



Beef Cattle and Bison Evaluation Tool

To be used in conjunction with the Food Alliance Whole Farm/Ranch Evaluation Tool

Operation Name:	
Address:	
Evaluation Date:	
Evaluator/Inspector:	

Scoring System

Compliance with the Food Alliance Beef Cattle and Bison Production standard includes the following:

1. Full compliance with all fixed evaluation criteria.
2. Average scores of 3.0 (75%) or above in each of the following evaluation areas:
 - a. Healthy and Humane Care for Livestock: Living Conditions
 - b. Healthy and Humane Care for Livestock: Other Criteria
 - c. Feed Production and Pasture Management
 - d. Nutrient Management
 - e. Pest Management

Instructions for Use

1. **Scored Criteria:** Using the performances indicators listed in Levels 1-4 of each of the scored evaluation criteria, assign a score for each criterion. Level 1 is worth 1 point; Level 2 is worth 2 points, and so on. Scoring half points is allowed. Example: All Level 2 requirements and half of Level 3 requirements are met. In this instance, a score of 2.5 may be assigned. Fixed Criteria: Indicate whether the operation complies with the requirements of each fixed criterion, and verification method(s) used.
2. **Inspectors:** In the NOTES section at the end of each criterion, include any pertinent additional information which was considered in determining the score. These notes will provide important background that will be carefully considered in the final certification decision. As applicable, please include reference to documents which were reviewed to verify compliance with requirements.
3. **Completion:** At the end of each set of evaluation criteria, complete the scoring table and calculate the final percentage score. Points for non-applicable criteria are not included in the final percentage score.

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Fixed Criteria

No Non-Therapeutic (Feed Additive) Antibiotics Used

Feed additive antibiotics or non-therapeutic antibiotic use is not permitted. Sick animals should be treated, but to be sold as Food Alliance certified, cattle cannot receive antibiotics within 100 days of harvesting or twice the label withdrawal period, whichever time period is longer.

1. Check all that apply:

- Non-therapeutic antibiotics are not used on the operation.
- Non-therapeutic antibiotics are used on the operation but not for beef cattle.
- Producer/manager can demonstrate the procedures used to separate animals that have been treated with therapeutic antibiotics.
- For cattle which receive therapeutic antibiotics, producer can demonstrate that these animals are only sold as FA certified if antibiotics were received greater than 100 days prior to harvesting or twice the label withdrawal period, whichever time is longer.
- Other (please specify):

Check all verification methods used:

- Feed and/or veterinary records demonstrate no antibiotics used.
- Visual inspection of storage area/buildings confirms no feed additive (non-therapeutic) antibiotics used.
- Producer/manager attests to production without non-therapeutic antibiotics during interview.
- A policy detailing the procedures used to separate animals is shown to the inspector.
- Other (please specify):

NOTES:

No Growth Promotants Used: The use of growth-promoting hormones (including implants) or other growth promotants is not permitted.

Check all that apply:

- Growth-promotants are not used on the operation.
- Growth-promotants are used on the operation.
- Other (please specify):

Check all verification methods used:

- Veterinary and production records are complete and show no use of growth promoting hormone implants or other growth promotants.
- Visual inspection of storage area/buildings and animals confirms no use of growth promoting hormone implants or other growth promotants.
- Other (please specify):

NOTES:

No Animal By-Products in Feed: Feedstuffs containing animal by-products of any kind are not permitted, with the exception of milk and milk products for unweaned animals or milk products such as whey for young and adult animals. ("Animal by-products" means any fish, animal or meat by-products, including animal fat, meat and bone meal, fishmeal, tankage, blood or plasma, chicken litter, etc.)

Check all that apply:

- Feed contains no animal by-products with the exception of milk and milk products for unweaned animals or milk products such as whey for young and adult animals.
- Feed contains animal by-products.
- Other (please specify):

Check all verification methods used:

- Examined feed tags.
- Examined feed records.
- Other (please specify):

NOTES:

No GMO Breeds Used: Cloned animals or their progeny are not permitted. Genetically modified animals or their progeny are not permitted. Animals produced directly from embryo transfer are not permitted. Artificial insemination is permitted and estrus synchronization is permitted.

Check all that apply:

- There are no GMO animals produced on the farm.
- If GMO animals are produced on the farm, please list them here:

Check all verification methods used:

- Records show the breeds produced. These are non-GMO breeds.
- There are currently no GMO varieties of the breeds produced.
- Other (please specify):

NOTES:

Animals Purchased for Finishing: Feeder animals may be purchased and finished, provided they are purchased from a Food Alliance certified farm or ranch.

N/A No animals are purchased.

Check all that apply:

- Purchased animals are from a Food Alliance certified operation.
- Purchased animals are not from a Food Alliance certified operation.
- Producer does not represent animals purchased from a non-Food Alliance certified operation as Food Alliance certified. Producer can show documentation to support this claim.
- Other (please specify):

Check all verification methods used:

- Producer/manager shows purchase records for all purchased animals.
- Producer/manager shows documentation proving only animals purchased from a Food Alliance certified operation are represented at sale or transfer as Food Alliance certified.
- Other (please specify):

NOTES:

Humane Treatment of Animals: Producer must comply with all the following criteria. Check all that apply:

- No animals show evidence of wattling.
- No animals show evidence of severe earmarking (more than 20% of ear missing).
- Producer/manager can describe an operating policy, or has a written policy, prohibiting:
 - Flank spaying of heifers without anesthetics.
 - Dehorning or cutting horns on adult cattle without anesthetics. (Tipping, the removal of the insensitive sharp end of the horn, of adult cattle is permitted.)
 - Poking sensitive parts of the animals, such as the eyes, nose, rectum or udder, to make the animals move.
 - Moving calves off-farm/ranch to confinement less than 45 days after weaning and vaccination.
- No more than 10% of the animals inspected have a body condition score of 3 or less on a 9-point scale. (Inspectors: attach a table showing the results of the body condition scoring done during the inspection.)
- No more than 1% of animals observed are found with any of the following conditions, or where the herd consists of 100 or fewer animals, no more than one of the animals observed is found with any of the following conditions. Check all that apply:
 - Cancer eye where the eyeball is ruptured.
 - Curved horn that has grown into the head.
 - Severely overgrown hooves that are twice the normal length.
 - Animal is bald (hairless) on more than 10% of its body.
 - Prolapse that has become necrotic and infected.
- No more than 5% of the breeding cows are lame on a 5-point scale. (Inspectors: attach a table showing the results of the lameness scoring done during the inspection.)
- For operations where cattle are confined in a pen or barn on bedding, sufficient bedding is used to prevent soil from transferring onto the animals. No more than 5% of the cattle have a dirt score of 4, using the following scoring system (inspectors – complete table below):

DIRT SCORES

Total Number of Animals Observed:

N/A: Animals are not confined in a pen or barn on bedding.

Description	Score	Number of animals observed at this score	% of animals observed at this score
Animals are clean except for soil or manure below the knees	1		
Legs are soiled above the knees with soil or manure	2		
Legs and belly are soiled with soil or manure	3		
Legs, belly, and sides of the body are soiled with soil or manure	4		

NOTES:

For Renewal Inspections Only

Handling Self-Assessment

NOTE: All Food Alliance certified beef producers must do a yearly self-assessment of handling. Copies of the results of the self-assessment must be provided to Food Alliance. (See attached Annual Handling Self-Assessment Template, page 38.)

Self-assessment scores for working or loading cattle must meet or exceed these measurements:

- No more than 1% slip and fall
- No more than 5% require the use of electric prods to move them through
- No more than 5% moo or call out (unless calves and cows talking to one another). Vocalizations are measured by counting vocalizations that occur while cattle are entering squeeze chute or occur in direct response to catching animal with head gate or body squeeze.
- No more than 25% leave the working chute at faster than a walk or trot
- When cattle are observed 30 minutes after processing (using a lariat or chute) no more than 1% show: hair loss, scrapes, or a lameness score of 3 or more.¹

NOTES:

Continual Improvement

Check the following for renewing applications only (as applicable):

- Improvement goals from previous application met.

NOTES:

Scored Criteria

Healthy and Humane Care for Livestock: Living Conditions

Living Conditions

Level 1: All legal requirements and industry association standards (if any) are met for space/stocking rate, and size and configuration of indoor shelter and/or confinement areas.

Check all that apply:

- Producer/manager is aware of legal requirements/industry standards.
- Producer/manager can explain how operation meets those requirements.

Level 2: As per Level 1, animals are provided bedding, as necessary and appropriate. In addition, manure collection and storage is separate from housing area. Facilities are checked regularly to maintain good living conditions. Check all that apply:

- Fences and shelters are checked regularly for broken sections or sharp objects to prevent injury.
- Handlers are scheduled to check on animals at appropriate intervals to detect and resolve problems before undue stress occurs.
- If bedding is used in outdoor shelters, bedding is clean and dry.
- Where conditions are appropriate, bedding in sleeping areas is available for all animals. If bedding is not utilized, producer/manager can explain the rationale.
- Outdoor shelters are clean and dry.
- If housed indoors, animals appear free from sores and abscesses attributed to inadequate bedding.
- All indoor areas have sufficient lighting, as appropriate.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and free ranging on pasture is provided when seasonably appropriate. If animals are wintered outside. Check all that apply:

- Care is taken to prevent frostbite and thermal stress.
- Rations are adjusted to meet the increased caloric demand.
- Extra, dry bedding is provided, as appropriate.
- Cattle do not show wide variation in body condition scores, and producer/manager can explain reasons for animals with extreme scores.²
- If cattle are housed indoors, conditions of wind velocity, ventilation, air moisture, aerial contaminants, and temperature extremes are adjusted so that cattle are not under stress. Producer/manager can provide a verbal or written description of the operation's system to reduce these types of stress.
- If bulls are kept separate from the rest of the herd, their pens or housing are adequately reinforced and designed for the safety of animals and handlers. A well-designed escape route for the handlers must be included. Bullpens should allow bulls to see other animals if possible.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: Cattle are raised using rational and sustainable pasture management, such as a management intensive grazing system, intensive rotational grazing, appropriate use of rented pastures, effective use of annual forages, etc. Cattle spend most of the season on pasture, continually moved to fresh grazing areas as appropriate for those pastures and the production period of the animals. Moves to new pasture take place frequently, with care taken to prevent “overgrazing” of forage in pastures that require sufficient residual plant material. If a continual grazing system is used, producer/manager can explain why continual grazing is appropriate and can explain and demonstrate the use of appropriate stocking rates for a given environment.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Healthy and Humane Care for Livestock: Other Criteria

Animal Nutrition

Level 1: Basic necessities for water and feed supply quantity and quality are met. No stress from competition for food is seen. Check all that apply:

- Producer/manager can describe visible signs of stress stemming from food and water deficiency.
- Clean water supplies are freely available on a daily basis.
- Livestock appear well fed with good body fitness (determined by using body condition score), as appropriate for the breed and the stage and level of production.
- Records indicate breeding stock experience normal reproductive potential for the region.
- Feed and water supplies are fresh and clean. Feed and water stations are well maintained.
- If competition is evident among feeding/watering animals, producer/manager can explain why there is competition.³

Level 2: As per Level 1, and feed and water supplies are adequately managed to preserve feed quality and avoid animal competition and stress. Animals are given mineral and vitamin supplements, if needed. At least four of the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Forage on grazing land is of good quality and quantity, where appropriate, as demonstrated by test results.⁴
- Appropriate mineral supplements (salt licks and/or loose minerals) are available if minerals are not otherwise provided.⁵
- If feed is stored, feed stores are at proper temperature and moisture to maintain optimum freshness, palatability and nutritional value.⁶
- Feeding and watering equipment size and spacing is adequate for the maximum number of livestock present at any one time.

- Changes in feed type from forage to grain or from grain to forage are made gradually, as appropriate.⁷
- Producer/manager can describe the plan for supplying cattle with feed and water in an emergency such as an extended storm or drought.
- Body condition scores are appropriate for the operation. Producer/manager can describe a target and rationale for the average score.⁸
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and feed and water supplies are adjusted to meet age-specific needs (of breeding stock). At least four of the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Producer/manager can describe the herd's rate of gain related to feeds used.
- Facilities and/or equipment are designed to work with different-age animals.
- Producer/manager is aware of age-specific nutrition requirements and has taken measures to address those requirements.⁹
- Producer/manager can describe the protein percentage in the herd's feed, how this percentage is achieved, and how this percentage changes with age groups.
- Producer/manager is aware of the potential issues with stray voltage¹⁰ and has resolved any problems that have been caused by it.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: All of the age-specific strategies from Level 3 apply. Producer/manager can relate how animal nutrition on the farm/ranch results in superior animal health. Check any of the following that producer/manager relates to nutrition:

- Breeding and calving success
- Weight gain
- Freedom from illness
- Premiums at slaughter
- Other (please specify):

In addition, where available, all supplemental livestock feed is sustainably raised and certified by Food Alliance or another third-party sustainable/organic certifier. Check all that apply:

- Food Alliance certification.
- Other certification program (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Feed Storage¹¹

N/A: There is no stored feed at this operation.

Level 1: Supplemental feed storage is not covered and precipitation and runoff freely enters and leaves the storage site.

Level 2: Supplemental feed storage is covered to prevent precipitation from running through and prevent contamination by birds and vermin. Feed is stored so as to prevent animal access.

Level 3: As per Level 2, and supplemental feed storage is managed to prevent clean runoff from entering or leaving the storage site

Level 4: As per Level 3, and supplemental feed storage is never subject to flooding, or is downslope of and/or sufficient distance from surface water, wells or untreated drainage systems to prevent contamination in the event of flooding.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Animal Health

Level 1: All basic requirements for livestock health are met. Check all that apply:

- Producer/manager is aware of legal requirements concerning animal health, should any apply.
- Producer/manager can explain how operation meets those requirements.
- Livestock appear healthy, and free of disease and/or severe problems with parasites.¹²
- Records indicate compliance with any legal requirements for vaccinations, administration of medicines and record keeping.
- Earmarking, if used, removes less than 20% of the ear.

Level 2: As per Level 1, and livestock are regularly monitored for injury, disease or abnormal behaviors. Any indications are addressed promptly and adequately, including the use of isolation and/or professional veterinary assistance, and correction of causal factors when necessary.

Check all that apply where applicable to the scope of the operation:

- No evidence of unresolved health issues.
- Earmarking, if used, removes less than 10% of the ear.
- Facilities for isolating sick animals are available and adequate to allow normal movement.
- Urine and feces from sick pens or infected animals are handled without spreading the infection.
- Veterinary consultation occurs when appropriate. Producer/manager can describe process for determining when a veterinarian is needed.
- Evidence shows a valid vet-client/patient relationship.
- Animal identifiers (e.g., bands, tags, brands) are applied safely and carefully, and checked regularly to avoid animal discomfort. If temporary markings are used, they must be non-toxic. Farm operators, farm employees or other individuals applying identifiers, including branding, are properly trained to avoid injuring animals or causing undue stress during the application process.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and handler can provide a detailed verbal description of a health plan that is implemented and proven effective. Facilities are well designed and maintained to promote health and reduce injuries. Check all that apply where applicable to the scope of the operation:

- New animals are isolated from other animals for 30 days, preferably with no-fence-line contact. Producer/manager can describe how newly acquired animals are screened for health issues.
- Facilities design allows for effective cleaning of surfaces.
- Potentially slippery surfaces are grooved or otherwise provided with traction.
- Equipment and surfaces are well maintained to avoid sharp edges, protruding nails or other sources of injury.
- Handler can explain how timing and practice for potentially injurious procedures minimize risk, fear and stress.
- If ear notching is used, producer/manager can explain the necessity for using ear notching. Ear notching is done with a notching tool.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: As per Level 3, and handler has a written health plan that is implemented and proven effective; livestock health and fitness appear excellent and animals appear calm. Check all that apply:

- Policies/practices for low-stress handling and use of preventative health measures.
- Policy of regular maintenance and repair of facilities to prevent injury.
- Policy and procedure to regularly evaluate and monitor herd health.
- Tabulation of written records show low incidence of injury or disease or need for veterinary intervention.
- Ear notching is not used.
- Other (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Animal Health: Calves¹³

Level 1: If calving is done on the operation, appropriate calving equipment is accessible and in good repair. Emergency information is easily accessible. Where calving is done in pens or pastures, producer/manager can describe procedures to prevent stress to calves & transmission of disease. Check all that apply:

- No plan or policy for weaning, castration, and/or dehorning/disbudding can be articulated.
- Castration: Basic requirements for proper restraint, sanitation and administration of band or surgical castration are met.

Level 2: As per Level 1, and calves are regularly monitored for injury, disease or abnormal behaviors. Any indications are addressed promptly and adequately, including the use of isolation and/or professional veterinary assistance, and correction of causal factors when necessary.

Check all that apply:

- Induction of calving is not a routine management practice and is done under veterinary supervision.
- Calving aids are used only to assist difficult parturitions, and never to accelerate calving time for the convenience of the handler.
- Equipment is present (bottles, etc.) to provide for special needs of newborn calves. Orphan calves receive an adequate supply of colostrum.
- Producer/manager can describe the operation's plan or policy for weaning.¹⁴
- If the operation practices castration and/or disbudding or dehorning, a plan or policy is in place for those practices.¹⁵
- Castration: Producer/manager can describe the operation's plan or policy for castration. This includes the following: Check all that apply:
 - The method and timing of castration is carefully chosen by producer to minimize stress (examples include prolonged vocalization, foot stamping, altered gait, infection and/or weight loss).
 - Bull calves are handled in close proximity to their dams to reduce stress.
 - Adequate equipment and personnel available to band (using bands of appropriate size) or surgically castrate all animals.
 - Chemical castration is not used.
 - Sanitation is ensured at time of castration procedure.
 - Calves are monitored and treated for infection when necessary.

- If castrated at over one year of age, only surgical castration by a veterinarian is conducted. Check one of the following:
 - If surgically castrated, calves are castrated before five months of age.
 - If rubber rings are used for castration, calves are castrated before six weeks of age.¹⁶
 - Castration is not practiced on the operation.
- Dehorning/disbudding: Producer/manager can describe the operation's plan or policy for dehorning/disbudding.
- If dehorned, calves are routinely dehorned within four months of age.
- When dehorning of older calves is necessary, local anesthesia and proper restraint is used when dehorning all calves older than six months of age.
- Adult cattle are dehorned only under the supervision of a veterinarian.
- If supernumerary teats are removed, they are removed before seven days of age. After seven days, they can be removed only by a veterinarian.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and handler can provide a detailed verbal description of a health plan that is implemented and proven effective. Facilities are well designed and maintained to promote health and reduce injuries. Check all that apply:

- Handler can explain how timing and practice for potentially injurious procedures minimize risk, fear and stress.
- A written plan or policy is in place for weaning and castration. If dehorning/disbudding is practiced, a written plan or policy is in place for dehorning/disbudding.
- Castration: Behavior of all castrated animals is closely monitored. If crying, excessive licking, restlessness, sweating unrelated to weather or exertion, change in breathing, aggressive reactions and unusual posture or gait are observed, those individuals are treated with painkillers &/or antibiotics as directed by a veterinarian. Other stressful procedures, such as branding and weaning, are considered when choosing timing of castration to minimize over-all stress of the bull calves. Producer/manager considers skills & experience of those castrating and chooses method that results in least stress and infection for the particular operation. Check one of the following:
 - If surgically castrated, calves are castrated before three months of age.
 - If rubber rings are used for castration, calves are castrated before two weeks of age.¹⁷
 - Castration is not practiced on the operation.
 - If dehorned, calves are routinely dehorned within two months of age.
 - Producer/manager uses polled breeds to eliminate need for dehorning, or can explain why polled breeds are not used.
 - If ear notching is used, producer/manager can explain the necessity for using ear notching. Ear notching is done with a notching tool.
 - Other (please specify):

Level 4: Producer/manager can discuss practices implemented to make procedures such as weaning, castration, dehorning, branding, etc., less stressful or least likely to injure. If calves are weaned early or late, producer/manager must have a solid justification and should address this stress with appropriate nutritional, health, and facility management.¹⁸

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Handling and Handling Facilities¹⁹

Level 1: Animals are handled aggressively. Handlers use strong actions and/or voices to compel livestock movement. Electric prods are carried and routinely used when cattle balk. Sticks may be used to move animals. Handling facilities (pens, chutes, ramps, stalls, etc.) are maintained in good repair but do not consider natural behaviors and may be slippery and potentially injurious. A program of regular cleaning and maintenance for all working parts is in place.

Level 2: Animals are handled calmly. Sticks, if used, are extensions of the arms only; the use of goads and striking animals with sticks are not permitted. Electric prods are not carried, and are used less than 5% of the time. Animal handlers show no evidence of raised voices or aggressive actions evident during inspection. Floors and loading ramps are designed to prevent slipping. Handling facilities are in good repair and show no evidence of fear or stressed behavior, such as bowed panels, smashed gates, etc.²⁰ Check all that apply where applicable to the scope of the operation:

- Animals are not showing fear or stress, e.g., rushing to escape or running into each other during handling or transport operations, excessive vocalization, etc.
- People appear calm. People and/or horses move slowly.
- Animal movement is directed based on cattle's natural action and reaction to the situation.
- Livestock move with little excitement and largely on their own, mostly walking.
- If stock dogs are used to move cattle, the dogs are under control and do not cause injury or undue stress to the cattle.
- No strong action is required to get cattle moving, only gentle prodding to get livestock to conform.
- Fences, gates and chutes have smooth or padded surfaces.
- Producer can describe a regular schedule for cleaning and maintenance of all working parts.
- Adequate clean bedding is provided.
- Feeders and waterers are clean.
- Outdoor shelters are sufficient in number and area and cleaned regularly.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and animal handlers are well trained and understand the natural behaviors and factors that cause stress or injury to the livestock under his or her care. Facility maintenance and design are effective in matching natural cattle behaviors and allowing normal social behaviors, and reducing fear, stress and injury. Check all that apply:

- Handler can discuss stress factors to watch out for, such as agitated movements, vocalizations, and fear.
- Handler can discuss natural behaviors to consider, like balking at shadows, changes in flooring, trash in ramps and chutes, “the flight zone,” movement towards light, balking at flapping objects like a shirt hanging on a fencepost, etc.
- Handler can discuss facility maintenance and design such as cleanliness, protruding sharp edges, slippery flooring, etc. that may result in injury to animals.
- Chutes, alleys, and other restraining equipment and facilities are designed to reduce stress and injury. Hydraulic restraint systems are adjusted according to manufacturers’ instructions to prevent excessive pressure during restraint.
- Inspection of chutes, ramps and fencing shows no sharp protruding edges
- Loading facilities are designed with adequate lighting and without steep inclines so that animals move smoothly and without injury.
- Electric prods are not used, except when their use is the only option for ensuring the safety of animals and/or handlers, and this occurs on less than 2% of the animals handled.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: As per Level 3, and design and/or modifications to handling and transport facilities match the natural behaviors of the animals and handler can discuss the features. Check all that apply:

- Lighting to prevent shadows
- Lighting in rooms at ends of indoor chutes to draw animals in
- Curved chutes, with smooth edges and solid sides
- Uniform flooring to prevent balking
- Quiet fans, pumps, etc. to prevent high pitch noise
- Rubber stops on gates to prevent noise when closing
- No hanging chains, clothing or other objects
- Other (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Off-Farm/Ranch Transportation²¹

Level 1: Transportation equipment is in good repair to prevent injury and comply with regulations. Loading and equipment are managed to prevent injury. Check all that apply:

- Truck floors are leak-proof to prevent urine and manure from dripping onto the highway.
- Overloading will injure animals and is prevented. Producer/manager can explain.
- Underloading will injure animals and is prevented. Producer/manager can explain.

Level 2: As per Level 1, and temperature and weather conditions are factored into transportation in order to reduce thermal stress.²² Check all that apply:

- Animals are fed a good dry hay ration prior to shipping. Lush or washy feeds are avoided.
- Truck or trailer has smooth or padded surfaces and is free of sharp, protruding features that could cause injury.
- Operator can manage or influence the handling and loading of cattle onto the truck.
- Pregnant cows are not transported during the last four weeks of gestation period.
- If the Heat Index²³ is over 100, operator recognizes existence of extreme heat conditions. Efforts are made to avoid transporting cattle, especially between 11 am and 4 pm, or to restrict travel to short distances with no stops. If cattle must be transported, trucks should be kept moving. Extra space is provided.²⁴
- When the Wind Chill readings are below 0° F, holes may be plugged to keep moisture and excess wind out. Cattle are delivered as quickly as possible.
- Animals are not transported for more than 24 hours without a break. Where animals are to be transported for more than 24 hours, carrier must unload the livestock for rest, feed and water for at least 5 hours at a location that has all the facilities necessary for loading, unloading, resting, feeding, watering and inspecting the livestock.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and all loading/unloading ramps have non-slip flooring. Loading densities are closely managed to prevent under loading or over loading, using the following guidelines:²⁵

Feedlot Fed Steers or Cows, Avg. Weight English / Metric Units	Horned or Tipped or more than 10% Horned and Tipped English / Metric Units	No Horns (Polled) English / Metric Units
800 lbs. (360 kg)	10.90 sq.ft. (1.01 sq.m.)	10.40 sq.ft. (0.97 sq.m.)
1,000 lbs. (454 kg)	12.80 sq.ft. (1.20 sq.m.)	12.00 sq.ft. (1.11 sq.m.)
1,200 lbs. (545 kg)	15.30 sq.ft. (1.42 sq.m.)	14.50 sq.ft. (1.35 sq.m.)
1,400 lbs. (635 kg)	19.00 sq.ft. (1.76 sq.m.)	18.00 sq.ft. (1.67 sq.m.)

Level 4: Producer/manager has written records of animal transportation to slaughter facilities, including dates, numbers of animals transported, and conditions. Impacts of transportation on animals and the environment are minimized. Check all that apply:

- Operation engages in on-farm production and direct marketing.
- If a trucking company is used to transport animals, the operator communicated with drivers and handlers about cattle behavior.
- Animal transport is coordinated with other regional producer/managers.
- Transport vehicles use bio-based fuels. Use is documented by transportation provider.
- Other (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

On-Farm/Ranch Casualty Euthanasia

Level 1: All legal requirements for on-farm casualty animal slaughter and disposal are met.

Check all that apply:

- Animals are rendered insensible to pain before being shackled, hoisted, thrown, cast away, or cut.
- Non-ambulatory animals are never dragged to kill area.
- Insensibility must come from a single blow, gunshot or knife stroke, or an electrical, chemical or other means that is rapid and effective.
- Non-ambulatory, dying, diseased and disabled animals are provided shelter, food and water.
- Producer/manager can explain how operation meets those requirements.

Level 2: As per Level 1, and handler can discuss assessment of insensibility to ensure animals are in fact rendered insensible during on-farm euthanasia. Check all that apply:

- Handler discusses methods of testing for insensibility, such as limp tongue, blank stare, limp back, no rhythmic breathing (gaspings OK), no response to painful stimulus, no vocalizations, etc.
- Handler discusses optimum location on the head for applying captive bolt (placed on the middle of the forehead on an "X" formed between the eyes and the base of the horns).
- Plans for carcass disposal are in place, and carcass disposal complies with all local regulations. Options provided by these laws may include burial, composting, or other techniques.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and handler can discuss guidelines for deciding when a casualty animal should be treated vs. euthanized. Check all that apply:

- Handler can explain decision-making guidelines regarding casualty animals, including examples of how the guidelines are followed.
- Non-ambulatory, dying, diseased and disabled cattle are separated from healthy animals, and provided with a stress-free pen sufficient to protect them from temperature and other stresses while awaiting disposition.²⁶
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: As per Level 3, and careful records are kept of casualty euthanasia incidents and causes, and effective corrective measures are put in place to minimize reoccurrence. Check all that apply:

- Records of casualty euthanasia including cause, procedures and disposition of carcass are legible and complete.
- Handler can report corrective actions taken.
- Animal casualty rate due to disease and injury is low or non-existent. Predator losses are minimized through appropriate management such as guard animals, good fences, careful herding, etc. Producer/manager can discuss how predator losses have been minimized and controlled.
- Other (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Hazard Reduction and Sanitation

Level 1: All legal requirements are met for food safety and biosecurity, including hygiene, sanitation, and storage of hazardous materials. Access to facilities and livestock is controlled.

Check all that apply:

- Producer/manager is aware of legal requirements.
- Producer/manager can explain how operation meets those requirements.

Level 2: As per Level 1 and a written policy is in place or producer/manager can describe in detail procedures and materials used for a) cleaning and disinfecting facilities and equipment, b) cleaning and disinfecting personal protective gear, and c) for limiting risks from contamination and disease. All the following apply, where applicable to the scope of the operation:

- Signage listing procedures and precautions is present where appropriate, e.g. fuel, pesticide, medicine storages, toilet facilities and feed stores. If signage is not used, producer/manager provides credible explanation for not doing so.
- Cleaning and disinfecting products are used properly, e.g. anti-microbial disinfectants are not used where cleaning products are appropriate.
- Handlers use clean and appropriate personal protective gear (such as gloves, hairnets, boots) where appropriate.
- Electrical installations are properly grounded and insulated and protected from rodents. Cattle should not be able to access electrical installations.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and, as appropriate, access to some equipment, some facilities, and medicine, fuel and pesticide stores is limited to appropriate persons. Check all that apply where applicable to the scope of the operation:

- Where practical and effective, entrances to farm and facilities are appropriately marked and secured to discourage/prevent unauthorized entry and/or movement of disease or contaminants into sensitive areas. If entrances are not marked and secured, producer/manager provides credible explanation for not doing so.
- Pesticide, medicine and/or fuel use is tracked in such a manner to ensure unauthorized use or spillage is detected. If hazardous materials are not tracked, producer/manager provides credible explanation for not doing so.
- Where practical and effective, biosecurity measures are in place to prevent diseases from being transferred to the farm (e.g. footbaths for visitors, plastic booties, etc.). If biosecurity measures are not in place, producer/manager provides credible explanation for their absence.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: As per Level 3, and a written policy addressing all points in Levels 2 and 3 is in place. On-farm storage of hazardous materials is minimal or non-existent. Check all that apply:

- Animal health and preventative pest management is adequate and as such very little medicine or pesticide is present on farm.
- Other (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Feed Production and Pasture Management

Grazing Plan and Outcomes

Level 1: No written or otherwise describable grazing plan based on land/vegetation features or livestock needs. Livestock moved when convenient, or based on when they have always been moved. No criteria established for pasture condition, which would signal a livestock move, other than short forage. Most pastures appear either overgrazed or under-grazed and unhealthy. Most pastures contain bare spots with little or no vegetation.

Level 2: Producer/manager has a very basic written grazing plan or can give a verbal description of the grazing plan. At least seven of the following are applicable: Check all that apply:

- Plan describes herd size, pasture size, criteria for moving animals, estimated forage yield, and periods of expected shortage.²⁷
- Plan establishes the forage conditions that trigger moving animals, but the description of conditions is not specific or detailed. Move dates tend to be long intervals, one month or more. The plan may mention consideration of other resources, but little management directed at enhancement or protection of these resources.
- Plan mentions animal gain and health, but may not elaborate on aspects of pasture/range management e.g. signs of poison plant symptoms to watch for, moving livestock before they start to eat poison plants, etc.
- Plan mentions weather related variations in forage production and plans for having adequate forage and water in dry years, but only general solutions described, leaving specific decisions until time of need.
- Most detailed discussions in the plan deal with livestock and not resource management.
- Plan calls for little monitoring of conditions, and such monitoring is done at irregular intervals.
- Wherever electric fencing is used, voltage and placement is such that only momentary discomfort occurs. Barbed wire is never electrified.
- Some pastures appear overgrazed with short leaves and little residual. This overgrazing is not part of an overall grazing strategy.
- Pasture density as evaluated by ground leaf cover is reasonable but not very dense. There are few bare spots in the pastures.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: Producer/manager has a written grazing plan with considerable detail, but the plan may deal only with the current year. The plan discusses livestock moves, and bases them on pasture condition criteria, which would tend to maintain vigorous production. Moves tend to be on a shorter timeframe, providing for good livestock gain (where appropriate)²⁸ and protection of forage resources. Producer/manager can describe considers weather-related forage and water problems, and outlines alternative management that would be instituted if these conditions occur. Plan covers pasture and forage management beyond consideration of animal nutrition issues.

Where fertilizer, manure and/or amendments are applied, all the following are required: Check all that apply:

- Field records include additions of manure and commercial fertilizer nutrients, where applied.
- Fertilizer and manure applications are timed to optimize effectiveness at the lowest possible rates.
- Where fertilizers are applied, soil testing is conducted annually on the farm, with all fields being tested within a three-year period.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: As per Level 3 and, ranch operates from a written grazing plan that addresses most livestock and land management issues and covers three years or longer, with provisions for reviewing specific issues at least annually. The plan references long-term goals, and identifies the short-term strategies needed to reach these goals. At least nine of the following are applicable.

Check all that apply:

- Riparian conditions and resources are considered, and management is directed towards the issue.
- Producer/manager uses a grazing wedge to guide pasture management and updates this wedge often.
- The written grazing plan includes a pasture inventory management plan. If that portion of the grazing plan is not updated yearly, producer/manager can explain why circumstances do not warrant yearly updates.
- Water quality conditions and resources are considered, and management is directed towards the issue.
- Erosion conditions and resources are considered, and management is directed towards the issue.
- Noxious weed and poison plant issues are considered, and management is directed towards the issue.
- Plant community health and forage production issues are considered, and management is directed towards the issue.
- Wildlife habitat conditions and resources are considered, and management is directed towards the issue.
- Additional water development is considered, and management is directed towards the issue.
- Monitoring occurs at least once a year and information obtained is used to address problems and improve the existing management plan.

- Improved pastures are densely populated with forages exhibiting vigorous plant growth. There is a minimum of standing litter. Plant and leaf density are high, ground cover is excellent, and pastures show no bare ground.
- Rangeland shows a healthy stand of perennial grasses. Few invasive non-natives are present. Decaying litter is present.
- Surface water and/or groundwater monitoring is conducted to test for nutrient contamination.
- Other (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Pasture or Grazing Unit:

Grazing Unit Types

Check all that are present:

- Rangeland
- Improved pasture
- Unimproved pasture/Marginal lands

Note: Each grazing unit type must be evaluated individually for each of the following criteria: Grazing Riparian Areas, and Feeding, Shelter, and Watering Site Management.

Grazing Riparian Areas

Level 1: Livestock has open access to riparian areas and stream banks, and is allowed to concentrate along streams in these areas. Producer/manager has no plan for protecting these areas.

Level 2: Riparian buffer exists and is maintained. Buffer is appropriate to site and environmental conditions and is adequate to minimize overland flow. No riparian degradation is apparent. If fencing is used to keep livestock out of the riparian area, fencing is adequately maintained.

Level 3: As per Level 2, and producer/manager can describe how the grazing plan specifically protects riparian areas. At least four of the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Fencing is maintained at least annually to ensure it will hold animals out.
- Water is supplied off site.

- Some in-stream watering sites are selected and fenced off and area can withstand some livestock watering use without adding large amount of silt or animal waste to stream.
- Riparian areas are monitored, but only visually and done at long time intervals or on an irregular basis.
- Monitoring information is sometimes used to adjust livestock management to protect riparian maintenance or enhancement.
- If riparian areas are not fenced, the producer/manager has taken active steps to insure grazing animals spend minimal time in riparian areas and riparian vegetation is developing towards the site's potential.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: The written grazing plan specifically considers riparian areas and their enhancement or maintenance in good condition. Management strategies include the following. Check all that apply:

- Off stream/wetland livestock watering facilities.
- Temporary or permanent fencing in some areas where other forms of management are not possible or are not adequate to keep animals out of riparian/stream at specific times.
- Pasture rotations that use units with riparian areas use those areas in early spring, when livestock spend little time near water and range out to find new grass in cool weather and use areas with other water opportunities during warmer periods.
- Grazing riparian areas only to a stated conservation stubble height (e.g., 6 inches), to maximize re-growth and protect stream(s) from surface flow situation and degradation of stream shading.
- Using "Hardened crossings" to direct livestock access to those stream watering sites where little or no damage will be done to riparian areas, and where stream banks and water quality for livestock and fish will be protected.
- Annual systematic monitoring of riparian/stream development with management. This information is used to make management decisions that better protect the riparian/stream resource.
- Other (please specify):

Score: Rangelands_____ Improved pastures_____ Unimproved pasture/Marginal Lands_____

Verification methods and notes:

Feeding, Shelter, and Watering Site Management

Level 1: Supplemental feeding, sheltering, and watering sites are sited within 100 feet of surface waters.

Level 2: Supplemental feeding, sheltering, and watering sites are situated more than 100 feet away from surface water (or farther if required by law) where flooding rarely occurs. These sites are, in general, fixed and used by animals on a regular basis.

Level 3: As per Level 2, and producer/manager can describe the strategy for protecting surface water quality. All the following apply when applicable to the scope of the operation. Check all that apply:

- Erosion and/or manure pollution due to animals is reduced by consistently moving (1 of the 2) feeding or watering sites, or by adequately rocking or barking watering sites to reduce/eliminate erosion and/or manure pollution.
- Where waterers are used, they are designed and maintained to prevent manure contamination.
- Where waterers are used, soil erosion and manure build-up around waterers is monitored and managed.
- Where permanent feed areas are used, movement of nutrients off-site is minimized by appropriate location and manure handling, and through the maintenance of vegetative cover, resulting in well-managed permanent facilities.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: As per Level 3, but feeding and watering site are consistently moved, where appropriate.²⁹ Moveable waterers are encouraged. If flow-through waterers are used, flow is stopped when not required. Windbreaks are utilized where appropriate. Shade is made available to cattle if extreme heat conditions call for it and the resulting concentration of animals does not cause damage to the pastures or water supplies, or increase the risk of health problems with the cattle.

Score: Rangelands_____ Improved pastures_____ Unimproved pasture/Marginal Lands_____

Verification methods and notes:

Nutrient Management

Manure Management Planning

Level 1: All legal requirements are met for collection, storage, treatment and application of manure. All the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Manager is aware of legal requirements.
- Manager can explain how operation meets those requirements.
- Other (please specify):

Level 2: As per Level 1, and manure is managed to minimize risks to surface and ground water, and animal health. Manure from the operation is not present on roads around the farm.

Required for all permitted CAFOs, for large animal feeding operations, or for operations with solid or liquid manure storage:

- A written nutrient management plan documents the generation, collection, treatment, storage and agronomic use of all manure and includes a mass nutrient balance for the major crop nutrients (N, P and K) that takes into account inputs from water, soil amendments, nitrogen-fixing crops, existing soil and plant tissue.

For all operations, All the following apply, where applicable to the scope of the operation:

- If excess manure accumulates in confinement or feeding areas, it is treated with straw or other composting material until it can be removed.
- Manure is removed from confinement areas as soon as feasible.³⁰
- Where applicable, manure management planning specifically includes strategies for preventing erosion and water pollution resulting from wallows, woodlands, dry lots and other areas associated with outdoor production.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and manure is managed for its nutrient value and to minimize nuisance. All the following apply when applicable to the scope of the operation. Check all that apply:

- Excess manure, if any, is put to good use off-site. Records are kept documenting the amount of manure exported and the name and address of individual receiving the manure.
- Manure nutrients from pastured animals are accounted for in nutrient management, and pasturing is rotated among fields/paddocks.
- Nuisance-level manure odors are not detectable in neighboring off-farm locations where people are present.
- Fly populations are at acceptable Levels both on and off-farm, without use of insecticides labeled “Warning” or “Danger.”
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: As per Level 3, and operation demonstrates exceptional commitment to manure management. At least two of the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- No liquid manure is stored on the operation.
- All manure produced by confined animals is composted. ³¹
- Other pathogen-reduction practices are in place (please specify and verify effectiveness).
- Within the past five years, the operation has been involved in testing or demonstrating innovative manure management techniques.
- Other management practices are in place to reduce odors (please specify and verify effectiveness).
- Other (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Solid Manure Storage

N/A: Manure is not stored as a solid.

Level 1: Solid manure storage is greater than 100 ft from surface water (or farther if required by law/local ordinance) and not in areas subject to flooding. Storage is adequate to contain manure production when application is not appropriate.

Level 2: As per Level 1, and all manure is stored with a significant buffer from surface waters.

Three or more of the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Some portion of the farm's stored manure is composted.
- All manure and compost are stored on an impermeable surface.
- Manure storage capacity is adequate to contain all manure produced when application is not appropriate (e.g., frozen or saturated soils).
- Where applicable, manure management planning specifically includes provisions for safeguarding manure storage areas from consequences of significant flood events.
- Compost is mixed, and a proper blend of Carbon and Nitrogen sources is available for microbial action.
- Storage is designed so that runoff from the storage site is contained and utilized.
- In high rainfall areas, compost is covered to prevent runoff from the manure and over-saturation of composting manure.
- Livestock are effectively excluded from manure storage areas.
- Animal mortalities, if composted, are composted separately from the bulk of manure and the resulting compost is stored and handled separately.

- Manure is stored downwind of sensitive areas.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: At least five practices from Level 2 apply. Storage structures are monitored and inspected annually and maintenance action taken to repair cracks and other faults that may lead to contamination of ground or surface water.

Level 4: As per Level 3, and all practices from Level 2 apply. All of the farm's stored manure is composted. Composting material is mixed, turned and monitored to a high standard including temperature and airflow. Clear separation exists between piles of raw materials, working compost and finished compost. No raw manure leaves the farm without composting.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Liquid Manure Storage³²

N/A: Manure is not stored as a liquid.

Level 1: Liquid manure is stored in earthen lagoons. Storage is adequate to contain manure production when application is not appropriate.

Level 2: All the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Lagoons have been designed and certified to NRCS standards.
- No individual lagoon exceeds 3.25 million gallons (10 acre-feet).
- Inspection of the lagoon shows no signs of bank erosion.
- Lagoon floor is above winter high water table.
- Manure collection (scrape) tank has adequate storage to contain storm event rainfall without overflow from slab.
- Access to lagoons is controlled, and warning signs are posted.
- Vegetation on lagoon banks is well maintained; there is no woody vegetation on the earthen banks.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and at least four of the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Access ramps of either stone or concrete are built into the lagoon
- Erosion control structures are included to prevent incoming manure flow from damaging the lagoon integrity.
- Manure is agitated at pump out.

- Twin lagoons are utilized to help manage phosphorus and/or crop scorch.
- Lagoon is lined with packed clay, bentonite or a butyl liner.
- The lagoon is covered to reduce rainfall impact on storage capacity or to collect methane.
- A device is in place to measure manure volume in the lagoon.
- A manure separator is used to reduce solids accumulation in the lagoon.
- Groundwater testing wells around the lagoon are monitored regularly and records of water quality are kept.
- Manure is stored downwind of sensitive areas.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: At least six practices from Level 3 apply, or all manure is stored in an above ground steel or concrete structure.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Commercial Fertilizer Usage

N/A: No commercial fertilizers applied.

Level 1: Fertilization for feed production is part of the farm's manure management plan. Manure fertilization is credited according to typical values for similar, local farms or by actual testing and analysis.

Level 2: As per Level 1, and previous crops, cover crops, and manure applications are credited when fertilizing. Producer/manager can describe how the operation recycles nutrients, and how their operation balances nutrient inputs with nutrient use.

Level 3: As per Level 2, and records show continuing decrease in per acre inputs of Nitrogen (N), Phosphorous (P), and/or Potassium (K) from nonorganic sources, such as synthetic fertilizers.

Level 4: As per Level 3, and for at least half of the rotation two of the three nutrient requirements are met exclusively with organic sources.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Mechanical Applications of Commercial Fertilizers and Animal Manure

N/A: No mechanical application of commercial fertilizers or animal manure.

Level 1: Fertilizers and animal manure are applied on a regular schedule or routine basis, without regard to nutrient testing of soil or crop requirements. Testing fulfills state standards.

Level 2: At least five of the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Soils are tested regularly in a program determined with a forage expert, agronomist, or state agency.³³
- Manure testing is performed at least once a year.
- Nutrient management records are maintained annually for each field.
- Fertilizers and animal manure are applied according to test results for all major plant nutrients.
- Animal manure is not spread within 50 feet of surface water, or within 100 feet of wells used for domestic water supplies.
- Animal manure is not applied to frozen or saturated ground.
- Animal manure is not spread on steep slopes.
- Animal manure is not applied to bare ground in the fall.³⁴
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: As per Level 2, and all the following apply when applicable to the scope of the operation. Check all that apply:

- All animal manure and other fertilizers used on the farm are applied in accordance with a Nutrient Management Plan for the farm written to NRCS or other county/state standards designed to protect surface and ground waters.
- Nutrient requirements for the cropping year are considered in depth before application for the season begins.
- Soil Organic Matter Level is determined, and the nitrogen release is included in crop nutrient management planning for the year.
- Animal manure is not spread within 100 feet of surface water, or within 300 feet of wells used for domestic water supplies.
- Applications of fertilizers and animal manure are timed to optimize effectiveness at the lowest possible rates.
- Applications of animal manure are monitored closely to avoid odor nuisance issues with neighbors.
- Animal manure applied to bare ground is incorporated within 24 hours.
- Application records are kept in accordance with the manure management plan.
- Field records include manure and commercial fertilizer nutrients.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: Animal manure and fertilizers are applied as per Level 3, and all the following apply when applicable to the scope of the operation. Check all that apply:

- A long-range plan is in place that considers organic matter, pH, and the full range of crop nutrients in the soil and addresses the over-accumulation of some nutrients and the depletion of others.
- Records of crop yields are used to monitor and adapt nutrient management plan.
- Surface water and/or groundwater monitoring is conducted to test for nutrient contamination.
- Soil quality, including organic matter content and pH, is established at planting and maintained at optimum levels to maximize the availability of existing soil nutrients, where feasible and applicable.
- Off-farm applications are under the control of a manure agreement that guides applications through accompanied manure test results.
- Manure is managed to allow differentiation between manures with different characteristics (e.g., Carbon rich shavings from hospital pens or Phosphorus rich sludge from the base of undisturbed lagoons).
- Producer/manager schedules manure spreading to reduce impacts to neighbors. Producer/manager applies manure early in the day and not on weekends or holidays, and/or can provide evidence of good faith attempts to coordinate manure applications with the schedules of neighbors.
- Producer/manager does not apply manure when wind conditions are likely to move odors to sensitive areas.
- Other (please specify):

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Application Equipment

N/A: No mechanical application of commercial fertilizers or manure.

Level 1: Fertilizer and manure application equipment is not calibrated or maintained to prevent spillage.

Level 2: All the following are applicable. Check all that apply:

- Application equipment is designed and maintained to prevent spillage.
- Application equipment is calibrated to deliver desired amount of material.

Level 3: As per Level 2, and All of the following apply when applicable to the scope of the operation. Check all that apply:

- Filling sites are designed and maintained to allow effective spill cleanup. Spills are cleaned promptly.

- Liquid manure, if used, is not applied through overhead sprinklers or big guns. Splash plates are located no higher than four feet above the ground.
- All application equipment running on moist soils is fitted with tires designed to minimize soil compaction.

Level 4: As per Level 3, and commercial fertilizers and animal manure is not tracked onto public ways by equipment.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Pest Management

Rodents

Level 1: Rodents are not monitored or controlled.

Level 2: Rodents are monitored and rodenticides are used only when populations exceed predetermined action Levels. Bait stations are employed to reduce the use of broadcast rodenticides

Level 3: As per Level 2, and cultural, physical and biological controls are used such as sanitation, exclusion, trapping and predators (e.g. cats). Rodenticides, if used, are in enclosed, tamper-resistant bait stations secured to posts, walls or floors to prevent removal. Rodenticides labeled “Danger” or “Warning” are not used. Traps, if used, are checked daily and injured rodents are humanely killed.

Level 4: As per Level 3, and cultural, physical or biological controls are used exclusively.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Flies and Gnats (Horn, Face, and Stable)

Level 1: Labeled pesticides are applied against flies (horn, face, and stable) on an ongoing, regularly scheduled basis. Check method of application:

- Insecticide ear tags.
- Other (please specify):

Level 2: As per Level 1, and animals are monitored for presence of flies. Pesticides are applied only when fly count is over a predetermined threshold or as indicated by herd history. Insecticides labeled “Warning” or “Danger” are not used. If insecticide dust bags or oilers are used, they are located to avoid contamination of streams, wells, and other water sources. Fly control appears adequate.

Level 3: As per Level 2, and insecticide use is reduced by employing cultural controls such as movement of feeding sites, trapping, sanitation, cleaning up spilled feed and damp bedding, and manure composting. Biological controls may be used, such as range chickens, dung beetles, and/or physical controls such as walk through traps. Pesticides, if used, are selected for least toxic chemical control. Fly control appears good.

Level 4: Cultural controls and other techniques have eliminated the need for other fly control methods.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

External Parasites and Heel Flies (Cattle Grubs)

Level 1: External parasites are untreated and no identification of external parasites is made.

Level 2: Animals are monitored on a regular basis for presence of external parasites. External parasites are treated without regard to pest identification or consequences of treatment method for environmental impact or cattle health. Check method of application:

- Insecticide ear tags.
- Other (please specify):

Level 3: Animals are monitored on a regular basis for presence of external parasites, and external parasites are identified and treated with methods targeted at specific pests. Check all that apply:

- Operator communicates knowledge of external parasites, suitable treatments, and animal health and environmental considerations.
- Animals needing treatment are segregated from those without external parasites
- Introduction of external parasites is reduced by treating purchased feeder animals and breeding stock before introduction to the herd.
- Introduction of external parasites is reduced by running a closed herd.
- Other (please specify):

Level 4: As per Level 3, and preventative measures and/or cultural controls are used to reduce or eliminate the need for insecticides and miticides (e.g. movement of cattle, sanitation, composting). Where good pasture management permits, animals are free to choose and move to habitats that are most comfortable (e.g. windy spots, wallows). Producer/manager can explain the rationale for situations where animals cannot move to more comfortable habitats, such as in management intensive grazing operations.³⁵

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Internal Parasites

Level 1: Internal parasites are untreated and no identification of internal parasites is made. Alternatively, if synthetic anthelmintics are used, they are used on a routine basis, with little or no regard for environmental conditions, parasite life cycles, host immunity, or drug efficacy.

Level 2: Treatments for internal parasites are made as needed. Producer/manager understands parasite life cycles, environmental factors, host immunity, and drug resistance issues. Fecal egg counts are monitored regularly to ascertain parasite load. Deworming is performed/timed in a strategic manner to reduce the number of treatments needed.

Level 3: As per Level 2, and anthelmintic resistance is determined using fecal egg counts or the DrenchRite® system. Incidence is reduced by segregating and checking purchased feeder or breeding animals before introduction to the herd, or by running a closed herd such that no new pests are introduced. The operator communicates knowledge gained through experience and preventative action that dictates action being taken (i.e. treatment with evaluation).

Level 4: As per Level 3, and experts such as state parasitology specialists and/or other information sources are consulted to implement a holistic or integrated parasite management program (IPM).³⁶

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Predators

Level 1: Producer/manager views predators as a factor to be controlled. Predators are killed when seen on the operation, or even sought out to kill.

Level 2: Producer/manager views predators as having some role in the ecosystem. Individual predators that kill livestock or are believed to threaten people are killed; others are not.

Level 3: As per Level 3, and producer/manager presents a more detailed understanding of predators' habits, habitats, territories, and food sources and adjusts livestock management to an awareness of the food needs of predators. Demonstrates understanding that if local predators are not killed, they learn year round food sources and tend to target livestock less. Killing of individual predators who have killed livestock is rare.

Level 4: As per Level 3, and producer/manager demonstrates an awareness of the positive role of predators in the ecosystem (e.g. rodent control), and how predators' behavior can provide indicators of change in the ecosystem.

Score:

Verification methods and notes:

Scorecard

SCORED CRITERIA	SCORE/LEVEL
Healthy and Humane Care for Livestock: Living Conditions	
Living Conditions	
(1) TOTAL POINTS EARNED =	
Total Points Available	4
- Minus Total Points Not Applicable	
(2) TOTAL APPLICABLE POINTS=	
(3) AVERAGE SCORE=	

SCORED CRITERIA	SCORE/LEVEL
Healthy and Humane Care for Livestock: Other Criteria	
Animal Nutrition	
Feed Storage	
Animal Health	
Animal Health: Calves	
Handling & Handling Facilities	
Off-Farm/Ranch Transportation	
On-Farm/Ranch Casualty Euthanasia	
Hazard Reduction and Sanitation	
(1) TOTAL POINTS EARNED =	
Total Points Available	32
- Minus Total Points Not Applicable	
(2) TOTAL APPLICABLE POINTS=	
(3) AVERAGE SCORE=	

SCORED CRITERIA	SCORE/LEVEL
Feed Production and Pasture Management	
Grazing Plan and Outcomes	
Grazing Riparian Areas: Rangeland	
Grazing Riparian Areas: Improved Pasture	
Grazing Riparian Areas: Unimproved Pasture/Marginal Lands	
Feeding, Shelter, and Watering Site Management: Rangeland	
Feeding, Shelter, and Watering Site Management: Improved Pasture	
Feeding, Shelter, and Watering Site Management: Unimproved Pasture/Marginal Lands	
(1) TOTAL POINTS EARNED =	
Total Points Available	28
- Minus Total Points Not Applicable	
(2) TOTAL APPLICABLE POINTS=	
(3) AVERAGE SCORE=	

SCORED CRITERIA	SCORE/LEVEL
Nutrient Management	
Manure Management Planning	
Solid Manure Storage	
Liquid Manure Storage	
Commercial Fertilizer Usage	
Mechanical Applications of Commercial Fertilizer and Animal Manure Application Equipment	
(1) TOTAL POINTS EARNED =	
Total Points Available	24
- Minus Total Points Not Applicable	
(2) TOTAL APPLICABLE POINTS=	
(3) AVERAGE SCORE=	

SCORED CRITERIA	SCORE/LEVEL
Pest Management	
Rodents	
Flies & Gnats (Horn, Face, and Stable)	
External Parasites and Heel Flies (Cattle Grubs)	
Internal Parasites	
Predators	
(1) TOTAL POINTS EARNED =	
Total Points Available	20
- Minus Total Points Not Applicable	
(2) TOTAL APPLICABLE POINTS=	
(3) AVERAGE SCORE=	

Summary Scorecard – Fixed and Scored Criteria:

Fixed Criteria

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| No Non-Therapeutic (Feed Additive) Antibiotics used | <input type="checkbox"/> OK? |
| No Hormones or Other Growth Promotants used | <input type="checkbox"/> OK? |
| No Feed Containing Animal By-Products used | <input type="checkbox"/> OK? |
| No GMO Breeds used | <input type="checkbox"/> OK? |
| Purchased Calves Meet All Requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> OK? |
| Humane Treatment of Animals | <input type="checkbox"/> OK? |
| Handling Self-Assessment (re-applicants ONLY) | <input type="checkbox"/> OK? |
| Continual Improvement (re-applicants ONLY) | <input type="checkbox"/> OK? |

Scored Criteria

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| Healthy and Humane Care for Livestock: Living Conditions | Score: _____ |
| Healthy and Humane Care for Livestock: Other Criteria | Score: _____ |
| Feed Production and Pasture Management | Score: _____ |
| Nutrient Management | Score: _____ |
| Pest Management | Score: _____ |

Annual Handling Self-Assessment Template

Name of operation:

Date:

Total number of cows handled:

During handling	# of animals exhibiting this behavior	% of animals handled exhibiting this behavior*
Animals that slip and fall		
Animals that require use of electric prods		
Animals that moo or call out		
Animals that leave the chute moving faster than a walk or trot		
30 minutes after handling		
Animals showing hair loss related to handling		
Animals showing scrapes related to handling		
Animals showing a lameness score of 3 or more where lameness is related to handling		

- Percent of animals handled exhibiting this behavior = (Number of animals exhibiting this behavior/Total number of animals) X 100

Acknowledgements

The evaluation criteria included in this inspection tool were developed using information from many sources, including*:

Cow-Calf Management Guide & Cattle Producer/manager's Library. 2008. Western Beef Resource Committee, University of Idaho (editors). <http://www.avs.uidaho.edu/wbrc/>

Temple Grandin's Web Page. <http://www.grandin.com>

National Beef Quality Assurance Guide for Cattle Transporters. Manual for transporters. <http://www.tbqa.org>

*Not all practices from these sources were incorporated into the final draft of these evaluation criteria, so acknowledgement of their use does not constitute an endorsement of these criteria.

These evaluation criteria were developed in collaboration with Dr. Woody Lane, Lane Livestock Services, Roseburg, OR, woody@woodylane.com.

The following individuals reviewed and provided comment on the evaluation criteria**:

1. Dr. Temple Grandin
2. Roland Camacho, Hearst Ranch
3. Mike Hale, Bunchgrass Enterprises
4. Dr. Claudia Ingham, Ecological Agricultural Consulting
5. Kathy Panner, Emerald Hills Beef
6. Charlotte Reid, Environmental Internal Partner, Country Natural Beef
7. Jack Southworth, Southworth Brothers
8. Allen Williams, Tall Grass Beef

**Not all reviewer comments and suggestions were incorporated in the final draft of these evaluation criteria, so recognition of their contribution does not constitute an endorsement.

Endnotes

1 See endnotes 4 & 5.

2 The appearance of cattle with the same body condition scores varies between cattle breeds. For example, Brahma and Spanish breeds have different skeletal structure compared with British and Continental breeds, tending to look “ribbier” and bonier in the hip. Corrientes cattle have a “broken-back” look with a prominent backbone. In addition, management situations may cause wide variations in condition scores, such as extended drought conditions, or cattle received from other operations, etc.

3 There are times when limiting feed is necessary for animal health. In such cases, there will be competition.

4 Proper grazing of animals may include grazing poor quality forages and weeds during periods of lower nutrient requirements. Manager should not be penalized for following good land or nutritional management practices. In addition, animals in range operations may be routinely managed to graze a wide variety of plants with differing nutritional values. In such cases, the manager must be able to articulate clearly the reasons for such grazing management decisions.

5 Vitamin supplements, per se, are usually not appropriate for ruminants. Some vitamins may be included in a trace mineral mixture rather than provided independently, but this practice depends on geography and other nutritional factors.

6 Range operations and other grazing operations may have little or no stored feed.

7 This is an issue when ruminants are switched from a forage-based diet to a grain-based diet. The reverse usually is not a problem. In general, changing from grain to forage may be done quickly without any nutritional stress or problems. Weaning from milk to grain should be done within one day for artificially reared calves. In addition, some grain mixtures may be made primarily from high-pectin soy hulls or beet pulp, so that the changeover from forage to this ration may be done much more quickly than to a traditional grain (corn, barley, etc) ration.

8 Body condition scoring is a good tool for beef cattle management, and there is a general recommendation that cows should maintain body condition scores between 4 and 6 (on a 9-point scale).

A good description of condition scoring can be found in the “Cow-Calf Management Guide & Cattle Producer’s Library” (see Acknowledgements). However, Food Alliance recognizes that beef cattle are raised under a wide range of environmental, nutritional and health conditions. These conditions, as well as genetic and other sources of variation, may affect body condition scoring. In addition, producers/managers may have production-related reasons for having animals with scores that differ from these general recommendations. Producer/manager must be able to explain any variation from the required scoring.

9 Animal nutrition to meet age-specific needs can be assessed by animal age class for segregated herds, but for integrated herds where family units are intact, a more important consideration is abundance and quality of forage.

10 “Low levels of AC (Alternating Current) voltage on the grounded conductors of a farm wiring system are a normal and unavoidable consequence of operating electrical farm equipment. These voltages are termed ‘stray voltage’ when they can be measured between two objects which may be simultaneously contacted by animals. Occasionally, stray voltage is significant enough to be felt by you as a “tingling” sensation, particularly if you have a cut at the point of contact.”

“Stray voltage on a farm is typically the result of several voltage sources acting simultaneously. Both on-farm and off-farm sources may contribute to the level of stray voltage present. A common on-farm source of stray voltage is the result of the interconnection of equipment grounding conductors with the neutral conductors of the farm wiring system. The grounding conductor is used to ground metal equipment and should never be one of the conductors used to supply power. The neutral, or other conductor supplying power, should never be connected to the metal case of equipment or be interconnected with the grounding conductor at any point other than the main electric service panel for the building. Other on-farm sources of stray voltage are electrical shorts in equipment, defective underground cable, unbalanced 120-volt loads including loads in the house that cause voltage drop on neutral conductors, corroded bonding connections, corroded neutral conductor connections, and missing or inadequate grounding systems. The normal operation of electrical equipment (such as welders, motors, pumps and conveyors) in remote areas of the barn or other buildings may also result in stray voltage within animal confinement areas. The degree to which these sources contribute to stray voltage levels depends upon many factors including the layout of the farm wiring system.” From “A Self-Help Guide To Stray Voltage Detection,” Wisconsin Farm Electric Council, <http://www.mrec.org/pubs/svd.pdf>

11 This does not refer to hay or other stored forage.

12 A rough coat/poor grooming dull eyes, lethargy/sluggish movement, poor appetite, over-stretching of the neck, hunching the back, kicking the belly area (indicating abdominal pain), grinding teeth, star-gazing are indicators of poor health.

13 Bison calves generally stay with the mother until weaning, which occurs at approximately 6-9 months. Castration and dehorning, if practiced, generally are also done at this time. Every effort must be made to reduce the animals’ pain and stress, as per guidance in the criteria. Timeframes, however, are adjusted for bison. Where timeframes, procedures, etc. differ from criteria and indicators, inspector must note.

14 The plan or policy may be written, or producer/manager can describe in detail the plan or policy.

15 The plan or policy may be written, or producer/manager can describe in detail the plan or policy.

16 In some cases, ranch management may require later castration. If bands are used, producer/manager can clearly explain why later castration is required. Producer/manager can show and/or explain how banding tools and bands used on older animals are adequate to deal with larger scrotum size. The Certification Manager will determine on a case-by-case basis whether certification will be granted to operations using band castration on calves older than two weeks.

17 In some cases, ranch management may require later castration. If bands are used, producer/manager can clearly explain why later castration is required. Producer/manager can show and/or explain how banding tools and bands used on older animals are adequate to deal with larger scrotum size. The Certification Manager will determine on a case-by-case basis whether certification will be granted to operations using band castration on calves older than two weeks.

18 Early weaning is considered weaning at less than 6 months. Late weaning is considered weaning after 8 months of age.

19 Bison, unlike cattle, are not a domesticated species. They will be “spookier,” have a larger flight zone, etc. Take this into account when evaluating handling of bison.

20 This damage will occur even with quiet animals if a predator (bear, cougar, etc) gets near the herd when they are in the facilities and the animals panic and try to escape, or if two aggressive animals are penned next to each other. Inspector MUST give allowance for these extreme behaviors that are not under the manager’s control.

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- 21 Generally, it is preferable to transport bison in solid-side trailers with adequate ventilation.
- 22 The Lower Critical Temperatures are different for cattle with summer coats and light winter or heavy winter coats. Lower Critical Temperatures may vary by as much as 40 degrees F, and they can be greatly affected by rain, mud, and wind.
- 23 Heat Index is a number derived from a combination of air temperature and relative humidity. Wind Chill is a number derived from a combination of air temperature and wind speed. Reference tables for these indices may be found at <http://www.tbqa.org> and <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/ansc/mastercattletransporter/new/PDF/heat-wind-chill-indexes.pdf>.
- 24 Guidelines for Heat Index & Wind Chill are from the “National Beef Quality Assurance Guide for Cattle Transporters.” (See Acknowledgements). Temple Grandin is one of the contributing authors of this manual.
- 25 These figures are taken from Dr. Temple Grandin’s Web Page: <http://www.grandin.com/behaviour/rec.truck.html>
- 26 A “covered” pen may not be a reasonable facility in some types of weather conditions. Cover may increase discomfort by isolating animals in the dark.
- 27 In certain circumstances, AUMs may not appropriate measures for determining a grazing plan. Grazing plan should result in a healthy, productive pasture, and may rely on feed availability and a feed budget rather than animal-based “stocking rates.”
- 28 Some animals on pasture may be brood stock or bulls, for which weight gain on pasture is not always appropriate.
- 29 In arid and semi-arid range country, feeding [and mineral] sites are also used to concentrate grazing in specified areas. Sites cannot be moved often.
- 30 In frozen winters, may not be feasible or economically rational to move near-frozen barn manure frequently. Bedding is allowed to accumulate until early spring, when the barn is carefully and thoroughly cleaned out and disinfected. However, animals should not be forced to lie in their own manure. Thus, the manure need not be removed as long as fresh bedding is applied to give the animals clean areas.
- 31 Food Alliance does not condone managing manure as a liquid. While logistically it makes sense to move large quantities of animal manure as a liquid, manure poses more of a threat to water quality in a liquid state, especially in earthen storage lagoons. Handling manure as a liquid prevents producers from reaching Level 4 in these criteria. Composting, although not a panacea for all ills and not without its problems, is widely regarded as the ultimate form of manure management. This may change in the future, especially as anaerobic digesters become more commonplace and accepted.
- 32 See Endnote 33, above. If no manure is handled as a liquid, the Liquid Manure Storage section is scored Not Applicable (NA).
- 33 The consultant does not have to be “local”, nor a professional agronomist. Excellent professional help is available from many types of consultants, and these people may be in other states communicating electronically.
- 34 Manure should only be applied to ground where there is grass or a cover crop planted to uptake nutrients.

35 Intensive grazing operations often utilize carefully fenced paddocks that purposely do not contain shade or natural water sources. To manage forage properly, grazing paddocks are often designated for their homogeneity rather than their variability. In addition, in many regions, environmental concerns about damaging riparian zones preclude the use of wallows and shaded water sources for cattle loafing areas.

36 IPM may include the planting of tanniferous plants such as *Sericea lespedeza* and other forages with anti-parasite properties.