age
 B Weight
 C Both age and weight
 D Other (specify) _____

47. What method of breeding heifers do you use?

- A AI only
 B AI first time, then bull
 C AI first and second time, then bull
 D Bull only
 E Other

48. What type of bulls are used for heifers?

- A Dairy - same breed as heifers
 B Dairy - different breed
 C Beef

49. Did you use estrous synchronization in heifers in the past year?

- A No
 B Yes

49a. If yes, what product did you use?

- A Prostaglandin
 B Synchro-Mate B
 C Other _____

50. Do you routinely palpate heifers prior to breeding?

- A No
- B Yes

If yes, at what age? _____ months

51. Are heifers confirmed pregnant by a veterinarian?

- A No
- B Yes

Replacement Herd Culling Practices

52. What percentage of heifers were sold for beef?

- A 0%
- B 1-5%
- C 6-10%
- D 11-15%
- E >15%

53. Which of the following most closely describes your heifer herd size within the past twelve months?

- A Increased by more than 5%
- B Decreased by more than 5%
- C Stayed within $\pm 5\%$