

# GLOSSARY



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
The Royal (Dick) School  
of Veterinary Studies

The Jeanne Marchig International Centre  
for Animal Welfare Education

Terms	Description
Ad libitum	Allowing animals access to feed or other resources as much as they want when they want (free choice)
Bull	An intact (not castrated) adult male bovine
Calf	Young male or female bovine animal
Calving	The act of a cow giving birth to a calf
Colostrum	The first milk a mother produces that contains immunoglobulins and bioactive compounds which are essential for the newborn's health, growth and vitality
Dam	Female parent of an animal and especially of a domestic animal (i.e., cow)
Dry period	In dairy cattle, the time between halting of milk removal (milk stasis) and the subsequent calving
Flight distance	In animal handling, flight distance is the distance between a human and an animal that, when penetrated, causes the animal to move to re-establish a comfortable distance
Heifer	Young female bovine animals from weaning throughout first calving and lactation



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Replacement	A female animal that is reared on the dairy farm and who is destined to enter the milking herd after her first calf.
Rumen	The largest of the ruminant stomach chambers and the site of fermentation of fibrous feeds
Ruminant	Group of herbivores with a four-chambered stomach, that regurgitate and re-chew their feed (called ruminating or 'cudding')
Social buffer	When negative effects of stress are mitigated through social support of conspecifics
Somatic cell count	An indicator of milk quality, composed of white blood cells and epithelial cells both of which increase when there is an udder infection
Steer	Male bovine animals that are castrated before reaching sexual maturity
Stereotypic behaviour	A repetitive, invariant behaviour pattern with no obvious goal or function
Transition period	In dairy cattle, the period between about 3 weeks before and 3 weeks after parturition
Youngstock	Any young animal (male or female) that are present on the farm

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