



Animal Welfare Institute

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Survey of Consumer Attitudes about Common Dairy Industry Practices

In July 2022, the Animal Welfare Institute commissioned a national web-based survey of adult American dairy consumers' attitudes towards different practices that are common to the dairy industry. The following are among our findings:

1. Consumers were asked whether they found the following common practices of dairy producers totally unacceptable, somewhat unacceptable, somewhat acceptable, totally acceptable or didn't know.

- a. Housing cows for a majority of the time in "tie stalls" where they are tethered by the neck to the stall and are only able to stand up and lay down.

Totally unacceptable	52%
Somewhat unacceptable	19%
Total	70%

- b. Housing cows for a majority of the time in a "stanchion," where they are restrained to an individual stall by two rails that close around the neck and prevent them from adopting a natural lying posture.

Totally unacceptable	56%
Somewhat unacceptable	16%
Total	71%

- c. Housing calves, after separating them from their mother at birth, in individual hutches or pens for the first several months of their life without contact with other calves.

Totally unacceptable	49%
Somewhat unacceptable	19%
Total	68%

- d. Housing calves, after separating them from their mother at birth, in individual hutches or pens for the first several months of their life outdoors, even in extreme weather.

Totally unacceptable	51%
Somewhat unacceptable	18%
Total	69%

- e. Housing calves, after separating them from their mother at birth, in individual hutches which severely restrict normal movements, such as turning around.

Totally unacceptable	55%
Somewhat unacceptable	15%
Total	70%

- f. Never providing the opportunity for exercise to cows kept in "tie stalls" or "stanchions," where they are restrained by the neck to the stall and are only able to stand up and lay down.

Totally unacceptable	56%
Somewhat unacceptable	16%
Total	72%

- g. Not allowing cows access to the outdoors.

Totally unacceptable	56%
Somewhat unacceptable	17%
Total	73%

- h. Transporting calves off the farm before 3 weeks of age without their mothers.

Totally unacceptable	46%
Somewhat unacceptable	18%
Total	64%

- 47% of consumers report that **considerations of a cow's quality of life had a major impact on their view of common dairy industry practices**, while 39% said it had a minor impact.
- 40% of consumers are much less likely and 34% are somewhat **less likely to purchase a dairy product if they learned that it came from a cow that had no access to the outdoors**.
- 36% of consumers are much less likely and 38% are somewhat **less likely to purchase a dairy product if they learned that it came from a cow who, as a calf, was housed individually with no ability to socialize with other calves**.
- 40% of consumers are much less likely and 34% are somewhat **less likely to purchase a dairy product if they learned that it came from a cow that is confined to a tie stall or stanchion without release for exercise or socialization**.
- 49% of consumers strongly agree and 34% somewhat **agree that if a dairy industry trade group provides certifications to producers based on standards related to animal welfare, producers should be required to meet all standards before receiving certification**.

7. **50% of consumers strongly agree and 29% somewhat agree that the dairy industry trade group's animal care certification program should include a requirement that inhumane handling of cows, such as twisting an animal's tail so hard that it breaks, results in immediate rejection of that dairy producer from the program.**

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute from July 19-21, 2022, among 2,030 adults ages 18+, of whom 1,991 ever purchase dairy products. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within + 2.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sample sizes, please contact dena@awionline.org.