



SAFE MILK KENYA

KNOW YOUR MILK-IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH!



HEALTH AND SAFETY ON THE DAIRY FARM



Health and Safety on the Dairy Farm: Why does it matter?



Health and safety is important for farmers, farm workers, veterinary practitioners and all visitors to the farm.



Farm accidents are very common, but the risk is often ignored.



According to the International Labour Office, agriculture has been identified as one of the most hazardous sectors in the world. It is estimated that of 335,000 fatal work-related accidents occurring worldwide every year, some 170,000 involve agricultural workers.



Health and safety does not only include the prevention of accidents, but also avoiding disease and physical stress from repetitive and heavy manual work, and contamination from unsafe handling of drugs and chemicals on the farm.

Dairy farming risks:



Clean and safe dairy



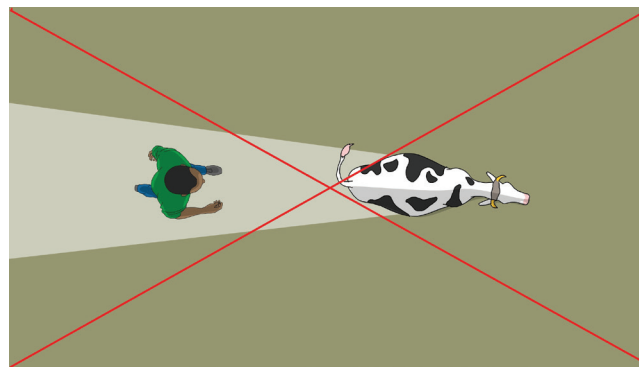
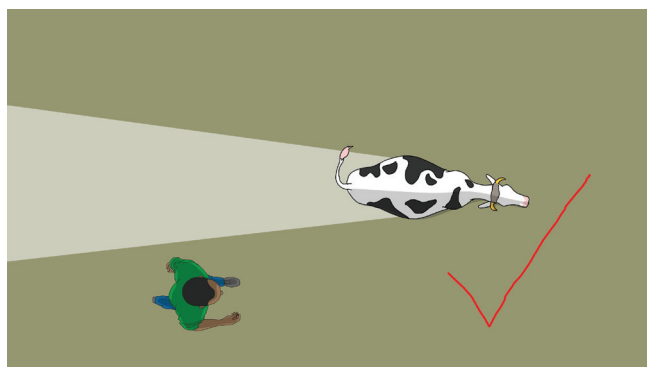
Unsafe and dirty dairy

- Handling of livestock.
- Difficult working positions (crouching).
- Repetitive and monotonous work tasks.
- Exposure to noise, vibration, dust, weather, pesticides.
- Exposure to diseases and infections that are naturally transmitted between cows and humans).
- Excessively long hours leading to fatigue and stress.
- Poor equipment maintenance.
- Lack of personal protection equipment (PPE).
- Poor storage and handling of veterinary drugs and chemicals.
- Poor knowledge and awareness of dangers.
- Human error.*

*Lunner-Kolstrup C and Ssali TK (2016) Awareness and Need for Knowledge of Health and Safety among Dairy Farmers Interviewed in Uganda

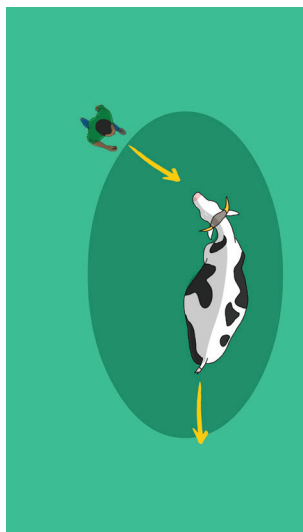
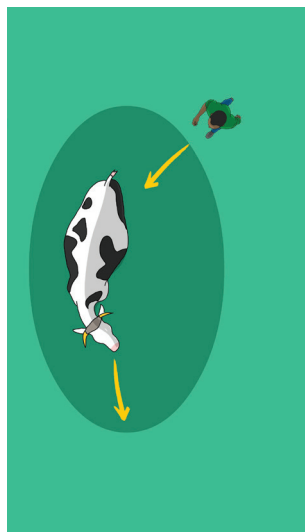
Avoiding accidents with livestock in the field:

When handling cows:



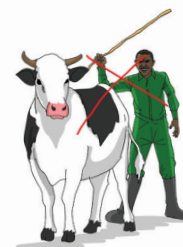
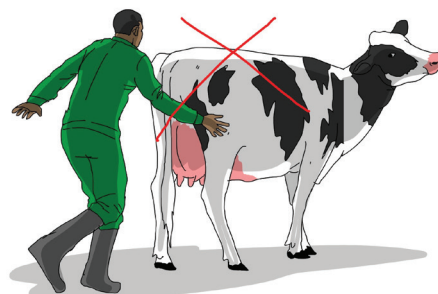
- ✓ Do: Make sure the cow can see you: when you can see their eyes, they can see you.
- ✓ Do approach cows in a calm manner and observe the body language of a cow.
- ✓ Do allow the cow space around her to move away. This is an imaginary circle called 'the flight zone'

- ✗ Don't walk behind a cow where she can't see you, or invade her flight zone.
- ✗ Don't make cows panic by forcing them to walk fast or run.
- ✗ Don't put pressure on a cow; it will make her do things like jump fences or run through people.



The flight zone is space around the cow to let her get away.

- ✓ Do take extra care when a cow is with her calf.



- ✗ Don't hit a cow and don't shout or scream at them. It will make them panic

Avoiding accidents in the dairy

- Maintain an even floor surface without potholes.
- Keep floors well scrubbed; no green scum.
- No cow dung left lying around.
- Drains well maintained and covered.
- Good lighting for early morning milking.
- Safe electrical installation.
- Wear rubber grip boots (gumboots).
- Secure cows in a milking bale with back legs held during milking to avoid kicking.

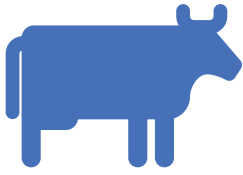


Avoiding accidents/long term effects when treating a cow:

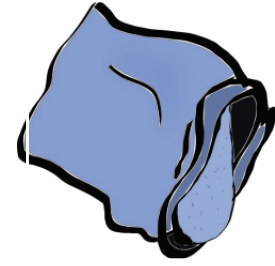


- Build a crush to secure the cows while you treat them for disease, deworming or vaccinations. Do not try to treat them in the milking bale.
- Only have one person administering veterinary drugs to cows. Try to make sure that the person is a qualified vet.
- Never let a lady handle drugs with breeding hormones.
- Wear full PPE when spraying cows with acaricide. This is a very poisonous chemical that can have a long-term negative impact on your health.

General tips:



Cows can spread diseases such as brucellosis, salmonella, e-coli. Some of these diseases are spread through cow faeces. Keep your cows clean and well vaccinated. Make sure you have water and soap for milkers and dairy workers to wash during and after milking.



Mouldy feeds and straw/hay carry aflatoxins and spores of fungus. Avoid the presence of these in the dairy as they can be ingested by humans and animals causing long term sickness



Repetitive work in a crouching position can put long term strain on the body. This mostly affects the back, shoulders and knees. Provide a milking stool. Ensure that milkers have a good rotation and days and time off.



Accidents are more likely to happen when people have not been trained properly or are overtired. Make sure that milkers have a good rotation of duties, and that they know how to avoid accidents.



Have Standard Operating Practices (SOPs) in place for all stages of dairy cow handling, milking and treating, as well as cleaning procedures for the dairy.



Ensure that acaricides are kept locked away until use. Make sure that full PPE is used.



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FARMERS MAKE IT SAFE!

As the primary producer of milk, you can make it safe by controlling what goes into the milk your cows produce.





THINGS TO REMEMBER!

Aflatoxin comes from fungal spores. It is Invisible but highly poisonous. It attacks food crops in Kenya and can contaminate animal products through the food chain. If you feed your dairy cows contaminated feed, they will give you contaminated milk. You can reduce the risk of aflatoxin contamination through good agricultural practices, especially at harvest and storage times.

Any mouldy mate should be burnt. Do not feed it to your cattle or family. If you are worried about aflatoxin, it is possible to get an aflatoxin test done. The NCPB or a lab near you should be able to provide this. If you mix your own cattle feed, we recommend that you get it tested. You may think that your own crops are aflatoxin safe, but the proteins that you buy in may not be safe. This is often the case with cotton seed cake, or sunflower cakes. You can use a binder to decrease the levels of aflatoxin in your cattle feed. Ask a professional for advice on this.



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