

January 8, 2024

Dear DSF Implementing and Aggregating Members,

### **Change to the DSF Animal Care Indicator Metric**

As you are aware, during 2023, the DSF Secretariat consulted Members and the DSF Multi-stakeholder Advisory Council regarding changing the Animal Care Indicator Metric.

Based on the positive outcomes of these consultations, a proposal for change was considered by the DSF Governors as part of their November Meeting.

The DSF Governors agreed to change the current Indicator Metric of average Somatic Cell Count to the ***development and implementation of an annually reviewed Animal Health and Welfare Plan (AHWP)***.

Recognising that, for some DSF Members, this change will require some time to implement, the following transitional timeline will be implemented. The timeline on the following page will hopefully support the below bullets.

- The DSF plans to report both SCC and Animal Health and Welfare Plans starting with the 2024 annual report (containing the 2023 calendar year reporting).
- Members prioritizing Animal Care are required to report either Somatic Cell Count, number of Animal Health and Welfare Plans or both leading up to the 2025 calendar year reporting (reported in 2026).
- The DSF will continue collecting Somatic Cell Count Data up to and including the 2025 year. The final report that will contain SCC data will be the 2026 publication for the 2025 calendar year.
- Collection of the number of AHWP's will start in 2024 – *I.e You can report in March 2024 for the 2023 year - If you already have the data.* The DSF anticipates that between the reporting years 2023 and 2025, there will be an increase in numbers of Animal Health and Welfare plans as Members establish processes to implement this requirement.
- Members can decide when they make the 'complete' transition from SCC to Animal Health and Welfare Plans.
- The reporting of Animal Health and Welfare Plans will be compulsory for members prioritising Animal Care from 2026 (for reporting in 2027) onwards.
- Somatic Cell Count data will not be collected after the 2025 calendar year reporting which will take place in March 2026.

To support the transition to Animal Health and Welfare Plans, the DSF is in the process of developing an Animal Health and Welfare Plan template for consideration, if Members are not sure where to start. If you already have existing plans that are appropriate, please do continue using these. Members with existing templates, may wish to consider the DSF Template as a benchmark. The Secretariat will share this template (along with others) with members in the near future.

The DSF Secretariat looks forward to working with you to make this transition as simple and effective as possible.

Kind regards,

DSF Secretariat

