

# Improving Calf Health – A Holistic Extension Approach

T-54

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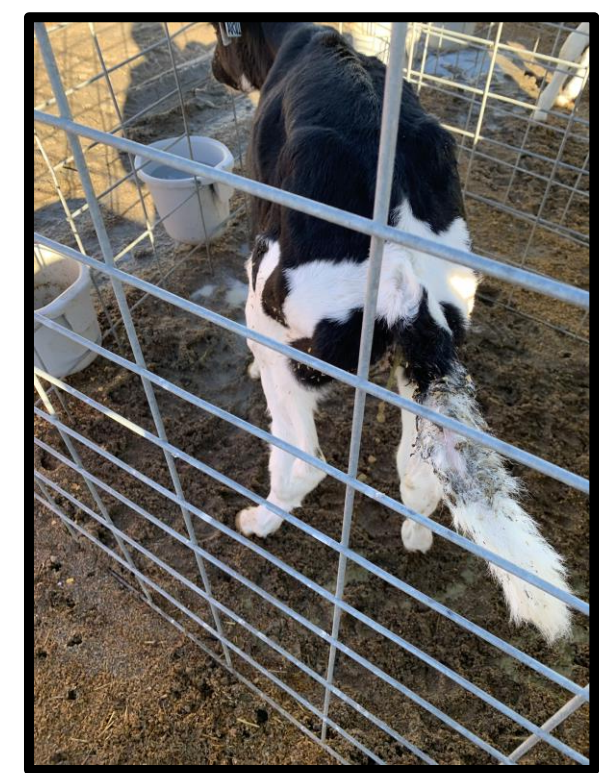
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Problem

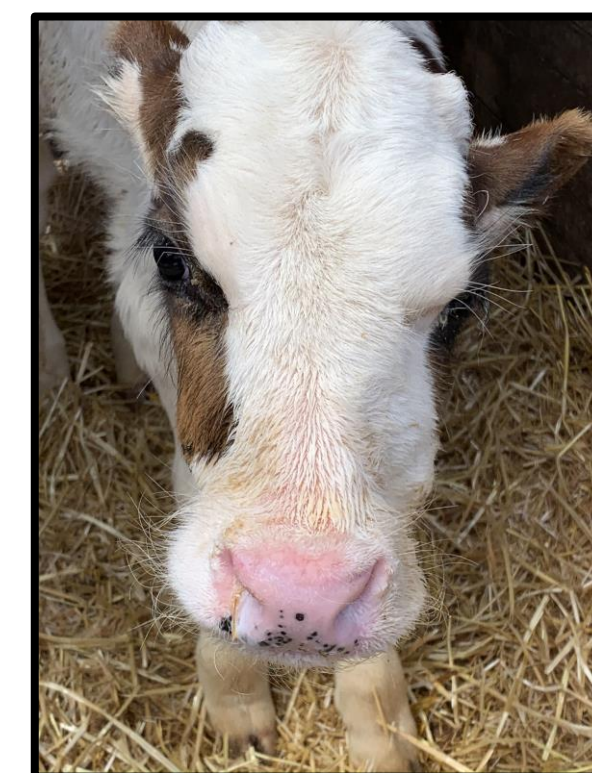
## Background

- High newborn calf morbidity (34%) and mortality (5%).
- Sick calves have lower fertility as heifers and produce less milk as cows.

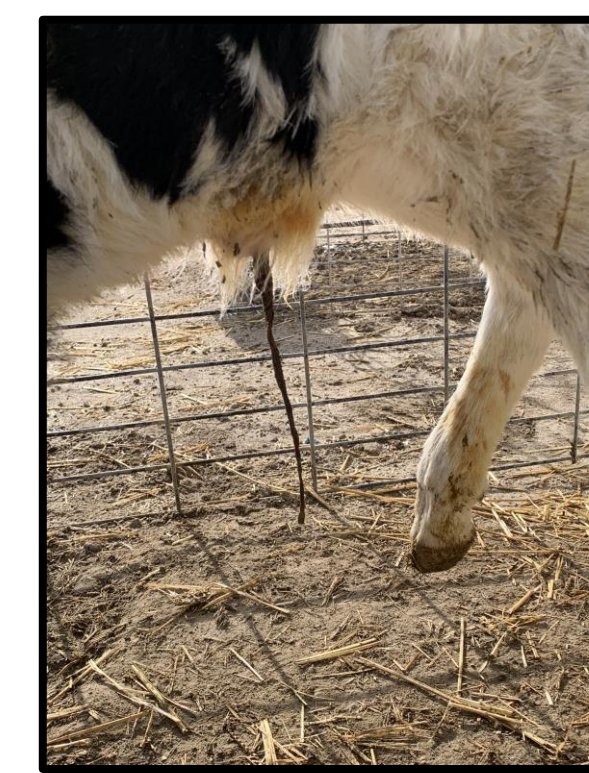
## Diseases in US dairies (reported by producers)



Gastrointestinal  
21%



Respiratory  
12%



Navel  
2%

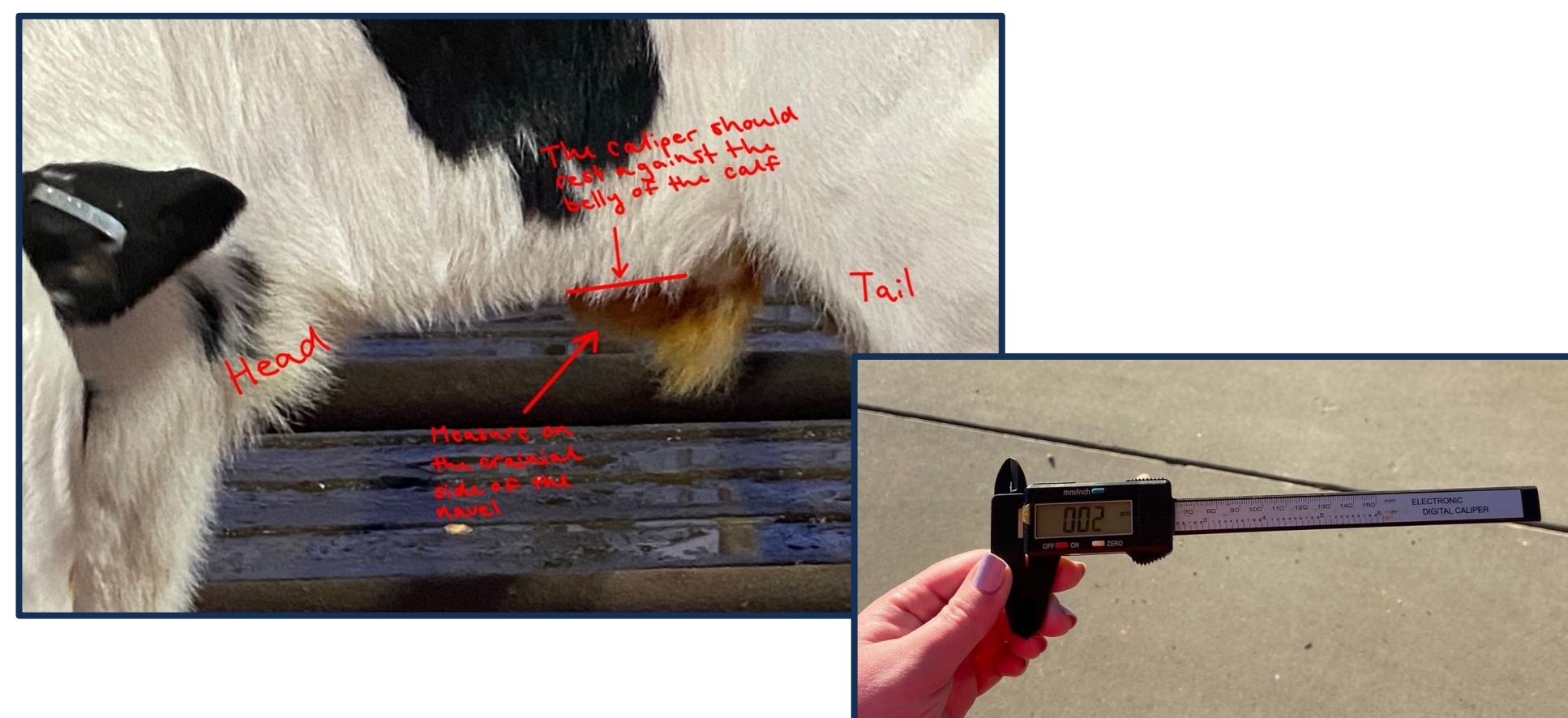
Disagrees with research studies:  
**16 to 30%** of calves have navel disease



## Hypothesis

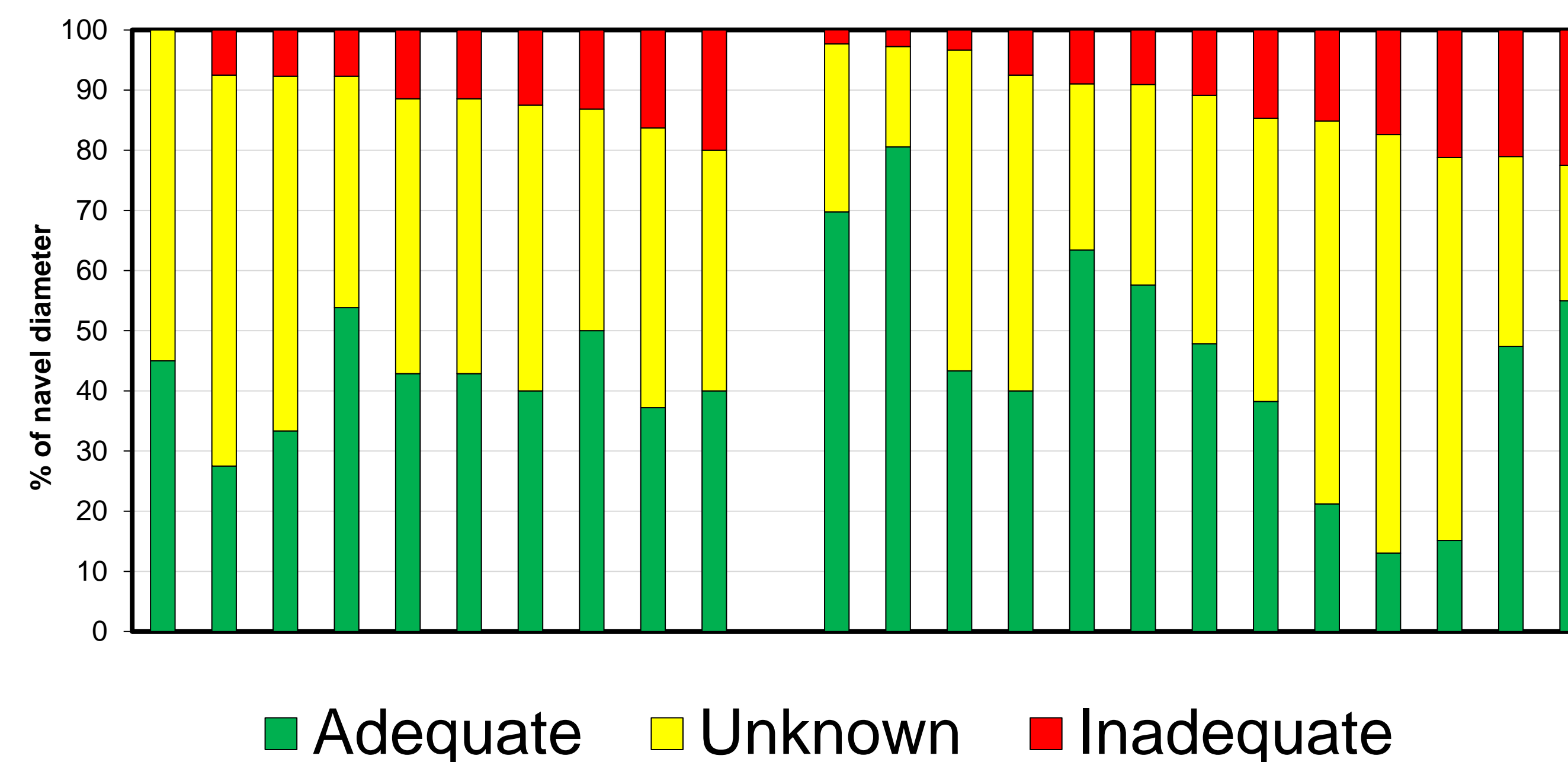
- Navel disease is under-reported in CA.
- Navel disease increases the risk of morbidity and mortality.
- Some management factors increase the risk of navel disease.
- Improving navel care and minimizing risk factors reduces navel disease.

Frequency of Disease



- Navels were measured in 23 dairy farms
- 905 female and male calves between 3-10 days old were enrolled
- $\leq 13$  mm: adequate,  $\geq 20$  mm: inadequate

## Navel Size Distribution



On-going Outputs

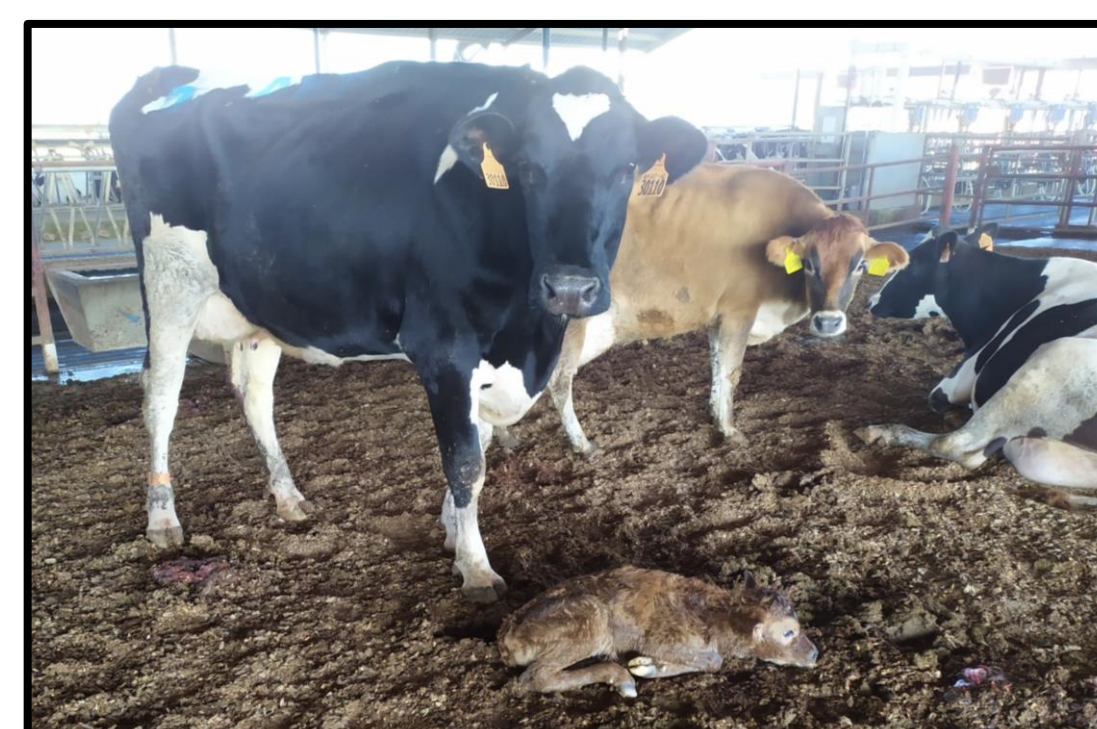
- Share results with each participant dairy and allied industry partners.
- Outreach: Newsletter article, industry presentations.
- Manuscript publication.
- Presentation in scientific meetings.

Next Steps

## Health Implications



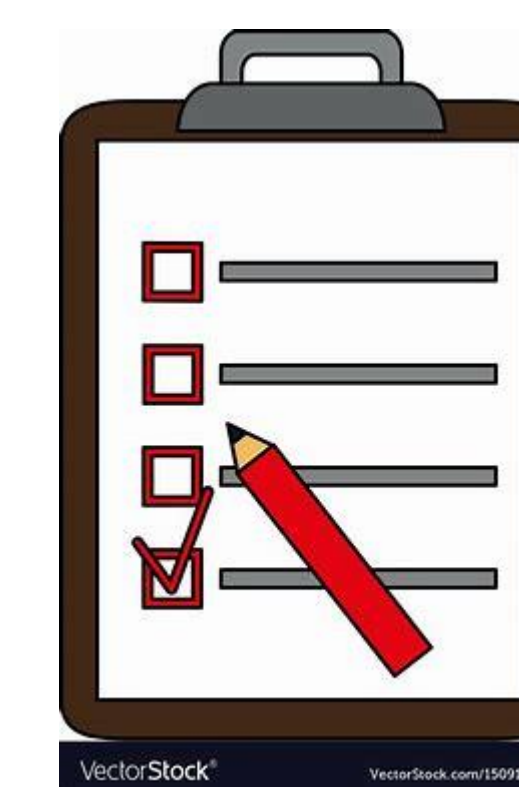
## Risk factors



## Current Practices



## Producer's perception



Expected Outputs

- Develop evidence-based guidelines on how to care for the navel.
- Design training materials aimed at dairy workers.

