



Feeder Job Description

This feeder job description is a template to be used by dairies to develop their own feeder job descriptions unique for their dairy. This template is a guide to help cover the feeder basics. It does not include feed push-up, reading bunks, and making bunk adjustments. Below is a list of eight suggested key functions of a feeder and may not be inclusive of all job requirements of a feeder on a given dairy.

- Goals**
1. Load TMRs accurately and consistently
 2. Deliver feed on time according to farm protocols and consistently along each feed bunk
 3. Minimize feed loss due to shrink, spoilage and inaccurate loading
 4. Use equipment, labor and fuel efficiently
 5. Work with all dairy teammates to improve dairy function

- Responsibilities**
1. Safety
 2. Mixer maintenance checks
 3. Feed center organization and cleanliness
 4. Silage feed out management
 5. Mixing Basics
 6. TMR Delivery
 7. On-farm premixing
 8. Dealing with truck drivers and traffic
 9. Communicate with feed manager and nutritionist any problems or issues that arise that need their attention

- Safety**
1. Highly suggested that all employees on a dairy wear safety vests including feeders
 2. Remove keys from tractor and trucks when entering mixer boxes to repair or check equipment
 3. Use cones to divert all traffic in a wide arcing path around blind corners
 4. Walk a distance equal to twice the height of the silage piles away from the silage face
 5. Use a restraint system of rope and body harness when removing tires and plastic from atop the silage piles and bunkers
 6. Do not work under object operated by hydraulics (i.e. loader buckets, barn doors and mixer doors).
 7. Avoid using your hands to clean equipment with any moving parts (example: live bottom trucks during unloading)
 8. Ensure that back-up warning sound system works on all equipment
 9. Do not reach into or walk on the mixer while it is running.
 10. Maintain clean windows on all equipment to ensure maximum visibility
 11. Interior of tractors and loaders should be maintained clean and free of debris to prevent tripping and falls from equipment
 12. All guards should be in place and functioning (PTO)
 13. Lights should be functioning if working in dark hours

- Mixer Maintenance Checks**
1. Daily check for oil leaks, low tires, extra feed inside the mixer box, loose blades, foreign objects in the mixer, fuel levels in tractors before you start your day.
 2. Clean tractor air filters according to management routine
 3. Any twine or string should be removed from augers regularly
 4. Routine will vary by farm and follow farm manager's recommendations and follow manufacturer recommendations on maintenance schedules.

Feed Center Organization

1. Keep feed center free of loose bags, twine, garbage and loose feed spilled during the day
 2. Place dumpster in an area where there is easy access for the recycling company to load and unload the dumpster without interfering with the TMR loading process
 3. Put labels on each commodity bay to identify the feed ingredient
 4. Rotate old and new feed to avoid mold and spoiled feed
 5. Put high volume feeds closest to the TMR loading area. (High volume feeds are those that require more than one pay loader/skid-steer loader bucket).
 6. Use digital scales to weigh hand-added ingredients (less than 50 lb.)
 7. Make sure ingredients that are unloaded into commodity bays match descriptions on the signs (truckers may have unloaded an ingredient in the wrong location and new feeders may not catch the mistake)
 8. Allow incoming trucks to wait until you complete the loading, mixing and the delivery of the current load of TMR. Do not delay feeding if at all possible.
 9. Follow dairy policy with helping incoming loads of hay and other commodities that require assistance with unloading.
 10. The loading and mixing time goal for each load of TMR is 10 -12 minutes or less.
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Silage Feed Out Management

1. Follow farm policy for the amount of silage to be uncovered at any one time including their rain policy.
 2. Use a safety restraint device to remove tires and plastic.
 3. Stack tires neatly in designated area.
 4. Place plastic in dumpster for recycling.
 5. Remove any moldy feed and haul to designated area for spoiled feed that will be land applied for fertilizer.
 6. Face the correct amount of silage needed for the day or for each feeding session. Recommend a minimum of one foot of silage per day.
 7. Push and lift faced silage into a co-mingled pile positioned at one edge of the drive-over pile or at one side of the bunker.
 8. Some dairies unload the on-farm premix, wet commodity feeds (wet distillers, beet pulp, wet gluten) and bales of hay near the silage face. This allows rapid loading of the TMR (10 minutes or less) with minimal shrink.
 9. Some dairies are using large square bales of hay or straw to make a temporary wall to protect the pre-mix from wind erosion.
 10. Take samples from the blended silage for moisture and nutrient testing.
 11. Minimize the amount of loose silage that can potentially heat up and spoil over night.
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Mixing Basics

1. There are ten things discovered during the Diamond V TMR Audit® that can cause TMRs to be poorly mixed. As a feeder be aware of the following things:
 - A. Worn mixer blades, kicker plates and augers
 - B. Un-level mixer boxes
 - C. Low auger speeds (on vertical mixers only) and auger speed recommendations vary by brand and sometimes among mixer models within a brand. Work with mixer manufacturer and Diamond V Ruminant Technical Specialist for more details. Also, make sure the augers are properly timed except for hydraulic driven vertical augers.
 - D. Over-filled (all types of mixers) and under-filled mixers (vertical mixers).
 - E. Poor hay and straw processing resulting in excessive sorting by the cattle leading to unhealthy and lower production animals.
 - F. Excessive mixing or not enough mixing long enough after the last added ingredient. The mix time will vary from 2 to 5 minutes depending on the situation.
 - G. Improper loading position on most mixer wagons, especially twin and triple auger vertical mixers.
 - H. Ingredient loading sequence will depend on the type of mixer (horizontal auger-reel) vs horizontal auger and vertical mixers
 - I. Forage restrictors settings on vertical mixers:
 - i. Completely out if no processing of hay is required.
 - ii. Move restrictor only part way in up to half way in depending on the mixer brand and model.
 - iii. Excessive use of forage restrictors create dead spots and incomplete mixing.
 - J. Liquid distribution:
 - i. Liquid is the last ingredient added to a mix and it should be added to the premix or TMR in multiple locations across the top of the load in equal portions. Many dairies use a manifold made of plastic pile.

TMR Delivery

1. Some dairies like to feed pens of cows according the milking schedule. However this if very difficult for most dairies to implement. The most important thing to remember is to make sure that first feed drop for the day is at the same time for each pen. Timing of later feeds is less critical because there is already feed in front of the cows. Some dairies feed multiple pens with one load of feed for the first feeding of the day. Many large dairies feed one load to one pen for the first feeding.
2. Make sure there is equal amounts of TMR delivered all the way along the feed bunk.
3. Feed all the way to the ends of the bunk so that all cows in the pen have access to feed.
4. Dump TMR at the proper distance from the stem wall in post and rail or headlock feeding systems. Avoid getting too close or too far away.
5. Avoid excessive backing as this is a safety issue and it takes more time to deliver the feed.
6. If cow pusher is moving cows to parlor, wait until all cows are out of the pen before you deliver feed.
7. If dumping to more than one pen, make sure each pen gets the proper amount of feed.
8. If there are waves in the feed delivery from a vertical mixer, talk to maintenance personnel about slowing down the delivery apron and/or increasing mixer auger rotational speed during delivery.
9. Look for clumps of hay or streaks of grain, which indicate mixing problems. Report problems to your boss.
10. Always push up feed prior to delivery to reduce running over feed and to reduce DM variation in the bunk.

On-farm Premixing

1. It is recommended that on-farm premixes are made after all of the TMRs have been mixed and delivered on time. Often the premixing and grinding of hay and straw occurs in the afternoon.
2. Follow the mixing basics for premixes as for TMRs.
3. It is recommended that some or all of the hay and/or straw be added to the premix to improve mixing consistency when using vertical mixers.
4. Watch particle length on straw and hay in the premix to avoid getting it too short.
5. Add liquid last and with a spray manifold. Avoid added water to a premix.

Proper Handling of Truck Drivers and In-coming Delivery Traffic

1. If you are in the middle of loading a TMR, please complete the loading, mixing and delivery before you assist the truck driver. This is where many mistakes happen causing poorly mixed TMRs.
2. Follow the farm policy for dealing with incoming trucks of hay or commodities that need assistance during unloading.
3. Help the truck drivers unload in the proper commodity bays.

Requirements

Essential

1. Ability to work as a team member
2. Good attitude and gets along with others
3. Basic mechanical knowledge
4. Ability to work by yourself

Preferred

1. Ability to operate tractors, pay loaders and skid steer loaders in a safe manner
2. Speak English

MANAGEMENT RETAINS THE DISCRETION TO ADD OR CHANGE DUTIES OF THE POSITION AT ANY TIME.

The content of this position description has been carefully reviewed and we believe it to be accurate.

Employee

Supervisor

Date