



# CDQAP Quality Assurance Update - March 2021

## Tips for Water Board Inspections

By Deanne Meyer, Ph.D., Livestock Waste Management Specialist, UC Davis, Department of Animal Science, UC ANR

Reducing the spread of COVID-19 in California will allow us to open up. As we return to the more familiar, we'll see more normal inspections from Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Staff. Here are some reminders to prepare for inspections.

### Corral management. Minimize infiltration of manure nutrients:

- Remove standing water within 72 hours after a storm event
- Minimize water trough spills into corrals
- Knock down and remove fence line manure

### Solid manure. Use compacted soil in storage areas:

- Remove solids at least annually
- Divert runoff from solid manure storage area



### Lagoon management:

- Maintain clean pond sidewalls
- Kill weeds early and often
- Prevent roots from growing and destabilizing pond sidewalls (especially important in above ground ponds)
- Maintain freeboard (1' if in ground; 2' if partially or completely above ground)
- Maintain capacity for the 25-year, 24 hr storm event
- Remove pond solids to maintain adequate capacity

### Feed center management:

- Use concrete surface when possible for wet feed storage
- Manage leachate from wet feeds (silage and commodities)
- Drain runoff from feed center to lagoon storage
- Manage non-concrete surfaces to minimize infiltration of nutrients

### Wellheads:

- Apply liquid manure at least 100' away from wellheads.
- Check air gaps or chemigation valves on all wells that connect to a system with liquid manure.

### Useful records:

- Rendering receipts
- Solid manure hauling receipts
- Documentation of manifested manure
- Nutrient Management Plan implementation documentation
  - Sampling results
  - Application results
  - Calculations for nitrogen applications and removals

### Mortality management (rendering receipts):

- The General Order prohibits onsite disposal of cattle in lagoons
- Disposal of dead animals at a dairy facility is prohibited without an emergency declaration

Use tailwater ponds only for tailwater storage. These ponds are not included in Waste Management Plans and cannot have liquid manure stored in them.

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## Whatever Happened to Prop 12?

The controversial 2018 animal care law is still impacting California agriculture.

By Dr. Michael Payne, UC Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine and Director, CDQAP

Three years ago California's voters passed Proposition 12, the [Farm Animal Confinement Initiative](#). The ballot initiative established minimum space requirements for veal calves, breeding pigs and egg laying hens. In addition, the initiative banned the sale of products from animals produced outside the state not meeting those requirements. One year later in a U.S. district court challenge, it was ruled that the initiative did not violate the Interstate Commerce Clause. The court found that, while California could not require animal care standards in other states, it was free to regulate sale of animal products within its own borders.

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## Tune in Next Week! Golden State Dairy Management Webinars

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**Thursday, March 25**

**1:00 - 5:00 PM**

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### Nutrition

- Almond hulls in lactating cow diets
- Feed additives to reduce enteric methane
- By-product feeding on CA dairies

### Animal Management and Health

- Polled genetics- ready for prime time?
- Feeding more milk – does it pay?

### Crop Production

- Recharging groundwater aquifers
- Water savings from forage sorghum
- Growing sugar beets as dairy feed

### Priority Nitrate Management Zones

- Whole farm balance
- Making the most out of manure
- Automated irrigation management

## Tips for Water Board Inspections *continued*

### General. Actions just prior/during the inspection:

- Review reports/documentation -the inspector has read these. Be sure you are familiar with your information submitted in annual reports
- Biosecurity- have inspector wash/disinfect boots or provide booties prior to the walk-around
- Escort the inspector on the walk-around, taking pictures or notes of areas of interest
- Request to copy inspection worksheet if one is not provided
- Review correspondence – respond in writing as needed or to correct misinformation

Inspections occur to protect our water resources and for you to protect your dairy. The more prepared, the easier yours will go.

## Whatever happened to Prop 12? *continued*

Nationally the initiative continues to have profound effects in the pork and egg-laying industries. Cage-free layer production grew from 6% in 2008 to over 24% today. It's estimated that a typical swine facility will lose about 25% to 33% of [sow capacity](#), if it implements the increased space requirements.

Dairy producers and their herd veterinarians routinely collaborate to select from a diverse range of rearing strategies, based on an individual farm's circumstances. While a variety of [housing options](#) are successfully and humanely implemented, according to the USDA nearly 75% of calves are raised in individual hutches or pens.

During the first two months of life replacement heifers are typically kept in hutches commonly measuring [24 to 32 square feet](#), adequate space to allow calves to turn around comfortably, stand up, and lie down with legs fully stretched. Fortunately, Prop 12's veal calf requirement, 43 square feet of usable space, never applied to the dairy industry.

Some in the animal rights community have continued to call for expansion of Prop 12's requirements to include dairy heifers. Some of this interest is undoubtedly fueled by a fundamental confusion between antiquated veal crates and modern dairy calf hutches. When communicating to those unfamiliar with dairy operations, it may be useful to point out that:

- Unlike the old veal crates where veal calves remained their entire lives, dairy calves routinely remain in hutches for only six to eight weeks before advancing to group housing. Calf hutches allow for monitoring and treatment of individual newborn calves.
- There is a rich body of scientific literature documenting decreased disease in calves that are separated from the cow at birth; nearly 40% reduction in diarrhea and 17-fold reduction of respiratory disease have been reported.
- There is strong evidence that removal of the calf early is actually more compassionate, with decreased measures of stress in both the calf and dam, including reduced vocalization, decreased heart rate and fewer observed instances of agitation.

Over 90 percent of California dairies participate in the National FARM (Farmers Assuring Responsible Management) Dairy Program with other dairies participating in other third-party management and welfare audits and programs. The FARM program is constantly updated to reflect our most current understanding of best practices for cow health and welfare. Recent changes in the program have been summarized in a [CDQAP newsletter article](#).

