

UVM Extension Fact Sheet: Champlain Valley Crop, Soil and Pasture Team

Record Keeping for Dairy & Beef Farms in Vermont

Good record keeping is a key to success for any farm. Although it can be a daunting task, proper record keeping is a vital component to managing an efficient and profitable farm operation. Whether you keep records on pieces of paper in your pocket or use the latest technology, knowing which things you should be tracking ahead of time can help you manage all that information and save time doing it. Below is a table showing several different farm records and the programs that require those records. Besides being *required* to keep these records in many cases, farmers should keep the most comprehensive records that they can. The more information you have, the better management decisions you can make – all of which can improve your crop production, livestock management, and your bottom line. The following list is not comprehensive; however, it will give you an idea of the multiple reasons to keep specific records.

Kinds of records include:

- **ANIMALS**: Number, ID, weight, groups/herds, breeding & calving information, transactions
- **FEED**: Pounds/animal/day of forages, concentrates, grains, purchased v. grown
- **GRAZING ROTATION**: Paddock size, grazing period, resting period, grass height (in/out), change in rotation with season
- **MANURE, COMPOST & FERTILIZER**: Manure production and storage capacity, annual tests of manure or composted, time and rate of application by field, weather before and after spreading
- **PESTS & PESTICIDES**: (Organic or conventional) pesticides applied, applicable conditions - following Label, pest scouting and trapping
- **HERD HEALTH & WELLBEING**: Preventative health, illness symptoms or problem, solution or products used, water access, shelter, handling (kind of records variable by certification).
- **CROP HARVESTS**: Date, yield by field
- **PRODUCTION**: Pounds of milk or meat per - cow, day, herd/group, price; slaughter practices
- **FARM MAPS**: A series of maps on farm features (often created by a Land Treatment Planner)
- **FARM SOILS**: Soil test results (per field or 20 acres, every 3 years), soil classification maps

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See more on reverse →

Records Required for Certification or Farm Planning Tool



Required or necessary part of records



Important or useful but may or may not be required (depends on situation or type, cost - may be estimated for IOFC)

	Animals	Feed	Grazing	Manure Compost Fertilizer	Pesticides	Herd Health	Crop Production	Farm Maps	Farm Soils	Milk/Meat Production
Nutrient Management Plan: CSFO (2017), MFO, LFO, NRCS	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Grazing Plan: NRCS or other	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Organic Certification: VOF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Income Over Feed Cost (IOFC):	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA):	✓	✓								✓
Animal Welfare Approved (AWA):	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓
Integrated Pest Management (IPM):					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	