

## The European Dairy industry fully endorses and supports animal welfare

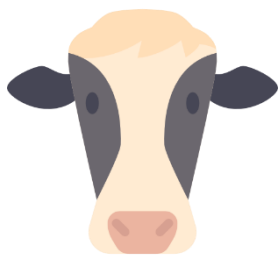
**The European dairy industry relies on healthy animals and well-kept dairy livestock.**



The European dairy industry processes milk and dairy ingredients in around 12,000 plants in the EU and partners on a daily basis with around 700,000 farmers across the whole Union. As dairy cows are the core pillars of the economic, social and environmental strength of the dairy sector, the animals giving the milk have long been deserving our particular care and attention. The dairy industry confirms that healthy cattle, as well as sheep, goats and buffaloes assure the sustainability of our sector. Animal care is essential to produce safe and high-quality milk, just as it is essential to assure farm productivity and profitability.

The essence of the well-being of dairy animals is followed when an animal is healthy, comfortable, well-fed and has access to safe clean drinking water, is safe, able to express normal behaviour and is not suffering unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress. Such animal care practices include healthy living conditions, nutritious and adapted diets and good medical care.

The dairy industry is fully aware of the importance of the well-being of animals for all parts of the chain, from farmers to consumers, and it shares the concerns of governments, investors and the civil society to ensure the well-being of the dairy animal throughout its life. Then, and for many years now, the members of EDA got aligned with initiatives either at national or corporate level, in accordance with the latest EU standards and legislation. We invite our stakeholders to value, as attached in the annex, our latest achievements. EDA plays an active role in the EU Platform for Animal Welfare and our EDA Animal Health / Animal Welfare Task Force has a strong voice within our association and is supported by our EDA Counsel for EU Veterinary Affairs. Hence EDA naturally fully endorses the internationally accepted "Five Freedoms" as applied to animals and works to ensure that its suppliers' farming practices meet these standards, and that they commit to take the necessary measures to ensure that their animals are:



1. Free from hunger, thirst and malnutrition
2. Free from fear and distress
3. Free from physical and thermal discomfort
4. Free from pain, injury and disease
5. Free to express normal patterns of animal behaviour



These are also taken up in the [OIE standards of animal welfare](#). Dairy cow and animal welfare are not a new topic for the dairy industry, on a European or global level. The [scientific guide of the International Dairy Federation \(IDF\)](#) has already been published in 2008, and is still helpful as a good overview. The global dairy sector sustainability initiative '[Global Dairy Sustainability Framework](#)' (DSF), co-created by EDA, also bases itself on animal welfare and care as one of its pillars. The '[Sustainable Agriculture Initiative](#)' (SAI) also works its principles for animal derives products around these five freedoms.

## Some examples of activities taken by European dairy companies to ensure dairy animal welfare:

- Danone communicates on a [dedicated website](#) around all sustainability issues, including animal welfare: ***“Animal welfare is a business issue for Danone, in order to meet the consumers’ and stakeholders’ expectations, ensure a top quality finished product, and help increase the farmers’ profitability and competitiveness.”***
- [Valio puts emphasis on the well-being of dairy cows](#), through production training and regular dairy farm audits.
- DMK GROUP has integrated several goals relating to animal welfare into its [DMK 2020 Sustainability Programme](#). For the ambitious goals in the farming sector DMK GROUP has implemented the Milkmaster Programme, in which all dairy farmers are involved. Milkmaster is the joint initiative by dairy farmers, for dairy farmers with which the company fulfils its responsibility.
- Friesland Campina strives to ***“use agricultural and dairy farming methods that have the lowest possible impact on the environment, are animal friendly and contribute towards boosting public support for dairy farming.”*** It supports its member dairy farmers via a [specific programme with tools for achieving sustainable farm management](#).
- At ARLA as well, a [specific programme](#) focuses on ***“continually improving animal welfare by implementing the animal welfare standard for all Arla farmers and by strengthening performance with extension services and new knowledge.”***
- Lactalis Group is fully supportive of [the French national programme for animal welfare](#), through the “Charter for good agricultural practices” launched in 1999. This national charter covers over 92% of the milk collected in France and inspired the Group’s own charter called “Cap sur l’Avenir” (*The Future ahead of us*) now covering 98% of the milk it collects in France.

### European Dairy Association (EDA)

[www.euromilk.org/eda](http://www.euromilk.org/eda)

[eda@euromilk.org](mailto:eda@euromilk.org)

Avenue d’Auderghem 22-28, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

 @EDA\_Dairy