What data do we need in dairy cattle welfare assessment?

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In order to improve dairy cattle health and welfare we need to know what type of information is important from a biological point of view. However, animal welfare is of multi-dimensional nature and during recent decades, different scientific but not necessarily mutually exclusive views on what constitutes animal welfare have developed. These concepts of animal welfare will be discussed and the type of data and ways to obtain data in order to assess dairy cattle welfare will be scrutinized. Focusing on (future) automated welfare assessment, the paper will address what we need to know and what will be nice to know to achieve valid and comprehensive assessment of dairy animal welfare and to help farmers improve animal welfare.