University of Vermont Organic Dairy Bedding Management Study – On-farm observation sheet

Pre-interview Orientation:

Where are the dry cows and heifers and unused bedding:

Where are the lactating cows? (If needed: Which pen contains the largest group, if multiple, which contains the high producing cows?)

Where is the unused bedded stored for lactating cows?

Where is the bulk tank and can you turn on the agitator?

How many hours since the cows were last bedded?_____

How many milkings are in the tank?_____

Number of cows whose milk is in the tank?_____

On-farm Observation Sheet

1. *ALL FARMS*

a. Bulk tank milk sample collection *(Agitate the milk for at least 5 minutes before taking a sample)*

i. Temperature of milk in tank from tank thermometer: _____

ii. Temperature of milk in tank from infrared (surface reading): _____

iii. Temperature of milk in tank from lab thermometer: _____

iv. Record the date and time that the sample was taken

Date _____

Time _____

b. How are individual cows identified?

□ Ear tags
□ Neck collars
□ Tattoos
□ No obviously visible identification
□ Other (describe): _____

c. Type of ventilation for lactating cow barn: (Check one)

□ Natural
  □ Sidewall curtains present
  □ Open ridge vent present
□ Tunnel ventilated (mechanical ventilation)
□ Cross ventilated (mechanical ventilation)
□ Other (describe): _____

d. Is the ventilation: (Check one)

□ Good: Constant air flow, no hanging odors
□ Fair: Some odors, but not overpowering
□ Poor: No air flow, strong hanging odors

2. ***Both FREE and TIE stall, lactating cows:***

    a. Stall width: _____ inches

    b. Stall body length (from neck rail or brisket board to back curb): _____ inches

    c. Total stall length (including head space to back curb): _____inches
    d. Are all the stalls uniform in size?

        □ Yes □ No □ Other (describe): _____

    e. Gutter behind cow or just alleyway?

        □ Gutter □ Alleyway only □ Other (describe): _____

    f. Does the stall have a brisket board or brisket locator?

        □ Yes □ No

3. ***FREE STALL, lactating cows:*** *sample from pen containing largest group of lactating cows, or if multiple pens of equal size sample from high producing group.*

    a. Total number of pens for lactating cows: _____

    b. How many rows of stalls are in a pen?

        □ 2 rows/pen □ 3 rows/pen □ Other (describe): _____

    c. Number of stalls per sampled pen: _____

    d. Number of cows in sampled pen: _____

    e. Stocking density in cows/stalls (can be calculated after): _____

4. ***TIE STALL, lactating cows:***

    a. Number of stalls in barn: _____

    b. Number of stalls used for lactating cows: _____

    c. Trainers present?

        □ Yes □ No

5. ***LOOSE HOUSING/BEDDED PACK, lactating cows:*** *if multiple pens and pens are different sizes or designs, describe the largest lactating group or high group if equal*

    a. Number of pens for lactating cows: _____

    b. Size of pen: _____ square feet

    c. CURRENT number of cows per pen: _____

    d. Square feet per cow (can be calculated after): _____

    e. Current estimated depth of pack: _____

    f. Temperature of pack: _____

6. ***Outdoor turn-out area, lactating****: sample similar to loose bedding; if no material on concrete surface, no sample necessary*

    a. Number of outdoor pens: _____

    b. Size of pen: _____ square feet

    c. CURRENT number of cows in pen: _____

    d. Square feet per cow (can be calculated after): _____

    e. Describe base (surface) material (e.g. concrete, no surface):

    _____

    _____

    _____

    f. Describe surface of turn-out pen (depth of manure present, how wet/muddy):

    _____

    _____

    _____

    g. **TAKE PICTURE OF EXERCISE YARD FOR LACTATING/DRY COWS WITH TABLET**