

Name of Practice: VOLUNTARY DAIRY LOAFING LOT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM  
DCR Specifications for No. VWP-4B

This document specifies terms and conditions for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's voluntary loafing lot management system best management practice, that are applicable to all contracts, entered into with respect to that practice.

A. Purpose and Description

To prevent those areas exposed to heavy livestock traffic from experiencing excessive manure and soil losses due to the destruction of ground cover. Unimproved loafing lots that are used for herd exercise and loafing are usually denuded of vegetation and harbor undesirable plants.

The intent of this practice is to prevent manure and sediment runoff from entering watercourses and sensitive karst areas and to capture a portion of the manure as a resource for other uses such as crop fertilizer. This is accomplished by dividing the area into lots. The cattle are rotated from lot to lot as is necessary to maintain a vegetative cover. One lot is designated as a sacrifice area for use in periods of wet weather.

B. Policies and Specifications

1. A management plan and practice design is to be developed with consultation from a qualified consultant, VCE, NRCS and/or SWCD.
2. A minimum of three grassed loafing paddocks are required. Each grassed loafing paddock will be sized based on soil type, topography and herd size not to exceed one acre per twenty to twenty-five (1,000 lb. EAU) cattle and be maintained in permanent forage.
3. Concrete walkway(s) with curbing or other hardened walkway(s) may be installed to facilitate herd movement from the barn to the loafing lots. Slope is to be no greater than 8%. See VCE publication on installing dairy lanes.
4. A sacrifice area is required unless adequate housing facilities are available (e.g. free stall barns).
  - i. Sacrifice area (if needed) must be scraped periodically.
  - ii. The sacrifice area should not be sized to exceed 600 to 650 square feet per animal (1,000-lb. equivalent). It should be sloped between 1% minimum to 8% maximum.
  - iii. Divert surface water away from the sacrifice area.
  - iv. Provide filter strip per NRCS standard 393 to filter runoff from the sacrifice area.
4. In order for the forage to take up nutrients such as nitrogen it must be managed

for growth and harvested for hay when possible. Dry cows or other grazers can be used to remove forage growth.

5. Critical eroding and sensitive areas will be fenced out and permanent cover established.
  - i. If a sacrifice lot is impractical due soil and/or topographical conditions, a loose housing structure may be substituted for the sacrifice lot.
  - ii. General Design guidelines for Loose Housing Structures
    - a) Bedded pack space requirements:
      - 1) 60 sq. ft. per heifer minimum
      - 2) 100 sq. ft. per lactating cow minimum
      - 3) 120 sq. ft. per dry cow
6. Soil loss rates must be computed for all applications.
7. The practice must not be in lifespan from any other conservation program.
8. For Structural Design Specifications for Loose Housing Structures refer to NRCS Standard 313 Waste Storage Facility, 342 Critical Area Planting, 362 Diversion, 367 Roofs and Covers, 516 Livestock Pipeline, 533 Pumping Plant, 558 Roof Runoff Structure, 561 Heavy Use Area Protection, 574 Spring Development, 575 Trails and Walkways, 614 Watering Facility, 620 Underground Outlet, 633 Waste Recycling, 634 Waste Transfer and 642 water well.
9. All practice components implemented should be maintained for a minimum of 5 years following the calendar year of installation. This practice is subject to spot check by the SWCD throughout the lifespan of the practice.

#### C. Technical Responsibility

Technical and administrative responsibility is assigned to qualified technical DCR and SWCD staff in consultation, where appropriate and based on the controlling standard, with DCR, Virginia Certified Nutrient Management Planner(s), NRCS, DOF, and VCE. Individuals certifying technical need and technical practice installation shall have appropriate certifications as identified above, and/or Engineering Job Approval Authority (EJAA), for the designed and installed component(s). All practices are subject to spot check procedures and any other quality control measures.

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