



# Makin' Cows Smile

Guided Reading Pamphlet



# Dairy Farmers: Care for Their Animals



**Dairy farmers** have a very important job. They must take good care of their animals. These animals include the **dairy cows**, **heifers** and calves that live on their farm. We depend on dairy cows to give us milk to help us stay healthy.

Dairy farmers do many things to care for those animals. They feed them a nutritious diet, make sure they are healthy and provide them with a place to live.

# Makin' Cows Smile: Key Vocabulary

**Barn** — The place where cows and other animals live.

**Calf** — A baby cow.

**Cud** — What is produced after the cow eats her food, swallows it and regurgitates it to chew again.

**Dairy Cow** — A farm animal who is a female and who produces milk for us to drink.

**Dairy Farmer** — A person whose job is to take care of dairy cows and to provide milk for us to drink and to make into dairy products.

**Heifer** — A female calf or teen-aged cow.

**Herdsperson** — Farm employees who have specialized training in cow health care.

**Milker** — The unit that gently removes the milk from the cow's udder.

**Nutritionist** — Someone who has specialized training in preparing special mixes of feed (called rations) that are balanced to meet an animal's specific dietary needs.

**Ration** — The special mix of feed that a cow eats to meet her specific dietary needs.

**Stall** — Separate beds where individual cows sleep.

**Udder** — The body part on the cow where she produces and stores milk.

**Vaccination** — A medicine given to cows or other animals to prevent them from getting sick.

**Veterinarian** — An animal doctor responsible for giving the animals regular medical care.



# Let's Review!

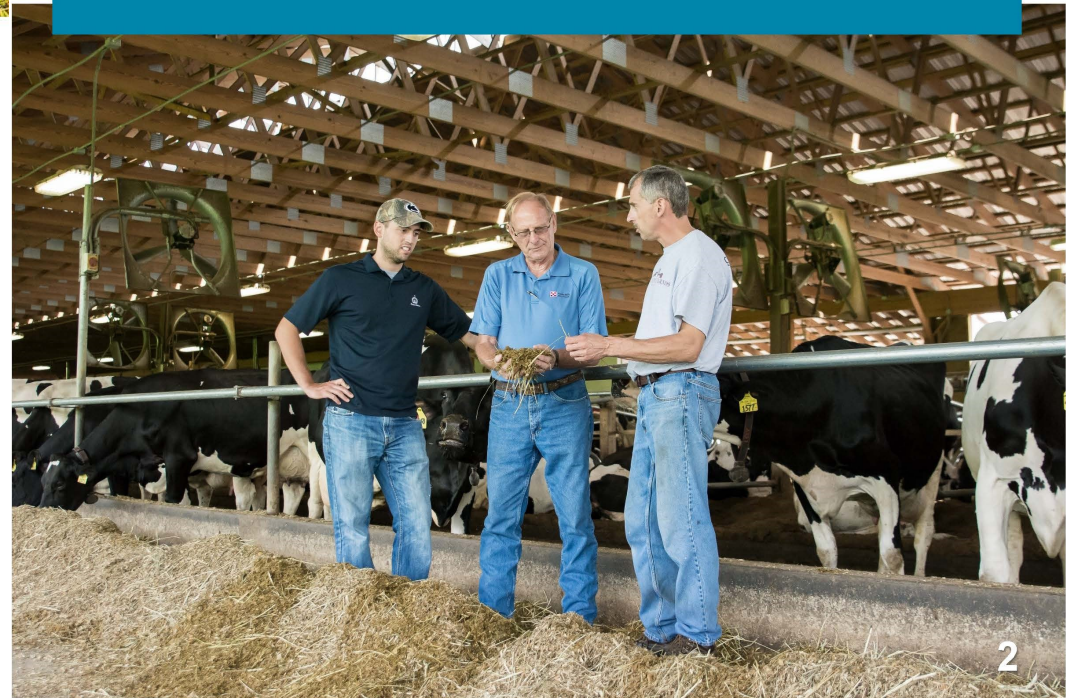


**Dairy farmers** work with several people who help take care of their cows. Some of the people who work with the dairy farmer are the **nutritionist**, **herdsperson** and **veterinarian**.

The animal doctor, or veterinarian, provides regular medical care to the cows and takes care of them when they are sick. The herdsperson, who is a farm employee with specialized training in animal care, takes care of the cows on a daily basis.

Who are people in your life that help keep you safe, happy and healthy?

- 1 Farmers work with several people to care for cows and keep them safe and healthy.
- 2 Cows eat a mixed **ration**, which includes nutrients and minerals to stay healthy.
- 3 Cows sleep in **stalls** inside **barns**. Farmers work to keep them dry and comfortable.
- 4 Farmers milk cows 2-3 times a day using high levels of sanitation to ensure a safe and wholesome product for you to enjoy.





## Dairy Farmers:

# Feed Their Cows

A Healthy Diet Managed by a Nutritionist



Cows eat plants, such as corn, wheat and grass or hay that the farmer grows. Those plants are also mixed with grain to make a special mix called a **ration**. The ration is customized to the age and activity of the cow.

Baby cows — called calves — drink milk formula that is similar to the formula that baby humans would drink. Older calves are fed grains such as corn and wheat.

During the entire milking process, the cows are happy and content. Cows love to be milked. The daily routine is an important part of keeping the cows healthy and happy.

### Fun Fact:

Cows produce about 60 pounds of milk a day, which is about 120 glasses of milk! Now, use this formula to see if you can answer the question below.

**Some cows can actually produce up to 220 pounds of milk a day. Can you calculate how many glasses of milk that is?**





## Dairy Farmers: Provide Safe Dairy Products That are Wholesome and Healthy for You

As the **calf** grows into a cow, the ration changes. A dairy farmer works with a **nutritionist** to prepare a feed **ration** that has a formulated mix of nutrients and minerals to keep the cows healthy.

The nutritionist is someone who has specialized training in animal nutrition. They work closely with the farmer to make sure the cow is fed the proper nutrients for her stage of life.

**What nutrients/food groups do you need to remain healthy and strong?**

Not only do dairy farmers care for their cows for their health, but also for yours! Every day farmers are providing wholesome and healthy milk for your family and theirs.

To ensure a safe product on your kitchen table, farmers milk their cows 2-3 times a day using high levels of sanitation. The cow's teats are sanitized thoroughly before and after milking to guarantee a safe and healthy product.





## Dairy Farmers: Give Cows a Place to Live That's Clean and Comfortable



Another important part of the dairy farmer's job is to provide the cows and calves with a clean, dry, comfortable place to live.

Cows sleep in **stalls** inside **barns**. There are many different styles of barns and stalls. No matter what style the farmer uses for his cows, keeping them dry and comfortable is his top priority.

Farmers use different types of material to bed the cows' **stalls**. Some stalls are bedded with straw. Others use sand or sawdust. Laying in the sand stalls feels like you are laying on the beach.

Other farmers bed their cows' stalls with old shredded newspaper or with dried shredded corn stalks from the field. Some stalls even have waterbeds in them. No matter what bedding is used, it is important that the cow stays clean and dry.

What items keep you clean and comfortable in your home?

