

FARM Animal Care Program Version 4.0 Update

By Lindsay Ferlito

When COVID hit last spring, on-farm evaluations for the FARM Animal Care Program were put on hold, however, with the country starting to open back up, on-farm FARM Program activities have resumed. Given this delay, Animal Care Version 4.0 will now run through June 30, 2024 (instead of the original end date of Dec 31, 2022, and the previous extension date of Dec 31, 2023). For Version 4.0 evaluations across the country in 2021, the main reason for Mandatory Corrective Action Plans (MCAPs) is not having an annually reviewed herd health plan and a signed annual Veterinary Client Patient Relationship (VCPR), with the next ones being non-family employees not having stockmanship and pre-weaned calf care continuing education and signed cow agreements. Make sure you are meeting with your herd veterinarian at least annually (every 12 months) to review your protocols and your herd health plan and have them sign your VCPR, and you are filling out paperwork for every employee (family and non-family).



Looking forward, Animal Care Version 5.0 is currently being created, a public comment period will be open in the Fall 2022, and it is set to start July 1, 2024. Further, the FARM Program now also has programs for Calf Care and Quality Assurance, Environmental Stewardship, and Workforce Development, and a module on antibiotic stewardship and they are developing a program on biosecurity. At this point, these programs are voluntary, but several milk cooperatives are starting to participate in them. For more information on any of these programs or help preparing for a FARM Animal Care evaluation, please contact me (lc636@cornell.edu; 607-592-0290) and check out the FARM Program website (<https://nationaldairyfarm.com/>).