



LEPRINO QUALITY
ANIMAL CARE

Our Beliefs

Ensuring ample supply of the highest quality milk is Leprino Foods' lifeblood for making superior quality cheese and dairy nutrition products. **It all starts with the milk.**

Healthy, comfortable cows that are well fed, maintained, and cared for will always be the best and most productive source of milk. Great farmers, the only kind we work with, clearly see the benefit of humane animal care and best practice adoption on the farm. **They recognize that healthy cows are good business.**

There is no room in our business for willful mistreatment or cruelty to animals. It is a personal affront to our core values, and gravely harms the reputation and well-being of good people earnestly trying to make a living. **We won't tolerate it.**

Leprino Quality Animal Care (LQAC) Policy

Ensuring ample supply of the highest quality milk is Leprino Foods' lifeblood for making superior quality cheese and dairy nutrition products. In our business, it all starts with the milk. Healthy, comfortable cows that are well fed, maintained, and cared for will always be the best and most productive source of milk. Great farmers, the only kind we work with, clearly see the benefit of humane animal care and best practice adoption on the farm. They recognize that healthy cows are good business, and they carefully protect their most valuable asset.

There is no room in our business for willful mistreatment or cruelty to animals. It is a personal affront to our core values, and gravely harms the reputation and well-being of thousands of good people earnestly trying to make a living in the dairy industry.

To this end, Leprino Foods recognizes the internationally accepted "Five Freedoms" as applied to animals:

1. Freedom from Hunger and Thirst
2. Freedom from Discomfort
3. Freedom from Pain, Injury and Disease
4. Freedom to Express Normal Behavior
5. Freedom from Fear and Distress

We fully support the work of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)¹ in promoting the implementation of these "Five Freedoms" in our global food supply chain.

Specifically, Leprino Foods commits to:

1. Legal Compliance

All materials derived from animals, which are used in the manufacturing of products sold by Leprino Foods shall comply with applicable local laws and regulations on farm animal care.

Leprino Foods will also develop and implement science-based standards and guidelines that are consistent with the international standards of OIE, Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM)² and the Red Tractor Scheme³.

1. www.oie.int
2. www.nationaldairyfarm.com
3. www.redtractorassurance.org.uk

2. Continuous Improvement

Immediate Compliance Requirements

Leprino Foods has established standards specifically related to the humane treatment of animals that in some cases exceed the standards of the FARM program and/or the Red Tractor Scheme. It is the expectation of Leprino Foods that farms will, at a minimum, comply with Section 2.A, 2.B, 2.C, 2.D and 2.E of this policy immediately upon starting to supply Leprino Foods.

Full Compliance Requirements

All farmers supplying raw milk to Leprino Foods are required to be fully compliant with the Leprino Quality Animal Care policy.

Enrollment in FARM (United States Suppliers) or the Red Tractor Scheme (United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland Suppliers) shall be complete by December 31, 2015.

Full compliance, to be complete by December 31, 2016, shall be inclusive of a completed second party on-farm evaluation, a written Herd Health Plan, an annual employee signed Code of Ethics, annual employee training, and a plan to ensure second party on-farm re-evaluations.

Second party on-farm re-evaluations shall occur every 1-3 years based on a farm level risk profile and farm size as determined by LQAC. Dairy cooperative partners will be responsible for ensuring implementation, program management, documentation of compliance, second party on-farm re-evaluations, and randomized third party verifications of all farmer members supplying raw milk to Leprino Foods.

Leprino Foods shall independently initiate verification of suppliers of milk and dairy ingredients to ensure compliance to the Leprino Quality Animal Care policy.



Specifically:

2A. Mistreatment of Animals

Leprino Foods has a Zero Tolerance policy for the willful mistreatment of animals which results in maliciously causing undue pain, injury or suffering. These acts include, but are not limited to, malicious hitting or beating of an animal, movement of non-ambulatory animals in a manner that is inconsistent with FARM guidelines (see Chapter 9 - Special Needs Animals⁴), prolonged lack of access to sufficient feed and water (see Chapter 5 - Nutrition, Table 1⁴), and inappropriate on-farm harvest or euthanasia.

Any farm with representatives (owners, management or employees) found to be willfully mistreating animals will be immediately suspended from supplying milk to any Leprino Foods manufacturing facility.

2B. Medical Procedures for Dairy Cattle

The appropriate use of pain control protocols, as agreed upon by the herd veterinarian and in conformance with established guidance by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)⁵ and the American Bovine Practitioners Association⁶, shall be used*.

PROCEDURE/METHOD		CONDITIONS OF USE		
		Animal Age	Operator	Anaesthesia & Analgesia
Disbudding *1	Chemical Cauterization	1st Week of Life	Trained Stock Person	*Per Herd Health Plan
	Hot Iron	Up to 8 Weeks of Age	Trained Stock Person	*Per Herd Health Plan
Removal of Supernumerary Teats	Sharp Scissors or Scalpel	Up to 8 Weeks of Age	Trained Stock Person	*Per Herd Health Plan
Dehorning *2	Tipping of Horn (Insensitive Portion)	Any Age	Trained Stock Person	*Per Herd Health Plan
	Permanent Removal (Must not be used routinely)	Any Age	Veterinarian	Required
Tail Docking	Practice to be discontinued by December 31, 2016			

*1 - Disbudding involves destroying the horn-producing cells (corium) of the horn bud. Horn buds are removed without opening the frontal sinus⁵.

*2 - Dehorning is removal of the horns after they have formed from the horn bud. When cattle have large horns they are sometimes "tipped", a procedure that removes the sharp end of the horn but leaves the base⁵.

4. http://nationaldairyfarm.com/sites/default/files/FARM_manual_2013_WEB.pdf

5. www.avma.org

6. www.aabp.org

2C. Euthanasia

At times, euthanasia may be required to humanely deal with complications from birth and other special needs circumstances when an animal's quality of life is decreased or when pain and suffering cannot be alleviated. Personnel who routinely work with animals need to be trained to recognize situations where euthanasia is the best option for the animal.

Designated animal caretakers are required to be trained to perform euthanasia through preferred techniques that are consistent with recommendations from the American Veterinary Medical Association.

2D. Caretaker Training

Evidence of annual employee training exists, and an Employee Code of Ethics (see FARM Appendix L⁷) has been signed by each employee annually.

2E. Animal Observations

Action plans are in place for situations where animal body condition scores (see FARM Appendix A⁶ or DairyCo UK⁸) are less than 2, or where locomotion scores (see FARM Appendix D⁶ or DairyCo UK⁷) are 3, as defined in the FARM program or Red Tractor Scheme. All animal observations shall be documented and the records retained for future verifications.

6. www.aabp.org
7. http://nationaldairyfarm.com/sites/default/files/FARM_manual_2013_WEB.pdf
8. www.dairyco.org

3. Accountability and Validation

Leprino Foods has an established independent verification process that scores compliance to the LQAC program at the individual farm and supplier level. The audit system recognizes the difference between non-compliance around critical criteria that will result in an immediate suspension versus other serious infractions which require corrective action and second party on-farm re-evaluations.

Critical infractions include, but are not limited to:

- a. Evidence of malicious treatment of animals
- b. Movement of non-ambulatory animals in a manner inconsistent with FARM guidelines
- c. Prolonged lack of access to sufficient feed and water in a manner inconsistent with FARM guidelines (see Chapter 5 - Nutrition, Table 1⁴)
- d. Inappropriate on-farm harvest or euthanasia
- e. Non-compliance to FARM, Red Tractor and LQAC Medical Procedures as detailed in Section 2B
- f. Nonexistent Herd Health Plan
- g. Systemic animal health issues in the herd
- h. Nonexistent annual employee training
- i. Nonexistent Employee Code of Ethics signed by all employees
- j. Second Party On-Farm Re-Evaluations not complete a minimum of every 3 years

In cases of egregious or extreme circumstances, the farm will be permanently terminated from the Leprino Foods supply network. Under other circumstances, the farm will be suspended indefinitely, until such time that an investigation has occurred, correction action has been implemented, and re-certification has been completed by the LQAC Investigative Board.

Leprino Foods has a “2 Strikes and You’re Out” rule. No reinstatement, under any circumstances, will occur if a repeat critical infraction is identified through Second Party On-Farm Evaluations, Third Party Verifications, or any other credible source of information.

4. http://nationaldairyfarm.com/sites/default/files/FARM_manual_2013_WEB.pdf

LQAC Advisory Council

An independent advisory council of animal care experts has been established to help guide Leprino Foods in policy development and best practice adoption. The Advisory Council includes:

Janice Swanson, Ph.D.
Department of Animal Science
Michigan State University

Jan Shearer, DVM, M.S.
College of Veterinary Medicine
Iowa State University

Cassandra Tucker, Ph.D.
Department of Animal Science
University of California, Davis

LQAC Investigative Board

An Investigative Board, led by the Leprino Foods SVP of Global Research, Development & Quality, has been established to independently investigate non-compliance with the LQAC policy at a farm level. The Board is charged with completing a thorough fact-based investigation, providing recommendations for corrective action(s), and verification that the said corrective action(s) are completed before a farm can be reinstated to supply Leprino Foods.

The Investigative Board is made up of representatives from Leprino Foods, the member cooperative, dairy farmers, and animal care experts.

4. Reporting

We are committed to reporting on the progress of this standard annually as part of our commitment to global responsibility.