

USDA Process Verification Certification

Generic Training Guide for Natural Beef Production

Department of Agricultural Economics



ABBREVIATIONS

AMS, Agricultural Marketing Service of the USDA

Agriculture Marketing Service, USDA-AMS

F, Form

Form, F

FSIS, Food Safety and Inspection Service of the USDA

Food Safety and Inspection Service, FSIS

LS Division, Livestock and Seed Division, USDA-AMS

Livestock and Seed Division, USDA-AMS (LS)

PV, Process Verified

Process Verified, PV

QSVP, Quality System Verification Program

Quality System Verification Program, QSVP

SOPs, Standard Operating Procedures

Standard Operating Procedures, SOPs

USDA, United States Department of Agriculture

United States Department of Agriculture, USDA

<program name>
Program Specific Terminology

Non Conformance - A case where practices are not consistent with documented program procedures.

<program name> - Signifies places where the specific program name should be inserted.

Program Quality Coordinator - Responsible for the maintenance and implementation of the QSVP quality system.

Quality System - The sum of all things that work together to make up the **<program name>** and its quality standards.

Subtherapeutic Antibiotics - Antibiotics that are administered or fed in low levels on a regular basis as a preventative measure.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. MEMBERSHIP	2
PRODUCER’S CERTIFICATE	3
APPROVED PRODUCER LIST	4
FARM / RANCH ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE	5
II. PRODUCTION	6
PRODUCER DOCUMENT CONTROL MASTER LIST	9
PRODUCER DELIVERY AFFIDAVIT	10
ANIMAL PASSPORT	11
APPROVED SUPPLIER LIST	12
PRODUCER TRAINING RECORD	13
PRODUCER SUMMARY SHEET	14
PRODUCER INTERNAL REVIEW REPORT	15
LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION PRACTICES	16
ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION DURING PRODUCTION	17
ANIMAL NON-CONFORMANCE PRACTICES	18
LIVE ANIMAL SLOTTING GUIDELINES	19

I. INTRODUCTION

TO BE FILLED IN WITH PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

In this section, information should be provided on the background of <program name>, information about process verification, and why this particular program has chosen to become process verified. Basically, the introduction section should be used to introduce the producers to the concept of process verification.

II. MEMBERSHIP

When seeking membership with **<program name>**, a producer must first sign and date the *Producer's Certificate (4-A)*. The producer must abide by the restrictions listed in these documents and must fulfill the requirements to market beef under **<program name>**. When the Program Quality Coordinator completes an internal review of the operation and approves membership, the producer's name is added to the *Approved Producer List (9-A)* along with the assigned producer code and other relevant contact information. The Livestock Production Manager completes the *Farm/Ranch Organizational Structure (6-A)* including the names of the Livestock Production Manager and the Production Staff and retains the form on the farm. The Livestock Production Manager ensures that all program requirements are met, and has the responsibility of determining which animals are qualified to be marketed through **<program name>**. The Production Staff are those who report to the Livestock Production manager and are responsible for performing tasks as assigned by the Livestock Production Manager. The following pages contain examples of the forms that will be filled out when membership is granted to **<program name>**.

PRODUCER'S CERTIFICATE

4-A

_____ (owner) has an operation at (address)
_____. The calves produced on this
farm are used in production of natural beef. They are raised without the use of growth hormones, sub
therapeutic antibiotics, or steroids. I personally am the owner and have fed the beef at my farm.

I certify that the beef delivered to the processor, have been under my supervision 100% of their lifetime.
The beef have been raised without the use of growth hormones, sub therapeutic antibiotics, and steroids.
The animals are numbered by ear tag numbers and are traceable from birth to slaughter.

(Producer Signature)

(Date)

FARM / RANCH ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
6-A

Farm / Ranch Name: _____
Livestock Production Manager 1.4.1 <i>Owner and/or family member(s)</i> Name: _____ Name: _____
Production Staff 1.4.2 <i>Owner, Family Member(s), and/or Hired Help</i> Name: _____ Name: _____

II. PRODUCTION

In the production of natural beef for <program name>, the production requirements are the most important aspects to keep in mind. The four production requirements are listed below.

- No growth hormones
- No sub-therapeutic antibiotics
- No antibiotics during the finishing phase
- Source of origin verified

These four requirements are listed on the product label, therefore it is very important to uphold the integrity of these claims. The following explanations, forms and standard operating procedures (SOPs) combine to provide an audit trail that can be used to verify these production claims. The following instructions should be followed carefully to do your part in the process verification program for <program name>. For further information about required production practices, please see *Livestock Production Practices (SOP1-A)*.

Animals must be individually ear tagged by the time they are weaned. Tagging allows for easy and convenient identification of animals for record keeping and traceability purposes. It will also be useful in recording non-conforming animals and will help identify trends that may improve the overall performance of your animals. Please see *Animal Identification During Production (SOP2-A)* for further details on identification of animals.

An animal's ear tag number and other identification information should be recorded on the *Animal Passport (7-A)*. In the event that an animal loses an ear tag, either at the production site or in transit, having additional information about the animal recorded on the passport will allow for easier identification. You will also notice the production requirements listed on the passport. Each of these requirements must be checked with the appropriate box to certify that the animal has been produced according to the specified production requirements. Finally, there is a space on the passport to record non-conformances.

Non-conformances are situations or circumstances that occur in which an animal does not conform to program requirements. Animals that are non-conforming are not eligible to be marketed through <program name>. Examples of possible non-conformances are losing an ear tag (identification is lost and therefore the animal is not source verified) or treatment with antibiotics during the finishing phase (antibiotics are not allowed during the finishing phase). These two non-conformances are very different however in that one can be remedied and one cannot. In the case of the missing ear tag, the animal should be identified using process of elimination or descriptions on the passport. The non-conformance is then remedied when the animal is re-tagged. The *Animal Passport*

(7-A) should then be used to record the non-conformance, the new identification number, and the steps taken to remedy the non-conformance. On the other hand, when an animal requires treatment with antibiotics during the finishing phase, the non-conformance cannot be remedied. It is stated in the production requirements that animals are not to be treated with antibiotics during the finishing phase. In this case, the non-conformance should be noted on the *Animal Passport (7-A)* and the animal should not be marketed through <program name>. Additional examples of non-conformances are listed on *Animal Non-Conformance Practices (SOP3-A)*.

It is important to determine when animals are ready to be delivered to the processor. *Live Animal Slotting Guidelines (SOP4-A)* lists some things to look for when determining whether or not your animals are ready to be delivered. The Production Quality Coordinator or other individual with slotting responsibilities should be notified well in advance of the projected delivery date for the cattle. The *Animal Passports (7-A)* should be delivered with the animals to the processing plant. The passports are a three part carbon copy. The producer is to keep the first copy, the processing plant keeps the second copy, and the final copy is retained by <program name>. In addition to the *Animal Passports (7-A)*, all animals delivered to the processing plant at one time by a given producer should be listed on the *Producer Delivery Affidavit (5-A)*. This form allows for easy identification at the processing plant as well as a place to record live weight, hot weight, and non-conformances of animals at the processing plant. A copy of this form will be given to the producer along with the *Producer Summary Sheet (12-A)* after processing is completed. The *Producer Summary Sheet (12-A)* is used as an explanation of payment for the cattle. There is also a space for the processor to write any special notes regarding non-conformances or other information that needs to be forwarded to the producer.

There are a few additional forms that must be filled out occasionally to ensure that production is taking place as specified in the <program name> requirements. When Livestock Production Managers or Production Staff receive training that furthers their knowledge in any aspect of cattle production, it should be recorded on the *Producer Training Record (11-A)*. In an audit situation, this training record shows that you are continually making an effort to learn more about production practices and that you have been trained in the requirements of the <program name> quality system. This form is continuously updated and is retained by the Livestock Production Manager along with this training guide and other membership papers.

Suppliers of services and supplies must be listed on the *Approved Supplier List (8-A)*. This list provides the Livestock Production Manager with an organized way to keep track of the acceptability of services and supplies that are purchased. These supplies (such as feed) and services (such as pregnancy

checking or dehorning) must be provided in a way that will allow the animals to conform to **<program name>** requirements.

Finally, each production operation involved with **<program name>** must be reviewed on a regular basis by the Program Quality Coordinator. The Program Quality Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the four production requirements are upheld on each of the production operations. The initial internal review is conducted prior to becoming a member of **<program name>**. Subsequent internal reviews are conducted upon the discretion of the Program Quality Coordinator, but each operation should have an *Internal Review Report (13-A)* completed at minimum once every three years. During the on-farm internal review the Program Quality Coordinator will inspect the animals, production practices, and record keeping (including the paperwork specified in this training guide) to verify that the production requirements are being upheld for all the cattle marketed through **<program name>**. The Program Quality Coordinator and the Livestock Production Manager will both receive a copy of the completed *Producer Internal Review Report (13-A)* and this report will be kept on file.

Once per year the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) will audit the entire **<program name>**. On these occasions, one or more operations may be audited. These audits will be similar to internal reviews, but more in-depth. The USDA auditor may ask questions about your production to make sure that you not only abide by and are knowledgeable about the four specified production requirements, but that you maintain the paperwork to verify these production practices. The annual USDA visits will be scheduled in advance and will determine from year to year whether the “USDA Process Verified” label can be placed on **<program name>** products.

From time to time, some of the forms listed in this training guide may be changed to better reflect what is being done by **<program name>** operations. When these changes take place, the Program Quality Coordinator will send you the new form, instructions and information about the form, and a new *Document Control Master List (1-A)*. The *Document Control Master List (1-A)* contains the current versions of all the forms and SOPs pertaining to this **<program name>** quality system. It should be used as a reference when determining which forms and SOPs are the most current versions. Old versions of forms and documents will be kept on file by the Program Quality Coordinator but may be discarded at the production sites to prevent confusion as to which version is the most current.

The contact information for the Program Quality Coordinator should be kept on site as should this Producer Training Guide. It should be made available to all those responsible for carrying out the quality system and ensuring the four production requirements are followed. It is to be used as both a learning tool and a reference.

Congratulations! You are now prepared to produce natural beef for the **<program name>**!

PRODUCER DOCUMENT CONTROL MASTER LIST

1-A

Maintained by: _____

Category	Document Name	Number	Issue/Revision Date	Version
Forms	Producer Document Control Master List	1	01/01/04	A
	Document/Procedure Change Request Form	2	01/01/04	A
	Contract Review/Summary	3	01/01/04	A
	Producer's Certificate	4	01/01/04	A
	Producer Delivery Affidavit	5	01/01/04	A
	Farm / Ranch Organizational Structure	6	01/01/04	A
	Animal Passport	7	01/01/04	A
	Approved Supplier List	8	01/01/04	A
	Approved Producer List	9	01/01/04	A
	Producer Slotting List	10	01/01/04	A
	Producer Training Record	11	01/01/04	A
	Producer Summary Sheet	12	01/01/04	A
	Producer Internal Review Report	13	01/01/04	A
Standard Operating Procedures	Livestock Production Practices	SOP1	01/01/04	A
	Animal Identification During Production	SOP2	01/01/04	A
	Animal Non-Conformance Practices	SOP3	01/01/04	A
	Live Animal Slotting Guidelines	SOP4	01/01/04	A

ANIMAL PASSPORT

7-A

ANIMAL EAR TAG # : _____

ANIMAL PASSPORT

7-A

SEX: M F

PRODUCER CODE: _____

COLOR/PATTERN: Black Brown Red
 White Red Roan Black Baldy Black Roan
 Red Baldy Solid Dairy

DATE FINISHING BEGAN: _____ / _____ / _____

GROWTH HORMONES: Y N

SUBTHERAPEUTIC ANTIBIOTICS: Y N

ANTIBIOTICS DURING FINISHING: Y N

DATE ANIMAL DELIVERED: _____ / _____ / _____

Animal is in compliance? YES NO

(producer signature)

Use the space below to list non-conformances including antibiotic treatments and steps to fix non-conformance.

APPROVED SUPPLIER LIST

8-A

In the spaces below, please list names of providers of specific supplies and services. Please list the name of your primary veterinarian, supplement provider, and feed provider if you obtain feed from outside your own operation.

Contact Person: _____

Producer Code: _____

SERVICE	PROVIDER	DATE BEGAN USING	DATE FINISHED USING

PRODUCER TRAINING RECORD
11-A

Producer Code: _____

Contact Name: _____

Name and Position	Description of Training	Location	Date Completed	Approved By:

PRODUCER INTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

13-A

Producer Name: _____ Date/Time of On-Site Inspection: _____

Farm Location/Phone: _____ Inspector: _____

Forms and Documents:

	Yes	No
A copy of the <program name> Producer Training Guide is on site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The producer is familiar with the contents of the Producer Training Guide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enclosed in the Producer Training Guide are filled out copies of: -Membership papers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-Approved Supplier List (8-A), Producer Training Record (11-A)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Program Quality Coordinator contact information is on site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Animal Passports (7-A) are present and updated for each animal that is to be marketed through the <program name>?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Identification and Traceability:

	Yes	No
Each animal is identified using a unique ear tag number by the time they are weaned?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Each animal has its own specific Animal Passport (7-A) where the animal is identified and non-conformances are listed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-conforming animals are segregated when appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The operation is maintaining effective records to verify the QSVP points?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cattle Management:

	Yes	No
Animals specified for marketing through the program are only steers and heifers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feed rations contain no hormones or subtherapeutic levels of antibiotics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is no evidence in the ears of use of growth promoting hormones in the form of implants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Antibiotic treatments are not used in program calves during the finishing phase or last 90 days on feed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Quality of the Audit Trail:

Based on the inspection, once this producer's animals reach the customer, the <program name> can be traced.....

Easily and Completely With a Few Problems With Difficulty Barely at All

Effectiveness of Consumer Guarantee:

Based on this inspection, it is my evaluation that at the producer level, the <program name> is able to guarantee to the ultimate consumer that the producer requirements for QSVP certification under the <program name> are being satisfied.....

Easily and reliably With a few problems With difficulty Generally Not

Comments:

ATTESTION We, the undersigned Program Quality Coordinator and Livestock Production Manager hereby attest that the information presented in this report, is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge.

Program Quality Coordinator

Livestock Production Manager

Date

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION PRACTICES

SOP1-A

GENERAL PROGRAM

All farming and livestock activities will be structured and executed to ensure compliance with product label claims.

HERD COW MANAGEMENT

All livestock activities should be structured and executed to maintain a humane production system. The following is a list of production requirements to QSVP certified beef:

- Animals raised on farm from birth through slaughter.
- Animals may be only steers and heifers.
- All animals for QSVP certification will be fully traceable from birth to slaughter.

BIRTH TO FEEDLOT

All calves and stockers should be managed in a manner designed to maximize both animal health and product quality.

- Feed rations are documented.
- No growth hormones or subtherapeutic doses of antibiotics are given.
- Calves are identified with an ear tag number by the time they are weaned.
- Complete records are kept to maintain animal traceability.

FEEDLOT TO SLAUGHTER

All cattle in the finishing phase should be managed in a manner designed to maximize both animal health and product quality.

- Feed rations are documented.
- No growth hormones or subtherapeutic doses of antibiotics are given.
- Complete records are kept to maintain animal traceability.

ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION DURING PRODUCTION SOP2-A

- Each calf will be identified by the time they are weaned using a unique number displayed on a tag attached to its ear. This identification should be backed up by written descriptions on the *Animal Passport (7-A)*.
- This number, assigned by the producer, is referred to as the “ear tag” number, and links the animal to its permanent records. Each animal will bear this identification number at all times. An example of an ear tag is shown below.
- Notes should be made of any changes in tags, including reapplied tags, on the *Animal Passport (7-A)*.
- When an animal is delivered to a processing plant its ear tag number will be listed on the accompanying *Producer Delivery Affidavit (5-A)*.
- If animals are lacking identification upon arrival or at any other time, *Producer Delivery Affidavits (5-A)* or *Animal Passports (7-A)* will be used to identify animal.
- Identification may be noted using traits such as breed, sex, size, weight, ear tag number missing from group, polled or non-polled, and other unique characteristics.



ANIMAL NON-CONFORMANCE PRACTICES SOP3-A

This SOP describes non-conformances in detail and the action to be taken with regards to specific non-conformances.

- If at any time during the life of the animal(s) it is treated with growth hormones, sub-therapeutic antibiotics, or receives therapeutic antibiotics during the finishing phase, the animal(s) must be identified and treatment must be noted so as to ensure conformance at time of marketing.
- Animal nonconformance identification may take various forms depending on the size of the operation (i.e. mental note, written recording, or segregation).
- This information should be recorded on the *Animal Passport (7-A)*.
- It may be a good practice to segregate ill animals that require antibiotic treatment as this may prevent transmission of disease as well as mistaken treatment of healthy animals.
- The “best practice” for identifying nonconforming animals is to record the animal(s) eartag number, note the nonconformance, and determine and document the corrective and preventative actions.
- The Livestock Production Manager is responsible for determining the disposition of nonconforming animals as to whether they should be delivered to the processing plant. The processor is responsible for determining whether animals will be accepted at the processing plant according to the <program name> quality system specifications.

Often, animal non-conformances cannot be determined until the time of slaughter and/or processing.

The non-conformances include but are not limited to:

- Incomplete castration
- Liver abscesses
- Growths (malignant and benign cysts)
- Dark Cutter
- Blood Spot
- Joint injury
- Bruises
- Disease
- Parasites
- Other

A non-conformance of a food safety nature is determined at the processing plant. In the event of a non-conformance at the processing plant:

- The producer of the non-conforming animal is contacted immediately.
- Feedback with regards to non-conformances/discounts is also listed on the *Producer Summary Sheet (12-A)*.

LIVE ANIMAL SLOTTING GUIDELINES SOP4-A

The individual slotting the program beef must have the qualifications, training and experience to determine if the live animal quality characteristics are being met.

Table 1.

<program name> Producer Program Requirements:

- No Growth Hormones
- No Sub-therapeutic Antibiotics
- No antibiotics during finishing phase.
- Source of origin verified

Table 2.

<program name> Live Cattle Specifications (*example*):

- Uniquely identifiable ear tags
- No dairy or Brahma Influence
- Beef type conformation
- No excessive evidence of hump, sheath, or dewlap
- Good growth and body form
- Moderate neck length
- Ample body length
- Long rump
- Well muscled rear quarter
- Trim flank and neat brisket
- Adequate height
- Good disposition and temperament
- No bulls or cows

Renee Sanden*
former Extension Assistant
Department of Agricultural Economics

Lori Thielen
Extension Assistant
Department of Agricultural Economics

Michael Boland
Associate Professor
Department of Agricultural Economics

* Renee Sanden is a former extension assistant at Kansas State University and is currently a nutritionist for Sweetlix, a livestock nutrition supplement company, in Salt Lake City.

Funding for this project was provided by the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center and Kansas Cooperative Development Center.

Publications from Kansas State University are available on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu>

Agricultural economics publications can also be found at: <http://www.Agmanager.info>

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, George E. Ham, Interim Director.