

Global Animal Partnership 5-Step® Animal Welfare Standards for Beef Cattle

- The original version of the G.A.P.'s 5-Step® Animal Welfare Standards for Beef was issued on August 4, 2009, was amended January 5, 2020, and updated April 7, 2022 and **goes into effect May 7, 2022**. This version (1.2) replaces all previous versions.
- On April 7, 2022 Section 9.2 was updated to clarify it only applied to mice and rats and Section 9.5 was added to clarify which methods of control for wildlife and feral animals were acceptable and unacceptable.
- While G.A.P. does not require an immediate audit for any operations that are already certified, they are expected to meet the updated Standards when it **goes into effect on May 7, 2022**. Any operations audited on or after May 7, 2022 will be audited to this version.
- All standards applicable to “All Steps” or to any range of Steps that include Step 1 are required and must be met for the ranch/farm to enter the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step Program. Higher Steps are elective after the basic requirements of Step 1 have been met.
- If a standard has not been met for all animals on the farm at the time of initial inspection, a Step rating will not be assigned until evidence is provided confirming that the standard has been met. For castration, pain relief, or weaning standards that are not met at the time of initial inspection, a Step rating will not be assigned until evidence is provided confirming that either the standard has been met or all relevant procedures and protocols are in place to meet the standard going forward.
- If in a particular situation or circumstance, a standard as written might compromise the welfare of the animals in the producer’s care, the producer should contact the Global Animal Partnership-approved certifier with which they are working to request a variance.
- Producers must be in compliance with all local, regional, and national regulations and laws that relate to the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step® Animal Welfare standards.
- No standards in this document may supersede local, regional, or national regulations or laws.
- Note: There is no Step 3 for cattle.

Step 1: No crowding

Step 2: Enriched environment

Step 4: Pasture centered

Step 5: Animal centered: No physical alterations

Step 5+: Animal Centered: Entire life on same farm

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Section 1: Ranch/Farm Plan and Documentation

1.1 Ranch/Farm Plan

1.1.1 (All Steps)

Each ranch/farm must have a written plan that identifies practices implemented to ensure compliance with all applicable sections of the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step® Animal Welfare standards.

- A written ranch/farm plan must exist.
- It must be current and updated as needed to reflect any changes.
- It must address all relevant areas covered by these standards.
- The ranch/farm plan must reflect actual practices on the ranch/farm.

The completed Application/Workbook will suffice for this requirement.

Producer Guidance: Your farm plan should be a description of the goals and methods of your ranching/farming operation. By filling in the workbook and describing your actual practices, you may satisfy the requirements for this standard. The intent of this workbook is to assist you in putting down your practices in writing and can act as a “how-to” manual if someone has to step into your operation in an emergency. An important benefit of developing a farm plan is that often helps to focus the goals that you are trying to achieve. Importantly, writing down what is second nature to you will allow you, and others, to appreciate the good work that you do and the magnitude of what you know, do, and accomplish throughout the day, the month, and the year.

1.1.2 (Steps 5 – 5+)

In addition to the above, each ranch/farm plan must include:

- a. Evidence of an integrated all-farm approach with proactive measures in place that demonstrate an agricultural animal production system with primary emphasis on animal welfare.
- b. The primary producer must be able to demonstrate inherent strengths in animal husbandry based on a good understanding of interactions within an animal production system.

To qualify for Step 5 or 5+ status, all species of commercial animals raised on the ranch/farm must be raised to at least Step 1 standards. Within two years of approval at Step 5 levels, all commercial animals on the property must meet at least Step 4 requirements.

Producer Guidance: The two-year allowance to bring all commercial animals to Step 4 levels will be granted to the producer one time only. If the ranch/farm loses Step 5 status and re-applies, Step 4 status of all commercial animals will be required to re-establish the previous Step level.

1.1.3 (Steps 5 – 5+)

All domestic animals on the ranch/farm must be managed to the following requirements:

- Given an appropriate amount and type of feed to meet their nutritional requirements
- Kept in surroundings that do not cause them injury
- Provided with a comfortable resting area that protects them from extremes of temperature
- Kept in good health and given veterinary attention as required
- Dogs must not be tethered

Producer Guidance: “Domestic animals” refers to dogs, cats, horses, goats, cows, or any other animals maintained on the ranch/farm for non-commercial purposes, including both working

animals and pets. Leashes may be used with dogs when they are being moved about the ranch/farm or when temporarily removed from their runs for cleaning, but they may not be tied and left for long periods of time.

1.2 Animal Health Plan

1.2.1 (All Steps)

Each ranch/farm must plan for the health of the animals. Planning must include biosecurity measures.

1.3 Records and Documentation

1.3.1 (All Steps)

Each ranch/farm must maintain and provide the inspector full access to records sufficient to document compliance with all applicable Global Animal Partnership 5-Step® Animal Welfare standards. Informal records such as those written on calendars or notepads are acceptable but must be presented in an organized manner at inspection.

1.4 Emergency Procedures

1.4.1 (All Steps)

There must be procedures to follow in case of emergency. Anyone engaged in animal management must be aware of the emergency procedures and trained to take action should an emergency occur.

Producer Guidance: Emergency procedures might include contingency plans for natural disasters likely to occur in the area. Fire, emergency disease outbreak, emergency water shut off, and power failure should also be addressed. Instructions should be detailed enough to ensure the safety and well-being of animals and workers during an emergency.

1.5 Training

1.5.1 (All Steps)

Initial and ongoing training must be provided in a manner that is clearly understood by all individuals who carry out any animal management tasks covered by this program.

Producer Guidance:

- Training should expand awareness and recognition that animals feel pain and have the capacity to suffer.
- Training should provide an overview of the entire operation as well as specific training related to the tasks that will be required. Ongoing training should aim at keeping up to date with current animal husbandry techniques and the requirements of the Global Animal Partnership standards. Training can be experience-based or written.
- Training might cover, but is not limited to, the following topics:
 - a. Artificial insemination
 - b. Assessment of cows/heifers to identify risks at calving
 - c. Assistance at calving
 - d. Any physical alterations, including the administration of pain relief
 - e. Animal handling
 - f. Movement and transport of animals
 - g. Animal identification, including branding and tagging

- h. Assessment of body condition
- i. Recognition of lameness
- j. Appropriate use of restraint tools
- k. Feeding protocols
- l. Assessment of range/pasture condition

1.6 Biosecurity Procedures

1.6.1 (All Steps)

Each ranch/farm must implement and maintain a biosecurity program. The program must include measures taken to avoid the introduction of disease from outside sources, such as incoming stock, visitors, and trucks or equipment.

Section 2: Breeding and Source of Animals

2.1 Breeding Programs

2.1.1 (All Steps)

Natural breeding and artificial insemination (AI) are the only breeding methods permitted.

2.1.2 (All Steps)

The intentional use of genetically modified or cloned animals or their progeny is prohibited.

2.1.3 (All Steps)

Breeding programs, whether on-ranch/farm or through introduced breeding stock, must be designed to promote the welfare of the animals in the production system rather than to select solely for production or economic outcomes. Breeding choices based solely on production outcomes that predispose the animals for reduced welfare in a system are prohibited.

Welfare-enhancing traits that must be sought in breeding programs are:

- Breeds chosen to ensure heifers and cows can calve without assistance.
- Selective breeding program aimed toward polled animals if disbudding is practiced.

2.2 Source of Animals

2.2.1 (All Steps)

The types of animals must be well matched with the system in which they are raised.

Producer Guidance: The goal of the farm/ranch should be to find animals that work best in the circumstances of the farm/ranch and to avoid welfare problems caused by breed selection.

2.2.2 (All Steps)

Sourcing market animals from sale or auction barns is prohibited. When animals are purchased through video auctions, animals must have remained on the originating ranch/farm property until the sale is complete.

Section 3: Animal Health

3.1 Medication Use

3.1.1 (All Steps)

The therapeutic use of antibiotics, ionophores, or sulfa drugs is prohibited for market animals. If a market animal must be treated with prohibited medications, that animal must be identified and removed from the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step Animal Welfare program.

3.1.2 (All Steps)

Sub-therapeutic (preventive) levels of antibiotics, ionophores, growth hormones, beta agonists, or sulfas are prohibited for all market and breeding animals.

3.1.3 (All Steps)

Records must be kept of all treatments, whether alternative remedies or medications, and the results of treatment.

3.1.4 (All Steps)

No medicines may be used in an extra-label manner unless prescribed by the farm's attending veterinarian. Any such medicine must have the prescribing veterinarian's label affixed over the manufacturer's label that outlines the prescribed method of usage, duration of administration, and withholding time.

3.1.5 (All Steps)

All medications must be discarded after the expiration date.

3.2 Treatment of Ill or Injured Animals

3.2.1 (All Steps)

In the event an animal becomes ill or suffers accidental injury on the farm, it must receive immediate individual treatment designed to minimize pain and suffering, including veterinary attention if relief cannot be promptly provided by the farmer.

3.2.2 (All Steps)

If alternative treatments such as herbal or homeopathic treatments are used and are not successful, veterinary advice must be sought and any medication prescribed must be administered.

3.2.3 (All Steps)

If an animal is suffering from a non-recoverable illness, injury, or condition, it must be promptly euthanized on-farm using an approved method.

3.3 Body Condition

3.3.1 (All Steps)

All cattle must have an overall body condition score (BCS) of 4 or higher.

3.3.2 (All Steps)

Any animals on the ranch/farm scoring below BCS 4 must be given immediate care and treated if necessary. Any animal in an emaciated condition (less than BCS 2) that does not respond to treatment must be euthanized using an approved method.

3.4 Lameness

3.4.1 (All Steps)

Lameness levels must not exceed 2% of the herd at any one time.

3.4.2 (All Steps)

Lame animals must be attended to and action taken immediately upon exhibition of foot or leg injury, or walking irregularity. If improvements are not seen, treatment must be escalated. If the animal is bearing no weight on one of its limbs or is severely lame and not responding to a treatment regimen, it must be euthanized. Actions taken to address lameness and results must be recorded.

Producer Guidance: Depending on the severity and cause of lameness, animals may need to be monitored, isolated for a period, or medically treated.

3.5 Separation of Newly Introduced, Ill, or Injured Animals from the Herd

3.5.1 (All Steps)

Animals must not be separated from the herd unless briefly during introduction to the ranch/farm, for veterinary procedures, or if the animal is injured or sick. Records must be kept of the separation from the herd of individual animals.

3.5.2 (All Steps)

The primary enclosure for sick or injured animals must meet all space and bedding requirements in Section 8.

Section 4: Animal Handling

4.1 Restraint

4.1.1 (All Steps)

Electro-immobilization is prohibited.

4.1.2 (All Steps)

Squeeze chutes or cattle crushes must be operated in a manner that does not cause injury or distress to the animals. The chute must not be so tight that it affects the animal's breathing. For hydraulic chutes, the relief valve must be set so the sides automatically stop squeezing before it is too tight for the animal to be able to breathe normally.

4.1.3 (All Steps)

Lariats may be used when necessary only by handlers who are experts in the use of this tool and only in a manner that minimize pain and distress to the animals.

Producer Guidance: Anyone being trained on the use of lariats should be taught using practice dummies or other non-living targets. Roping expertise should be established through testing and verified in the ranch training record. New employees with previous roping experience should also be tested to verify their expertise and the results of the testing recorded.

4.2 Cattle Handling

4.2.1 (All Steps)

Cattle must not be mistreated in any way.

4.2.2 (All Steps)

Cattle must be handled in a calm manner that takes into consideration the animals' natural response to stimuli.

4.2.3 (All Steps)

When handling cattle, the area must be quiet and free of high-pitched noises.

4.2.4 (All Steps)

Cattle must move of their own volition. They may not be dragged by any part of their body.

4.2.5 (All Steps)

Stock dogs and horses used to move cattle must be well-trained and must be controlled at all times. All dogs used with cattle must be under the direct control of a dog handler.

4.3 Electric Prods

4.3.1 (All Steps)

The use of electric prods during handling is prohibited unless there is imminent risk of injury to the animal or handler. The prod must not be carried routinely by the handler. If it is necessary to prod an animal, shocking the animal on any part of its body other than the muscle of its hindquarters is prohibited.

Section 5: Animal Management

5.1 Calving

5.1.1 (All Steps)

The rancher/farmer must be able to check on unproven cows and heifers at calving time and provide timely assistance if necessary.

5.1.2 (All Steps)

The number of assisted calvings and caesarians, taken together, must not exceed 5% of all calvings per year. Accurate records must be kept and made available at inspection.

5.1.3 (All Steps)

Areas used for calving, whether inside or out, must not put the newborn calf at risk of illness or infection.

Producer Guidance: Pastures used for calving should ideally have been rested from use by cattle before calving cows are introduced, or stocked at such a low rate that challenge from parasites or infection does not occur. If cows calve inside, the pens or barns should have been cleaned and re-bedded prior to introducing calving cows.

5.2 Weaning

5.2.1 Weaning Age: Step Differentiation

5.2.1 (Steps 1 – 4)

Minimum weaning age is 6 months.

5.2.1 (Step 5)

Minimum weaning age is 8 months.

5.2.1 (Step 5+)

Natural weaning is required.

If the welfare of a cow or calf may be compromised by leaving calves on the cow to the weaning age, an individual calf may be weaned earlier than the Step requirements listed above. In no instance may calves be weaned prior to 6 months unless the cow or calf's health is in jeopardy. Records of early weaning must be made available at audit.

For Step 5+ ranches/farms, intact bull calves can be removed from their mothers at puberty.

5.2.2 (Step 5)

Fenceline or two-stage weaning is required. If two-stage weaning is practiced, stage 1—in which the calf is prevented from suckling from its mother—must last at least 7 days. If there are other methods of low-stress weaning in use, the rancher/farmer must be prepared to explain the rationale and provide evidence of their effectiveness at inspection.

Producer Guidance: Although this standard is required only for Step 5 status, it is recommended for all Steps.

5.3 Animal Identification

5.3.1 (All Steps)

The producer must demonstrate traceability of all G.A.P. Certified animals, including all locations where each animal has been kept since birth.

5.3.2 (All Steps)

All animals must be individually identified.

5.3.3 (All Steps)

No more than two ear tags per animal are permitted, whether breeding stock or market animals. If two ear tags are required by law, a third ear tag may be used providing it does not interfere with the animal's ability to express normal behavior.

5.3.4 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Ear notching of breeding and market animals is prohibited.

5.3.5 (All Steps)

Wattling is prohibited.

5.4 Branding

5.4.1 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Branding is prohibited.

Producer Guidance: Hot iron branding is extremely painful for the animals. Freeze branding is less painful and equally effective, especially for dark coated animals. There is substantial information on the websites of various universities with good agricultural programs regarding freeze branding materials and procedures. For further information regarding this procedure, please contact one of these organizations.

5.4.2 (All Steps)

Face branding is prohibited.

5.5 Castration and Spaying

NOTE: Ideally, castration should occur prior to 7 days of age using an emasculator ring.

5.5.1 Castration Age: Step Differentiation

5.5.1 (Step 1)

If calves are castrated, the procedure must occur prior to 6 months of age.

5.5.1 (Steps 2 – 4)

If calves are castrated, the procedure must occur prior to 3 months of age.

5.5.1 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Castration is prohibited.

Producer Guidance: These standards apply to castration by ranch/farm personnel. Castration by a veterinarian may be carried out outside of these ages if using long- and short-term pain relief.

5.5.2 Castration Method: Step Differentiation

5.5.2 (Step 1)

If calves are castrated, one of the following methods must be used:

- Compression using rings
- High tension bands after 3 months of age (Note: High tension bands are prohibited prior to 3 months of age.)
- Surgery
- Burdizzo

5.5.2 (Steps 2-4)

If calves are castrated, one of the following methods must be used:

- Compression using rings
- Surgery
- Burdizzo

5.5.3 (All Steps)

Spaying is prohibited.

5.6 Disbudding and Horn Removal

5.6.1 Disbudding: Step Differentiation

5.6.1 (Steps 1 – 4)

If calves are to be disbudded, the procedure must occur prior to 6 weeks of age. Short-term pain relief must be used when disbudding calves with a hot iron.

5.6.1 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Disbudding is prohibited.

5.6.2 (Steps 1 – 4)

If disbudding is practiced, the ranch/farm must demonstrate a breeding program designed to select for polled cattle.

5.6.3 (All Steps)

Routine tipping of horns is prohibited. Tipping an individual animal's horns is permitted only when necessary to prevent horns from growing into the animal's head or in response to behavior that puts other animals or handlers at risk. Tipping an individual animal's horns to stop it from being aggressive to other animals or handlers must only be carried out after contributing factors, such as group size, feeder space, and lying space, have been addressed.

Producer Guidance: The difference between tipping and de-horning is that tipping removes only non-living horn material. If the operation extends to the point of cutting into living tissue in the central core of the horn, this is dehorning and is prohibited.

5.6.4 (All Steps)

The removal of horns (de-horning) is prohibited.

5.7 Bullied Animals

5.7.1 (All Steps)

Any bullied animal must be immediately removed from the group to a safe location, treated for any injuries and stabilized.

Producer Guidance: One example of a bullied animal is known as “buller syndrome.” A “buller” is a steer that is ridden excessively by other males. Bullied animals should be removed from the group in which they were victimized, treated, and stabilized. They can be then be re-introduced to their original group. They should be watched closely for signs of repetition of the behavior and removed permanently if this does occur.

Section 6: Feed and Water

6.1 Water Availability

6.1.1 (All Steps)

All animals must have free and continuous access to drinking water. In systems where animals move between indoors and outdoors, water must be continuously accessible in both areas.

6.2 Feeding Requirements

6.2.1 (All Steps)

All animals must be provided with a full ration that supplies optimal nutrition at each specific stage of life.

Producer Guidance: “Optimal nutrition” means that the combination of feed, including rations, supplements, and fiber, are sufficient to maintain the animal in good body condition (see Section 3) and to ensure the animal does not remain hungry after feeding.

6.2.2 (All Steps)

Palatable fibrous food, such as grass, hay, haylage, or silage, must be continuously available. Straw and corn stover are unacceptable as the only fibrous foods.

6.2.3 (All Steps)

Animals must be fed in a manner that enables all animals to eat their full ration.

6.2.4 (All Steps)

When feed type and/or sources are being changed, cattle must have the dietary changes introduced gradually as not to disturb digestive function.

6.3 Feed Safety and Hygiene

6.3.1 (All Steps)

Feed must not become moldy, mildewed, or otherwise compromised in quality.

6.3.2 (All Steps)

Feed must not be contaminated by rodents.

6.3.3 (All Steps)

Feeders must be clean and free of foreign objects.

6.4 Additives or Ingredients in Feed or Water

6.4.1 (All Steps)

Mammalian or avian by-products or wastes, with the exception of milk or milk-derived products, are prohibited.

Section 7: Range/Pasture and Outdoor Requirements

7.1 Range/Pasture

7.1.1 Range/Pasture Access: Step Differentiation

7.1.1 (Steps 1 – 2)

All cattle must spend at least 2/3 of their lives on range or pasture when seasonal conditions permit. Removing an animal from range or pasture for more than 1/3 of its life is prohibited.

7.1.1 (Step 4)

Cattle must spend at least 3/4 of their lives on range or pasture when seasonal conditions permit. Removing an animal from range or pasture for more than 4 months in any one year or for more than 1/4 of the animal's life is prohibited.

7.1.1 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Cattle must live continuously on range or pasture.

7.1.2 Circumstances for Removal from Range/Pasture: Step Differentiation

7.1.2 (Steps 1 – 2)

Cattle may be removed from range or pasture for finishing or when seasonal conditions compromise the welfare of the animals or during extreme weather conditions when the outdoor environment poses a risk to welfare.

7.1.2 (Step 4)

Cattle may be removed from range or pasture only when seasonal conditions compromise the welfare of the animals or during extreme weather conditions when the outdoor environment is poses a risk to welfare.

7.1.2 (Step 5 – 5+)

It is prohibited to remove cattle from range or pasture except during extreme weather conditions that pose a risk to welfare.

Seasonal or weather-related removal from range or pasture must be temporary and as short in duration as possible. The rancher/farmer must be able to justify removing cattle from pasture either seasonally or in extreme weather conditions.

7.1.3 Vegetative Cover Requirements on Pasture or Range: Step Differentiation

7.1.3 (Steps 1 – 4)

There must be at least 50% vegetative cover in each occupied area.

7.1.3 (Steps 5 – 5+)

There must be at least 75% vegetative cover in each occupied area.

No more than 50% (Steps 1 – 4) or 25% (Steps 5 – 5+) of the occupied outdoor area can be exposed, bare earth.

7.2 Outdoor Conditions

7.2.1 (All Steps)

All animals must be protected from heat or cold stress and from extreme weather.

Producer Guidance: The producer must be able to demonstrate protocols for protecting animals from heat and cold stress and extreme weather.

7.2.2 (Step 2, Steps 5 – 5+)

Shade must be provided that accommodates all animals in all outdoor areas.

Producer Guidance: If shade cloth is used, it should be of a design that filters out at least 50% of solar radiation.

7.2.3 (Step 2)

All animals in outdoor areas must have continuous access to a structure for shelter.

Producer Guidance: The structure can be housing, a roofed loafing shed, lean-to, or other such structure.

7.2.4 (Step 2)

Animals must be provided with objects on which to scratch or groom.

7.2.5 (All Steps)

All outdoor areas and structures accessible to the animals must be maintained in a way so that they do not pose risk of injury.

7.2.6 (All Steps)

Animals must be protected from contact with any potentially toxic substances.

Producer Guidance: All potentially toxic materials, such as paints or anti-corrosives, pest control substances, or lubricants, must be properly stored and used in a manner that prevents animals from coming into contact with them.

7.2.7 (All Steps)

If electricity is required for the delivery of water or feed, a back-up power supply (with power failure alarm) must be operational and periodically tested.

7.3 Outdoor Access from Seasonal Housing

7.3.1 (Steps 1 – 4)

Housed cattle must have continuous, unobstructed access to the outdoors.

7.3.2 (Steps 1 – 4)

Outdoor areas accessed from housing must allow animals to rest and protect the animals' hoof and leg health. Bare concrete and/or mud surfaces are unacceptable as the only surfaces. There must be sufficient area where animals can rest and retreat from concrete and mud surfaces.

7.4 Outdoor Confinement Conditions

7.4.1 (Steps 1 – 4)

Cattle may not be confined to an outdoor area that is less than 250 ft²/24m² per animal.

7.4.2 (Steps 1 – 4)

Whenever cattle are confined outdoors, they must have a clean, dry place to lie.

Section 8: Housing Conditions

NOTE: Because animals may be housed seasonally at Step 4, Step 4 is included in both the outdoor and housing sections. If Step 5 or 5+ animals are brought into housing for more than 24 hours during a weather emergency, the following standards must be met.

8.1 Space Requirements for Housing

8.1.1 (Steps 1 – 4)

When housed, animals must have enough space to be able to lie down and get up simultaneously without bumping or pushing another animal; move about freely; exercise, sleep, rest, and ruminate undisturbed; groom; play; and perform normal social behavior.

8.2 Bedding Requirements

8.2.1 (Steps 1 – 4)

Bedding must be provided in all housing.

8.2.2 (Steps 1 – 4)

Bedding must be dry, clean, fresh, and of sufficient quantity to cover the inside lying area completely and to provide comfort and protection for all animals.

8.2.3 (Steps 1 – 4)

Bedding must be straw or other non-toxic substance.

8.3 Air Quality

8.3.1 (Steps 1 – 4)

Air quality must be regularly assessed at the level of the animals through sensory evaluation or other appropriate methods.

8.4 Safety, Sanitation and Maintenance in Housing

8.4.1 (Steps 1 – 4)

Flooring must minimize the possibility of animals slipping. Floors must be solid and constructed of, or covered with, non-slip material.

8.4.2 (Steps 1 – 4)

All equipment, fittings, fences, gates, openings, and protrusions must be maintained in good working order and in such a manner that they do not inflict injuries or pose risks to the animals or caretakers.

8.4.3 (Steps 1 – 4)

Animals must be protected from contact with any potentially toxic substances used for maintenance, sanitation, cleaning, or pest control. All potentially toxic materials, such as sanitizers, pest control substances, and lubricants, must be properly stored and used in a manner that prevents animals from coming into contact with them.

8.4.4 (Steps 1 – 4)

It must be possible to quickly remove animals from housing in an emergency.

8.4.5 (Steps 1 – 4)

If electricity is required for ventilation, water, feeding, or lighting, a back-up power supply (with power failure alarm) must be operational and periodically tested.

Section 9: Insect, Mice & Rat, Predator, Wildlife and Feral Animal Control

The standards in this Section are applicable to any control efforts, whether contracted or arranged by an outside third party.

9.1 Insect and Parasite Control

9.1.1 (All Steps)

The use of organophosphates or any product containing organophosphates in any manner in which an animal might ingest or absorb them is prohibited

9.2 Mice and Rat Control

9.2.1 (All Steps)

The producer must minimize risk to cattle posed by mice and rats.

9.2.2 (All Steps)

Exclusion of mice and rats from feed storage areas or other non-lethal methods must be the first level of protection. Buildings must be constructed and/or maintained in such a manner as to prevent the intrusion of mice and rats.

9.2.3 (All Steps)

Poisons for the control or elimination of mice and rats is permitted only after exclusion has failed.

Producer Guidance: Methods used to control mice and rats should be swift and efficient, and not cause unnecessary suffering. Currently, poison used to control or eliminate mice and rats is unavoidable in certain farming models, and it is acknowledged that poison does cause suffering. The ultimate goal is to prohibit its use entirely. One of the unwanted side effects of using poisoned bait is that it can attract mice and rats to the area and exacerbate the problem. It is essential to design any baiting procedures to attract only mice and rats already posing a danger and to avoid attracting more mice and rats to the area.

9.3 Predator Control

9.3.1 (All Steps)

The producer must minimize risk to cattle posed by predators.

9.3.2 (All Steps)

Exclusion of predators from housing and outdoor areas or other non-lethal methods must be the first level of defense.

9.3.3 (All Steps)

Methods of control and/or elimination of predators must be swift and efficient, and must not cause suffering.

9.3.4 (All Steps)

Poisons for the control or elimination of predators that are posing a risk to cattle are prohibited.

9.3.5 (All Steps)

Lethal means of predator control must target the offending animal(s) only.

9.4 Methods of Control

9.4.1 (All Steps)

All varieties of leg-hold traps, including egg traps, neck snares, conibear traps, glue boards, and drowning traps, are prohibited.

Producer Guidance: Box traps that capture animals alive without restricting them from movement are permitted.

9.4.2 Live Trap Monitoring: Step Differentiation

9.4.2 (Steps 1 – 4)

Live traps without monitors must be checked at least daily. If live trap monitors are used, they must be acted upon within 24 hours of an alert

9.4.2 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Live traps without monitors must be checked at least twice daily. If live trap monitors are used they must be acted upon within 6 hours of an alert.

9.5 Wildlife and Feral Animal Control

NOTE: This Section covers birds and all other mammals (undomesticated or feral) not covered by Section 9.2 (Mice and Rats) and Section 9.3 (Predators).

9.5.1 (All Steps)

Exclusion of wildlife and feral animals from housing and outdoor areas must be the first level of defense.

9.5.2 (All Steps)

Poisons for the control or elimination of wildlife and feral animals are prohibited.

9.5.3 (All Steps)

All varieties of leg-hold traps, including egg traps, neck snares, body grip traps, conibear traps, glue boards, drowning or drowning traps, and the use of dynamite and toxic gases, are prohibited.

9.5.4 (All Steps)

Lethal means of wildlife and feral animal control must target the offending animal(s) only.

9.5.5 (All Steps)

Methods of control and/or elimination of wildlife and feral animals must be swift and efficient and must not cause suffering.

Section 10: Movement and Transport of Animals

NOTE: Transport pertains to transporting animals onto or off the farm. Movement pertains to moving animals within the farm. Step 5+ allows movement of animals ONLY within the farm.

10.1 Movement of Animals Within the Farm

10.1.1 (All Steps)

Movement within the farm must not exceed two hours. If movement of animals exceeds two hours, all transport standards apply.

10.1.2 (All Steps)

Calves must not be moved on a vehicle within the farm except to access range or pasture where they will remain with their mothers.

10.1.3 (All Steps)

The trailer or other conveyance must be clean and in good condition.

Producer Guidance: Specific areas to evaluate, whether the trailer is an on-farm conveyance or a hired trailer moving animals off the farm, are:

- Is the floor of the trailer in good condition or worn? Is the flooring surface sufficiently textured to prevent slipping and falling?
- Is the aluminum torn or broken so as to present the risk of injury to the animals?
- Is the exhaust system in good repair so fumes do not enter the pens

10.1.4 (All Steps)

All ramps and floors must be constructed in such a way to minimize animals slipping. Floors must be solid and constructed of non-slip material.

Producer Guidance: Loading ramps must be appropriately designed and should have foot battens or be covered with litter to prevent animals slipping or falling.

10.1.5 (All Steps)

Animals must be able to stand naturally.

10.1.6 (All Steps)

Animals must be able to step into and out of the vehicle easily and safely.

10.2 Disposition of Animals

10.2.1 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Sale through auction or sale barns is prohibited.

NOTE: The long-term intention of these standards is to extend this requirement to all steps. This standard will be reviewed on an annual basis.

10.2.2 (Step 5+)

Slaughter must occur either on ranch/farm or at a location the animals can easily and safely reach by walking.

Slaughter conducted on or adjacent to the ranch/farm must be conducted under USDA or state inspection. A separate third party audit of both animal welfare and food safety must be successfully completed prior to the ranch receiving a Step 5+ certification

10.3 Condition of Animals at Transport

10.3.1 (Steps 1 – 5)

Transporting unhealthy, non-ambulatory, or injured animals off the ranch/farm for any reason other than to access veterinary treatment is prohibited.

Producer Guidance: It is permitted to transport an unhealthy or injured animal to access veterinary treatment.

10.3.2 (Steps 1 – 5)

Pregnant cows must not be transported off the ranch/farm within 12 weeks of expected calving.

10.3.3 (Steps 1 – 5)

Calves must not be transported onto or off of the ranch/farm prior to weaning. Orphaned calves may be transported only when their welfare will be improved.

10.4 Transport Duration

NOTE: At no time may transport exceed in-country regulatory requirements.

10.4.1 Transport Duration: Step Differentiation

10.4.1 (Step 1)

Transport must not exceed 25 hours.

10.4.1 (Steps 2 – 4)

Transport must not exceed 16 hours.

10.4.1 (Step 5)

Transport must not exceed 8 hours total.

10.4.1 (Step 5+)

Transport to or from the ranch/farm is prohibited.

Producer Guidance: No animal may be subjected to a journey longer than the duration listed above unless that journey is specifically intended to improve or safeguard the welfare of the animals.

10.4.2 (Steps 1 – 5)

Extending transport duration past the maximum time-span by removing the animals from the truck to rest before continuing the journey is prohibited.

10.5 Transport of Animals

NOTE: If the farm conducts or contracts transport, subsection 10.5 applies to the farm. If a producer group, cooperative, or other organization conducts or contracts transport, subsection 10.5 applies to the producer group, cooperative, or other organization. The ranch/farm must adhere to producer group policies and practices.

10.5.1 (Steps 1 – 5)

The trailer or other conveyance must be clean and in good condition.

Producer Guidance: Specific areas to evaluate, whether the trailer is an on-ranch/farm conveyance or a hired trailer moving animals off the ranch/farm, are:

- If the floor of the trailer is diamond plate, is it in good condition or worn? If it is another material, is its surface sufficient to prevent slipping and falling?
- Is the aluminum torn or broken so as to present the risk of injury to the animals?
- Is the exhaust system in good repair so fumes do not enter the pens?

10.5.2 (Steps 1 – 5)

All ramps and floors, whether internal or external, must be constructed in such a way to minimize animals slipping. Floors must be solid and constructed of non-slip material.

Producer Guidance: Loading ramps must be appropriately designed and should have foot battens or be covered with litter to prevent animals slipping or falling.

10.5.3 (Steps 1 – 5)

Animals must be able to stand naturally.

10.5.4 (Steps 1 – 5)

The driver must be able to inspect all animals on the truck.

Producer Guidance: The truck design should provide visual access to all animals. If the interior lighting is not sufficient for this purpose or is not working, the driver should carry a flashlight or other light source to be able to inspect the animals.

10.5.5 (Steps 1 – 5)

The truck must be designed to allow the driver to attend to an animal in distress.

Producer Guidance: Access to individual compartments may be through the main loading door, but provision of a separate inspection door giving access to each floor or tier is recommended.

10.5.6 (Steps 1 – 5)

Animals must be able to step into and out of the vehicle easily and safely.

10.5.7 (Steps 1 – 5)

Animals must have access to water until loading begins.

10.5.8 (Steps 1 – 5)

Animals must be protected from heat and cold stress during transport.

10.5.9 (Steps 1 – 5)

During transport, space allowance must meet the requirements in the table below. Cattle must be given 10% more floor space than the standard allowance when the temperature in the truck exceeds 25°C/77°F.

Category	Weight (in kg / lb)	Area in m ² /animal	Area in ft ² /animal
Small calves	55 / 121	0.30 to 0.40	3.23 to 4.30
Medium-sized calves	110 / 242	0.40 to 0.70	4.30 to 7.53
Heavy calves	200 / 440	0.70 to 0.95	7.53 to 10.22
Medium-sized cattle	325 / 715	0.95 to 1.30	10.22 to 14.00
Heavy cattle	550 / 1210	1.30 to 1.60	14.00 to 17.22
Very heavy cattle	>700 / 1540	>1.60	>17.22

10.5.10 (All Steps)

The use of electric prods during loading and unloading is prohibited unless there is imminent risk of injury to the animal or handler.

Producer Guidance: If electric prods are used, they may only be used if it is absolutely necessary for the welfare of the animal or the safety of the handler. The prod may not be carried routinely by the handler. If it is necessary to prod an animal, shocking the animal on any part of its body other than the muscle of its hindquarters violates this standard. No shock may last more than 2 seconds and no more than two shocks may be delivered to any one animal.

10.6 Transport Personnel Responsibilities, Training, and Procedures

NOTE: If the farm conducts or contracts transport, Sub-section 10.6 applies to the farm. If a producer group, cooperative, or other organization conducts or contracts transport, Subsection 10.6 applies to the producer group, cooperative, or other organization. The ranch/farm must adhere to producer group policies and practices.

10.6.1 (Steps 1 – 5)

Personnel involved with transport must be licensed to drive the type of truck used for transport, thoroughly trained, and competent to carry out the tasks required of them.

10.6.2 (Steps 1 – 5)

The driver is responsible for the animals during all aspects of loading, delivery, and unloading that are under his/her control.

10.6.3 (Steps 1 – 5)

Transport records for each group of animals, including loading start and end times, departure and arrival times, and reasons for any stops or delays en route, must be kept and made available for review.

10.6.4 (Steps 1 – 5)

If the truck is scheduled to pick up animals at more than one ranch/farm, a separate bill of lading/delivery note must be kept for each ranch/farm.

10.6.5 (Steps 1 – 5)

If a truck has animals from different properties and/or sources, the groups of animals must be segregated.

10.6.6 (Steps 1 – 5)

If a truck is transporting animals of different species, they must be segregated during transport.

Producer Guidance: Animals of different species must not be transported in the same compartment. They can be transported on the same vehicle.

10.6.7 (Steps 1 – 5)

Horned and non-horned animals must not be transported in the same compartment.

10.6.8 (Steps 1 – 5)

There must be a clear, written procedure for the driver to follow that includes actions and contact numbers to ensure the highest welfare of the animals in case of an accident or emergency en route.

Producer Guidance: These should include actions that can be taken by the driver and a clear point at which he/she should call for assistance. The driver must have an emergency number that will reach the staff field agent, rancher, or farmer who can initiate logistical actions that could include getting a replacement truck to the scene, getting a crew to the scene to reload the animals, and designating a person responsible for euthanizing or separating injured animals.

