



BREEDING

Cows are strongly maternal beings who form close bonds with their young, and must give birth in order to produce milk.

On dairy farms, they are forcefully impregnated every year to keep this milk flowing, usually by artificial insemination, which requires workers to insert their arm into the cow's anus to hold her cervix in place while injecting her with semen collected from a bull.

Semen is collected from bulls through the use of 'electro-ejaculation'.

Like humans, dairy cows carry their young for nine months before giving birth. Cows are generally pregnant for 10 months of the year, with two months 'off.'



BOBBY CALVES

Male 'bobby' calves are considered useless to the dairy industry because they'll never produce milk. These calves, along with surplus females, are sent to slaughter at just 5-7 days old.

At the slaughterhouse, they are roughly handled and often killed while still conscious.

In 2021-2022, Dairy Australia estimated that over 200,000 bobby calves were sent to the slaughterhouse.

Calves can also be killed on the farm, within their first 24 hours of life.

Male calves who are not killed within the first week of their life are raised and sold for their meat.



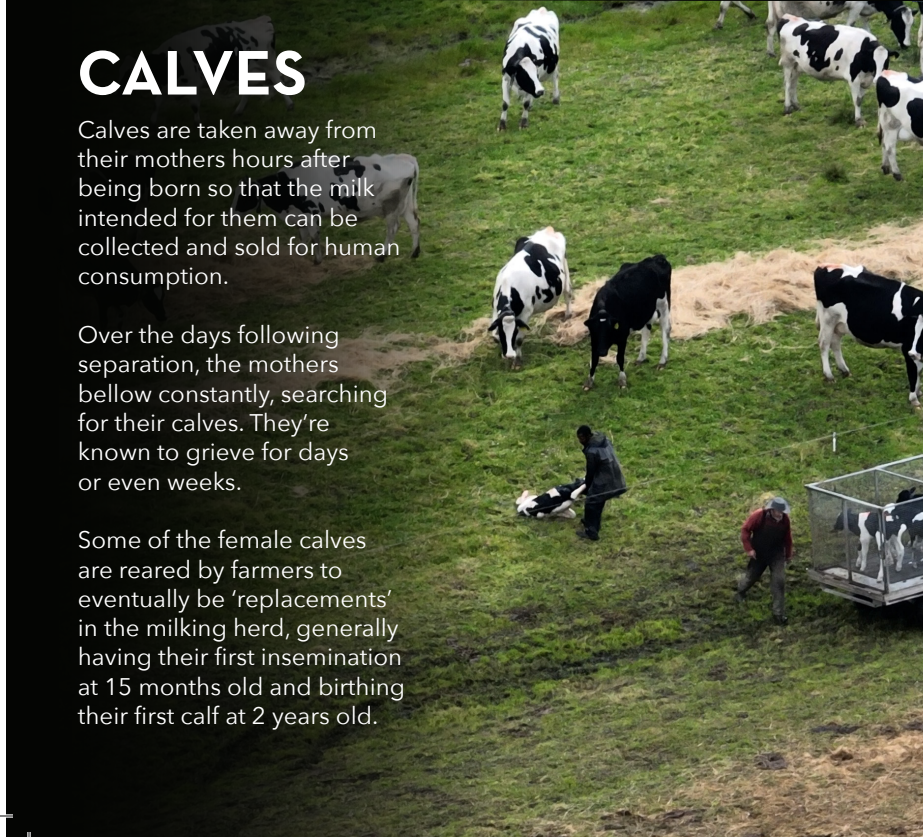
DAIRY FACTORIES

In 2024, the Australian dairy industry became the first in the world to release a comprehensive national set of guidelines for the intensive confinement of dairy cows.

These guidelines support the adoption of American-style zero-graze housing systems, where cows are kept in large, concrete barns with access to individual 'loafing stalls' where cows can lie on beds of sand or recycled waste.

Like other forms of factory farming, dairy factories restrict cows from natural behaviour, such as grazing on grass and having access to open spaces to play and socialise.

Instead, cows spend the majority of their lives standing on hard concrete eating grain, or being milked in an industrial milking parlour where their milk production is closely monitored and evaluated.



CALVES

Calves are taken away from their mothers hours after being born so that the milk intended for them can be collected and sold for human consumption.

Over the days following separation, the mothers bellow constantly, searching for their calves. They're known to grieve for days or even weeks.

Some of the female calves are reared by farmers to eventually be 'replacements' in the milking herd, generally having their first insemination at 15 months old and birthing their first calf at 2 years old.



MILKING

Dairy cows have been selectively bred to produce higher levels of milk, with modern dairy cows producing around 20-40 litres of milk per day.

Like all mammals, cows produce milk on a demand and supply basis. The faster a cow's udder is emptied, the faster her body tries to replenish the lost milk.

2-3 times per day, the lactating cows are herded into the milking shed and hooked up to industrial milking machines.

It is estimated that up to one third of dairy cows suffer from mastitis, a painful inflammation of the mammary glands caused by bacteria. Cows can become extremely unwell, miserable, and even die.

22% of dairy cows also suffer from lameness, meaning that walking and moving is difficult and painful.



SPENT

Although cows have a lifespan of up to 20 years, most dairy cows will be slaughtered before they are six years old. On high production dairy farms, most cows are between 3-4 years old when they are sent to slaughter.

Cows are killed when their milk production slows or they become injured. Some cows, known as 'downers', become weak and unable to stand due to the pressure of continuous impregnation and milk production.

In Australia, many slaughterhouses specialise in the slaughter of spent dairy cows, generally selling their bodies as cheap meat for export or domestic sale.

Greenham is the largest company specialising in the slaughter and processing of Australian dairy cows. They export meat to multiple countries and supply to Burger King in the US.

OUR INVESTIGATIONS

From 2023 - 2025, Farm Transparency Project documented every stage of the Australian dairy industry, from birth to slaughter. Their investigations found:

- Newborn calves, dragged from their mothers as they cried out in fear and pain. Mother cows running after a trailer, unable to keep up as their babies disappeared from view.
- The merciless slaughter of week-old calves, including dozens who had their throats slit while fully conscious.
- 4-7 year old dairy cows sent to slaughter, exhausted from a constant cycle of pregnancy, birth and separation, and worn out from the endless pain and discomfort of having milk, intended for their missing babies, sucked from their bodies by machines.
- Cows living on hard concrete floors, covered in their own waste and with no access to the outdoors.

This is Australian dairy.



TAKE ACTION

The commercial breeding, confinement and slaughtering of hundreds of thousands of cows and calves in the dairy industry is completely unnecessary, especially given the vast array of easily accessible plant-based alternatives.

With each plant-based choice you make, you're saving cows and calves from a lifetime of suffering.

Scan the QR code below to find out more about how you can stop cows being slaughtered by exploring slaughter-free alternatives to dairy.



The only way to End Dairy Slaughter is to stop breeding cows to make milk.

All cows deserve to grow old.

EndDairySlaughter.com.au

DEADLY DAIRY

THE REALITY BEHIND EVERY GLASS OF MILK



farmtransparency.org