



Animal Welfare Approved Standards for Bison and Calves

Ranchers in this program will be distinguished by a humane and conscientious attitude toward the animals in their care as well as by housing and husbandry that meet the *Animal Welfare Approved* standards.

Ranchers in the program agree to a minimum of one visit a year from *Animal Welfare Approved* staff or agents, with the possibility of additional visits if deemed necessary, to confirm compliance with the standards during various seasons and to allow observation of animals in different phases of life. Participation in the program is on an annual basis and participation must be renewed each year.

The premise of the *Animal Welfare Approved* standards is that animals must be allowed to behave naturally. The following standards allow animals the opportunity to perform natural and instinctive behaviors essential to their health and well-being. Provisions are made to ensure social interaction, comfort, and physical and psychological well-being.

The *Animal Welfare Approved* program is voluntary. The standards do not supersede national government or state legislation.

Animal Welfare Approved recommends that ranchers have the *Guide to Understanding Our Standards* and *Standards and Program Definitions* documents at hand while reading these standards.

1.0 OWNERSHIP AND OPERATION

1.0.1 Each ranch must be a working independent family ranch, that is, one on which a family or individual:

1.0.1.1 Owns the animals.

1.0.1.2 Is engaged in the day to day management of the ranch and its animals.

1.0.1.3 Derives a share of his/her/their livelihood.

1.0.1.4 Produces a livestock product for sale or trade.

1.0.2 The family or individual may participate in networks, co-operatives or marketing groups as long as each member is audited as meeting all other requirements listed in these standards.

1.0.3 Exceptions to the family ranch requirement may be permitted for ranches that serve an educational purpose or demonstrate exceptionally high animal welfare.

1.0.4 The family or individual must employ the *Animal Welfare Approved Standards* for all the animals of the species for which they are seeking approval. Ranchers must not use "split" or "dual" systems, in which some animals of one species are simultaneously kept in systems that do as well as systems that do not meet *Animal Welfare Approved Standards*.

Note: A ranch is not required to seek approval for all species on the ranch simultaneously.

2.0 BREEDS AND ORIGIN OF ANIMALS

2.0.1 Bison who have undergone genetic selection to the point that their welfare is negatively affected are prohibited.

2.0.2 Not allocated.

2.0.3 Cloned or genetically engineered animals, breeding stock or semen are prohibited.

2.0.4 The rancher must ensure that any breeding animal brought onto the ranch is suitable for the *Animal Welfare Approved* program.

2.0.5 A record of the source, date of purchase and number of breeding animals must be kept.

2.0.6 Ranchers should develop a breeding plan to produce their own replacement stock.

2.0.7 Any ranch which rescues or rehabilitates animals must contact the *Animal Welfare Approved* office as soon as practically possible and preferably before rescue animals arrive on ranch.

2.1 The bison breeding herd

2.1.1 to 2.1.2 Not allocated.

2.1.3 The ability to successfully give birth independently must be taken into account in modifications over time to herd genetics.

2.1.4 Embryo transfer and knowingly using the progeny of animals produced by embryo transfer is prohibited.

2.1.5 In breeding programs, attention must be paid to breed characteristics that will improve welfare such as udder health, susceptibility to lameness, and longevity.

2.1.6 to 2.1.7 Not allocated.

2.1.8 Breeding or cross breeding with animals outside the genus of Bison is prohibited.

2.1.9 Artificial insemination is prohibited.

Note: Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

2.2 Not allocated

2.3 Animals raised for meat

2.3.1 Feeder or store bison must only be obtained from *Animal Welfare Approved* ranches.

3.0 HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Health and management planning increases both positive welfare and productivity.

3.0.1 Animal management must be focused on promoting health rather than treating disease.

3.0.2 Each rancher in the *Animal Welfare Approved* program must establish contact with a qualified expert such as a veterinarian. The qualified expert must be familiar with:

3.0.2.1 The animals on the ranch.

3.0.2.2 The health requirements of the state.

3.0.2.3 Methods to maximize animal health and welfare.

3.0.3 Each rancher should schedule regular preventative care visits by a qualified expert.

Note: The Animal Welfare Approved program will provide support and assistance in achieving this standard.

3.0.4 A health plan emphasizing prevention of illness or injury must be prepared in consultation with the ranch's qualified expert advisor to promote positive health and limit the need for treatment. It must address:

3.0.4.1 Avoidance of physical, nutritional or environmental stress.

3.0.4.2 Lameness.

3.0.4.3 Climatic considerations.

3.0.4.4 Vaccinations and other methods to cope with prevailing disease challenges.

3.0.4.5 Biosecurity measures.

- 3.0.4.6 Nutrition.
- 3.0.4.7 Environmental impacts, including manure management and run-off.
- 3.0.4.8 Pasture management.
- 3.0.4.9 Exclusion of predators and control of rats and mice.
- 3.0.4.10 Euthanasia.
- 3.0.4.11 Mastitis.
- 3.0.4.12 Johne's disease.

3.0.5 Any surgical procedure not covered by these standards must be carried out by a veterinarian.

3.0.6 to 3.0.7 Not allocated.

3.0.8 If there is disease or known risk of disease on ranch vaccines must be used.

Note: In order to help eliminate or reduce vulnerability to disease and the need for antibiotics at therapeutic levels, Animal Welfare Approved encourages the appropriate use of vaccines on an individual or group basis for prevention of disease.

3.0.9 Any sick or injured animals on the ranch must be treated immediately to minimize pain and distress. This must include veterinary treatment if required.

3.0.9.1 Homeopathic, herbal or other non-antibiotic alternative treatments are preferred.

3.0.9.2 If alternative treatments are not suitable or not effective or if a veterinarian has recommended antibiotic treatment, this must be administered.

3.0.9.3 Withholding treatment in order to preserve an animal's eligibility for market is prohibited.

Note: Finding untreated injured or ill animals may be grounds for removal from the program.

3.0.10 Animals treated with an antibiotic must not be slaughtered for the *Animal Welfare Approved* program for a period of time that is at least twice the licensed withdrawal period of the antibiotic used.

3.0.11 Action must be taken to treat lameness and to remove any causes of lameness.

3.0.12 There must be provision of a safe place for sick or injured animals to recover, free of competition.

Note: Before removing a bison or calf to a safe place the rancher must assess whether such removal will cause greater stress that may compound the injury or sickness, against allowing it to exhibit the natural behavior of self separation and healing. If in doubt consultation with an Animal Welfare Approved advisor is recommended.

3.0.13 If injured animals are separated from the herd they must only be kept apart until such time they can rejoin the group without adversely affecting either the health or welfare of the individual or the herd.

3.0.14 The sub-therapeutic and/or non-therapeutic use of antibiotics, or any other medicines, to control or prevent disease or promote growth, is prohibited.

3.0.15 Growth hormones or the use of any other substances promoting weight gain are prohibited.

3.0.16 Records must be kept of the administration of veterinary medical products.

3.0.16.1 Date of purchase.

3.0.16.2 Name of product.

3.0.16.3 Quantity purchased.

3.0.16.4 Identity of the animals treated.

3.0.16.5 Reason why animals were treated.

3.0.16.6 Number of animals treated.

3.0.16.7 Date when treatment started and finished.

3.0.17 The primary methods of preventing parasite infestations must be pasture management or rotation and bedding management and removal.

3.0.18 If prevention has not been effective, medicine regimens must be implemented to effectively control worms, lice, mange and any other parasites.

Note: Animal Welfare Approved recognizes that some parasites that are a threat to bison can only be managed through preventative treatment. The parasite, the treatment and the justification must be noted in the herd health plan.

3.0.19 The use of organophosphates is prohibited.

Note: An exception to the standard above may be considered if other treatments have been shown to be ineffective. Please refer to the Animal Welfare Approved paper on organophosphate and non-organophosphate products.

3.0.20 *Animal Welfare Approved* recommends that fecal samples to monitor internal parasite burdens are taken at least annually.

3.1 Health management for bison

3.1.1 Routine use of substances to induce estrus (heat) is prohibited.

3.1.2 to 3.1.5 Not allocated.

3.1.6 All bison must be thoroughly inspected no less than every third day.

Note: During this inspection, the welfare of each animal must be observed. If any bison or calf is not in a state of well-being, the animal must be cared for immediately and corrective measures must be taken. During a time of increased risk to health and welfare, inspections must be increased as necessary to protect the animal's well-being.

3.1.7 A competent person may use a dart gun loaded with a sedative to anesthetize the animal when the rancher has a concern about an individual and examination and/or treatment cannot otherwise take place.

3.2 Temporary separation

3.2.1 to 3.2.4 Not allocated.

3.2.5 Adult bison must never be kept in isolation.

Note: If an individual adult animal needs to be removed from the herd for any reason at least one other companion animal must be removed with it.

3.2.6 Bison calves must not be kept in isolation unless they are hand reared orphan calves in which case they must have regular interaction with humans and/or suitable companion animals.

Note: The companion animal for an orphan calf need not necessarily be another bison.

3.3 Euthanasia

3.3.1 Bison and calves experiencing pain or suffering from which they are unlikely to recover must be immediately and humanely euthanized on the ranch.

3.3.2 Euthanasia must be carried out in a manner that renders the animal immediately insensible to pain.

3.3.3 Euthanizing bison and calves in a way that poses unnecessary pain or suffering is prohibited. Prohibited methods include:

3.3.3.1 Electrocution.

3.3.3.2 Suffocation.

3.3.3.3 Exsanguination without prior unconsciousness.

3.3.3.4 Blow to the head by blunt instrument.

3.3.3.5 Bow and arrow.

3.3.4 Not allocated.

3.3.5 When local or national authorities order the killing of a herd of bison or calves or if any large-scale euthanasia is about to take place to eradicate disease, the *Animal Welfare Approved* program must be notified immediately. Such an event must be supervised by a veterinarian, government authority, bison expert, and/or official representative of the *Animal Welfare Approved* program, to ensure that the proper euthanasia protocol and humane handling procedures are being followed.

3.3.6 *Animal Welfare Approved* recommends that euthanasia of bison is carried out using a high powered hunting rifle.

Note: Please contact Animal Welfare Approved if further information on appropriate methods of euthanasia is required.

4.0 EMERGENCIES

4.0.1 A plan to allow bison to deal naturally and escape from emergency situations must be in place and understood by all care takers of the bison on the ranch. (See section 10.0.4.)

4.0.1.1 If escape is not an option then a plan for removal of the bison must be in place.

4.0.1.2 The plan must ensure welfare of the animals is maintained in any potential climatic extreme such as floods, snow storms, or drought.

Note: Any climactic condition that occurs in North America and does not deprive the bison of sustenance, is not considered an emergency or disaster for North American Bison as long as they are able to respond to the situation with natural behaviors.

4.0.1.3 The plan must ensure welfare of the animals is maintained during any potential disruption of services or mechanical breakdown, such as water supply cutoff and breakdown of feeding machinery.

4.0.1.4 The plan must ensure the welfare of animals is maintained during transport to include actions to be taken in the event of an accident or vehicle breakdown.

5.0 ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

5.0.1 Records must be kept of the sale or transfer of *Animal Welfare Approved* animals and products (e.g. hides, meat etc).

Note: For animals to be sold with the Animal Welfare Approved label or logo records must show that they have been slaughtered at Animal Welfare Approved slaughter plants. Animal Welfare Approved recommends that even if animals or animal products are not sold under the label or logo they are sold to other Animal Welfare Approved ranches and slaughtered at Animal Welfare Approved slaughter plants.

5.0.2 Records must be kept of mortalities and morbidity including cause where known.

5.0.3 Records must be kept of the number and reasons for animals being culled.

5.0.4 to 5.0.6 Not allocated.

5.0.7 All facilities, equipment, fittings and pasture used by the animals must be free of debris.

5.0.8 All facilities, equipment, fittings, fencing and pasture areas must be designed and maintained in such a way that they do not pose a risk, or inflict injury or damage to the animals.

5.1 Management of bison

5.1.1 Animals must be maintained at body score 4 or above on a 1-9 scale or body score 2 or above on a 1-5 scale.

5.1.2 Breeding animals must not exceed body score 7 on a 1-9 scale or body score 4 on a 1-5 scale.

5.1.3 As far as is possible a competent person must monitor calving from a distance to ensure health and welfare of the new born calf and its mother are maintained.

5.1.4 to 5.1.28 Not allocated.

5.1.29 The social dynamics and family group development within a herd of bison must be acknowledged. Disruption of the herd dynamics, adding to or taking away, must be addressed with consideration for the following criteria.

5.1.29.1 New animals must be allowed a period of time no less than two weeks to become familiar with the ranch from a small pasture or large holding pen.

5.1.29.2 New animals must be allowed to form a family group consisting of the new arrivals before introducing that group to the established herd.

- 5.1.29.3 New animals should be exposed to daily human and or machine interaction in quarantine so as to become familiar with the routines of the ranch and ranch personnel.
- 5.1.29.4 At the time of assimilation with the existing herd, behaviors observed during assimilation should be documented.
- 5.1.29.5 Exposing newborn bison calves to the behaviors that occur during the assimilation of new animals to the herd is prohibited.
- 5.1.29.6 Bison must be allowed the ability to separate into stable subgroups at will.

5.1.30 Bison must be allowed to calve outdoors on pasture.

5.2 Provisions for calves

Animal Welfare Approved acknowledges the fact that in the majority of instances no human interactions with the new born bison calf are possible or desired.

5.2.1 to 5.2.13 Not allocated.

5.2.14 Milk replacer containing antibiotics, growth promoters and/or any animal by-products aside from milk protein is prohibited.

Note: If the welfare of a calf could be compromised and evidence can be submitted that suitable products are not available, a derogation is in operation to allow milk replacers which do not meet the standard above.

5.2.15 to 5.2.18 Not allocated.

5.2.19 All calves must have continuous access to high quality forage from seven days of age onwards.

Note: Access is recommended from day one.

5.2.20 to 5.2.22 Not allocated.

5.2.23 The rancher must have a plan of management and the equipment to deal with orphaned bison calves.

5.2.24 Removal of bison calves from the herd must be documented by the ranch.

5.2.25 Rescued bison calves must be held in a clean bedded pen that protects them from extreme weather, is predator proof and out of sight and sound from the cow so as to reduce stress for both.

5.3 Weaning and separation

5.3.1 Husbandry systems that allow young calves to remain in the herd with their mothers until weaning occurs naturally are recommended.

5.3.2 Not allocated.

5.3.3 Newly weaned or separated calves should be kept in groups of familiar animals.

5.3.4 Not allocated.

5.3.5 In cases where natural weaning is not practical separation of the calf from its mother must involve methods designed to cause as little stress as possible.

5.3.6 After separation, cows and calves must either be kept in adjacent pens where they can see, hear and sniff/lick each other or be completely out of sight and hearing of each other.

5.3.7 Feed for calves should be replaced daily to ensure that it is clean and appealing.

5.3.8 to 5.3.10 Not allocated.

5.3.11 Weaning calves less than six months of age is prohibited (see 5.3.16).

5.3.12 The average weaning age of calves in the herd must be eight months.

5.3.13 to 5.3.15 Not allocated.

5.3.16 In exceptional circumstances when the health and welfare of the calf or the mother would otherwise be compromised, calves may be weaned before six months of age. A record must be kept of how many calves and the reasons for this early weaning.

5.3.17 Bison calves should not be weaned until 90% of their hair coat has turned to their adult color.

5.3.18 Weaning should be timed so that the calves are not exposed to temperatures of 95° F degrees or 35° C or more.

5.3.19 To reduce the risk of pneumonia or other illness calves should not be exposed to dusty conditions at weaning.

5.3.20 Weaned calves should be held in the weaning pen for at least two weeks time before they are turned out or relocated.

5.4, 5.5, 5.6 & 5.7 Not allocated

5.8 Castration

5.8.1 to 5.8.9 Not allocated.

5.8.10 Castration of male bison is prohibited.

5.9 Physical alterations

5.9.1 to 5.9.2 Not allocated.

5.9.3 Tail docking is prohibited.

5.9.4 Dehorning is prohibited.

5.9.5 Not allocated.

5.9.6 Spaying of heifers is prohibited.

5.9.7 to 5.9.19 Not allocated.

5.9.20 Disbudding is prohibited.

5.10 Identification

5.10.1 Where identification is required it must not cause harm to the animal.

5.10.1.1 The preferred method for permanent identification is Sub-Cutaneous Radio Frequency Identification.

5.10.1.2 The preferred method of temporary identification is non-toxic paints or dyes.

5.10.1.3 Ear tagging and tattooing are permitted methods of identification.

5.10.2 Ear-marking by cutting/notching the ears with a knife or cutting of dewlaps is prohibited.

5.10.3 Hot branding and freeze branding are prohibited.

Note: Flank or rump branding may be carried out when required by state law or by financial institutions. If both hot iron and freeze branding are permitted, freeze branding must be used when practical. Please contact the Animal Welfare Approved office to discuss any requirement to brand.

6.0 FOOD AND WATER

6.0.1 Animals must have free access to clean, fresh water at all times.

6.0.2 Animals must have a feeding plan that will guarantee a varied, well-balanced and wholesome nutritional regime appropriate for their age.

6.0.3 A list of ingredients or sample tear tags from all feed, feed blocks and mineral blocks used on ranch must be made available to the *Animal Welfare Approved* representative.

6.0.4 Food and water must be distributed in a way that eliminates competition.

6.0.4.1 If the ranch or ranch operations cannot accommodate the nutritional needs of subordinate bison, they must be sorted from the herd and allowed to form their own subgroup. This does not apply to nursing calves.

6.0.5 Feeding meat or animal by-products is prohibited.

6.0.6 Wherever possible, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or derivatives of GMOs, including GMO feed and veterinary and health care products containing GMOs or their derivatives as well as the growing of genetically engineered crops must be avoided.

6.1 Food and water for bison

6.1.1 A significant and consistent roughage component must be provided in the diet through all stages of an animal's life to ensure proper rumen function. The minimum requirement is 70 percent long fiber roughage/forage on a daily dry matter basis from weaning onwards.

6.1.2 Not allocated.

6.1.3 Any changes in diet must be carried out gradually to minimize rumen problems.

6.1.4 The pasture management plan and nutritional regime must take into account the added nutritional requirements of lactating animals (see also 7.0.7 and 6.0.2).

6.1.5 Feedlots and other types of confinement feeding operations are prohibited.

6.1.6 Wild or natural water sources are recommended in regions of extreme summer heat so as to allow bison to perform the natural behavior of swimming and mud wallowing.

6.1.7 Wild ponds must be checked on a routine schedule to ensure that no bison are stuck or in jeopardy.

6.1.7.1 Frozen wild water sources must be checked often to ensure that no bison are in jeopardy from falling through the ice.

6.1.7.2 Any bison discovered dead in a wild water source must be removed immediately so as not to contaminate the water source.

Note: As an indigenous species, the bison utilize and deal with wild water sources as part of performing their natural behavior.

7.0 PASTURE ACCESS

The aim of good pasture area management is to satisfy the herd's food-seeking behaviors. Animals must be able to explore the ground and their natural environment.

For management of animals in extreme weather please see sections 7.5 and 8.0.

7.0.1 Continuous outdoor pasture or range access is required for all animals.

7.0.2 to 7.0.3 Not allocated.

7.0.4 Range areas should be used in rotation. Both extensive and rotational grazing systems are permitted.

7.0.5 The amount of outdoor area must be such that the health of the animals and pasture quality is maintained.

7.0.6 Animals must have access to pasture areas that are well drained and clean.

7.0.7 A pasture management plan must be in place that addresses the specific ranch site. It must ensure that:

- 7.0.7.1 The nutritional requirements of grazing animals can be adequately met through grazing and appropriate supplementation.
- 7.0.7.2 Not allocated.
- 7.0.7.3 The composition of the pastures does not create health problems for the animals.
- 7.0.7.4 Animals have access to fresh, clean pasture that has not become polluted with manure.
- 7.0.7.5 Pasture areas are not subject to erosion by the activities of the animals.
- 7.0.7.6 Pastures are not degraded by overgrazing and other management techniques.
- 7.0.7.7 Appropriate paddock size and grazing frequency is assured.
- 7.0.7.8 The location of water, shelter, and feeding areas is addressed.
- 7.0.7.9 Non-point pollution and other local environmental standards are being met.
- 7.0.7.10 Pasture areas on which animals have been out-wintered or that are otherwise worn out or denuded are restored.

7.0.8 Periodic soil testing must be conducted as necessary.

7.0.9 Periodic testing of pasture or forage nutritional content is recommended (see also 6.0.2).

7.0.10 Herbicides and pesticides may only be used when weeds or pests cannot be practically controlled by other means.

7.0.11 Herbicides and pesticides must be mixed and disposed of according to manufacturer's instructions to avoid environmental contamination.

7.0.12 Animals must not be grazed or kept on land within 21 days of direct application of herbicides or pesticides.

7.1 Pasture for bison

7.1.1 Pasture area must be provided such that the activity of the animals does not lead to more than 20% of the pasture being denuded.

7.1.2 Animals and pastures must be managed to avoid the risk of bloat.

7.2, 7.3 & 7.4 Not allocated

7.5 Exclusion from pasture

Animals who have been properly selected for the specific climate conditions will voluntarily choose to go outdoors in all but the most extreme weather. However when exclusion is in the best interest of the animal the standards in the following section and those in section 8 must be met.

7.5.1 Bison may only be removed from pasture and housed in an emergency situation or extreme weather conditions, when their welfare would otherwise be affected.

Note: Any climactic condition that occurs in North America and does not deprive the bison of sustenance is not considered an emergency or disaster for North American Bison if they are able to respond to the situation with natural behaviors.

7.5.2 Animals may only be housed with no management plan and no pasture access for up to 28 days in an emergency situation.

7.5.3 If local climatic conditions mean that animals are likely to be housed with no access to pasture for more than 28 days, the rancher must have a plan for their management that applies from day one of housing. It must include:

7.5.3.1 Triggers for housing such as temperature, precipitation or soil condition.

7.5.3.2 Space available to each housed animal.

7.5.3.3 Facilities available to house the animals. These must include laying areas, loafing areas, feeding areas and space to enable animals to fulfill their behavioral needs.

7.5.3.4 Triggers for animals to be returned to pasture.

Note: It is not acceptable to use a particular date during the year as a trigger for either housing or return to pasture. Triggers should relate to the identified risk to the welfare of the animals under particular climatic or environmental scenarios.

8.0 HOUSING AND SHELTER

Animal Welfare Approved recognizes that the housing of bison in the US is likely to be only in the rare event of rearing orphan calves. Any other housing of bison may impact negatively on their welfare. In other climates bison may be housed when it is of benefit to their welfare.

The ranch must observe the natural behavior of the bison herd on the ranch and by doing so, learn from the bison how to best allow them to utilize the natural shelter available on the ranch such as trees, swales, hills, ponds, rivers and lakes.

8.0.1 Bison and calves must have continuous access to shelter when this is required.

8.0.2 Not allocated.

8.0.3 When housing or shelter is required there must be space such that all animals can enter, move around and lie down respecting the social hierarchy of the herd (see also 8.1.1).

8.0.4 In extreme weather there must be a means to feed and water animals in a sheltered environment.

8.0.5 Shelters and housing must be well ventilated and allow fresh air to enter.

8.0.6 Shelters and housing must allow natural light to enter.

8.0.7 Animals must not be subjected to dim and/or continuous lighting or kept in permanent darkness.

8.0.8 In the daytime, the animals must always be able to see each other, their food and water sources, as well as their surroundings clearly.

8.0.9 Use of artificial light is permitted as long as it does not exceed a maximum day-length of 16 hours.

8.0.10 Artificial light must be distributed evenly.

8.0.11 Shelters and housing must have solid floors.

Note: Floors may be natural - the surface of the ground or pasture - or artificial. An area of wire or slat under a drinker will be deemed drainage not a floor. Standard 8.0.11 does not apply to range, pasture or forage area, unless the area is covered by a house or designated as a shelter area.

8.0.12 Animals at all times must have an area available that provides dry footing so they are not forced to stand in mud or manure.

8.0.13 Inspection of animals must be possible at any time day or night.

8.0.14 Manure must be removed from housing or shelters on a regular basis.

8.0.15 The house or shelter must be managed to eliminate ammonia, dampness and mold.

Note: The human nose can detect ammonia at levels of 5ppm upwards. If the rancher can smell ammonia action must be taken to eliminate the source.

8.0.16 Liquefaction of manure and liquefied manure handling systems are prohibited.

8.0.17 Close confinement in cages, crates or tethering is prohibited (see 8.0.18).

8.0.18 Temporary close confinement or tying up (tethering), which may be required for vaccination, weighing, feeding, marking or veterinary procedures, is permitted. This must be noted in the ranch plan or recorded at the time.

8.0.19 Accommodations must be constructed so that they can be easily and effectively cleaned.

8.0.20 Maintenance and housekeeping routines must be in place to minimize any potential problems from rats or mice.

8.1 Housing and shelter for bison

8.1.1 When housing bison the following space requirements are recommended.

Note: A period of consultation will take place until the end of 2010 with a view to making these standards required.

Minimum indoor bedded lying area:

Calves up to 220lbs (100kg)	48 sq. feet	4.5 sq. meters
Bison between 220-440lbs (100-200kg)	81 sq. feet	7.5 sq. meters
Bison between 440-770lbs (200-350kg)	129 sq. feet	12.0 sq. meters
Bison between 770-1100lbs (350-500kg)	162 sq. feet	15.0 sq. meters
Bison over 1100lbs (500 kg)	33 sq. ft per 100kg live weight	3.0 sq. meters per 100kg live weight

Minimum additional loafing area when animals are excluded from pasture:

Calves up to 220lbs (100kg)	36 sq. feet	3.3 sq. meters
Bison between 220-440lbs (100-200kg)	60 sq. feet	5.7 sq. meters
Bison between 440-770lbs (200-350kg)	96 sq. feet	9.0 sq. meters
Bison between 770-1100lbs (350-500kg)	120 sq. feet	11.1 sq. meters
Bison over 1100lbs (500 kg)	24 sq. ft per 100kg live weight	2.25 sq meters per 100kg live weight

8.2 Housing for male breeding animals

8.2.1 to 8.2.2 Not allocated.

8.2.3 Housing adult bison bulls separately from the herd, other than for reasons of veterinary treatment, is prohibited.

Note: This does not preclude removing bison bulls from the main herd during calving season, but they should be maintained on separate pasture areas during this time and not housed.

8.3 Bedding

8.3.1 In housing, bedding must be available to animals at all times.

8.3.2 Not allocated.

8.3.3 Bedding must be clean, dry, mold-free and replenished as needed.

8.3.4 Bedding must not cause discomfort or harm to the animals. Particular attention must be paid if sand is chosen as bedding.

8.3.5 Bedding with straw or cornstover is preferred.

8.3.6 Bedding from timber-based products sourced from chemically treated wood is prohibited.

8.3.7 There must be enough bedding to ensure the comfort of all animals.

9.0 REMOVAL OF ANIMALS FROM THE APPROVED RANCH

9.0.1 These standards only apply to animals that the approved rancher retains ownership of when they are moved off the approved ranch.

9.1 Routine use of land that is not controlled by the approved ranch

Animal Welfare Approved recognizes that the approved ranch may routinely need to send animals off-ranch to access grazing or for other management reasons. *Animal Welfare Approved* retains the right to audit these off-ranch sites. Please see the standards below for guidance.

9.1.1 If the approved ranch has any compliance issues other than record keeping and ranch plans the off-ranch animals must be audited before approval can be granted or renewed.

9.1.2 If animals are removed from the main approved ranch for five months or more in any calendar year the off-ranch animals must be audited before approval can be granted or renewed.

9.1.3 If 25% or less of the total animals owned are off the approved ranch for less than five months in any calendar year and the main ranch audit has no animal based compliance issues the off-ranch animals may not need to be audited.

9.1.4 There must be a separate and specific plan for maintaining animal health and welfare, transport, biosecurity and continued compliance with the *Animal Welfare Approved* standards while animals are not directly controlled by the approved ranch (see also 3.0.4).

9.2 Temporary removal of approved animals from the approved ranch

9.2.1 *Animal Welfare Approved* livestock will only retain their status when temporarily removed from the approved ranch for the following reasons:

- 9.2.1.1 Male animals used for breeding.
- 9.2.1.2 Female animals taken to be naturally served.
- 9.2.1.3 Movement of animals in an emergency.

9.2.2 When *Animal Welfare Approved* livestock are removed from the approved ranch they must be kept to *Animal Welfare Approved* standards until such time they leave the ownership of the approved ranch or rancher (see also 9.2.3).

9.2.3 Not allocated.

9.2.4 If *Animal Welfare Approved* breeding animals are hired or taken to ranchers that are not *Animal Welfare Approved* the approved ranch must ensure that the ranch they are transferring the animals to is aware of the relevant standards for management and can meet them.

9.2.5 There must be a separate and specific plan for maintaining biosecurity, animal health and welfare and transport when moving stock on and off the approved ranch (see also 3.0.4).

10.0 PROTECTION FROM PREDATORS AND CONTROL OF RATS AND MICE

10.0.1 Bison and calves must be protected from poachers and predators.

10.0.2 If livestock guardian dogs are used their management must meet the *Animal Welfare Approved* guidelines for guardian or herding canine management.

10.0.3 In the event that exclusion is unsuccessful and predation remains an issue, live trapping may be used. (Please contact *Animal Welfare Approved* for guidance.)

10.0.4 Live traps must be checked twice daily.

10.0.5 All other forms of traps are prohibited.

10.0.6 All snares and leghold traps are prohibited.

10.0.7 The use of poisons against predators is prohibited.

10.0.8 If live trapping is not possible or is not successful then as a last resort lethal control of specific animals may be carried out when these are causing an immediate threat to ranch livestock.

10.0.9 If there is a continuous threat from predators that cannot be managed by live trapping advice must be sought from *Animal Welfare Approved* regarding a control program.

10.0.10 Lethal control/euthanasia of predators must result in instantaneous irreversible unconsciousness and death.

10.0.11 If a predatory animal has been euthanized to protect the animals on the ranch, there must be records kept of the species in question, number of animals, and euthanasia method.

10.0.12 Glue boards for the control of rats and mice are prohibited.

10.0.13 Licensed rodenticides placed such that non-target species have no access to them may be used for the control of rats or mice.

10.0.14 Lethal control/euthanasia of live trapped rodents must result in instantaneous irreversible unconsciousness and death.

11.0 RECORDS AND RECORD-KEEPING

This section lists the records that must be maintained on ranch and the sections where they can be found.

11.0.1 Records of the source, date of purchase, and number of animals in the breeding herd or flock (see also 2.0.5).

11.0.2 Records of a health plan (see also 3.0.4).

11.0.3 Records of the administration of veterinary medical products (see also 3.0.16).

- 11.0.4 Records of an emergency plan (see also section 4.0).
- 11.0.5 Records of sale or transfer of *Animal Welfare Approved* animals or products (see also 5.0.1).
- 11.0.6 Records of mortality, morbidity and culling (see also 5.0.2 and 5.0.3).
- 11.0.7 Records of a feeding plan including nutritional regime (see also 6.0.2).
- 11.0.8 Records of ingredients of feed for each class of stock, proportion of the constituents to the total feed on a dry matter basis, and/or sources of the constituent parts (see also 6.0.3).
- 11.0.9 Records of a pasture management plan (see also 7.0.7).
- 11.0.10 Records of a plan of management if animals are excluded from pasture for more than 28 days (see also 7.5.3).
- 11.0.11 Records of any close confinement of animals (see also 8.0.18).
- 11.0.12 Records of management of owned animals that are removed from the approved ranch (see also 9.1.4 and 9.2.5).
- 11.0.13 Records of predatory animals who have been euthanized to protect the animals on the ranch (see also 10.0.11).
- 11.0.14 Records of a plan for transporting animals (see also 13.0.1).
- 11.0.15 Records of any calves weaned prior to the age specified in standard 5.3.11 including reason for early weaning (see also 5.3.16).

Note: For new ranchers entering the program a period of 12 months will be provided to put the program plan and documents in place. The Animal Welfare Approved consultancy team will be able to assist in this process. The Animal Welfare Approved program will also provide templates for record-keeping upon request.

12.0 HANDLING

- 12.0.1 Efforts must be made to develop positive relationships between the rancher and the bison through calm handling and a respect for bison behaviors.
- 12.0.2 All areas accessed by the animals must provide good traction, be well drained and kept clean and free of ice in the wintertime.
- 12.0.3 The use of hot prods or electric shocks is prohibited.
- 12.0.4 Abuse or maltreatment of animals is prohibited.
- 12.0.5 All animals must be moved in a calm and consistent manner. Stress from loud noises and rapid movements must be minimized.

12.0.6 All chutes and other facilities for loading must be designed to minimize stress to the animal and ensure that animals can breathe normally as they proceed through the loading process.

12.0.7 Herding dogs must be well trained.

Note: Ranchers who regularly train herding dogs must contact the Animal Welfare Approved office to discuss compliance with the standard above.

12.0.8 If herding dogs are used their management must meet the *Animal Welfare Approved* guidelines for guardian or herding canine management.

12.0.9 Not allocated.

12.0.10 All bison handling systems must be constructed to take account of the behavior of the species with the flow of bison through the system created by a series of release triggers.

13.0 TRANSPORT

This section applies to all transport of animals including to slaughter, around the ranch, between ranches or delivery to ranch.

13.0.1 A plan must exist to ensure that welfare of the animals is maintained during transport both around the ranch and off the ranch. (See also 4.0.1.4).

13.0.2 All animals must be healthy, ambulatory and uninjured to be transported unless they are being transported to receive veterinary treatment.

13.0.3 The person transporting the animals must ensure they are transported without delay to their destination.

13.0.4 The person in charge of the animals being transported must ensure that the animals are not caused any injury or suffering while waiting to be loaded on to the transport vehicle, during transport, or after they have been unloaded.

13.0.5 All subcontractors, handlers and truckers must adhere to *Animal Welfare Approved* standards.

13.0.6 If delays during transport or unloading upon arrival at destination are anticipated, loading and transport must not commence until those complications are resolved.

13.0.7 During transport, all animals must be protected from harm and thermal stress.

13.0.8 In the event that any animals suffer injury or distress during transport they must be treated or euthanized as soon as practically possible.

13.0.9 Ventilation must be provided that allows the animals to breathe fresh air while on the transport vehicle.

13.0.10 Overcrowding during transport is prohibited.

13.0.11 The transportation vehicle must be thoroughly cleaned and dried prior to loading.

13.0.12 All animals must have continuous access to water until the moment of loading.

13.0.13 To avoid the spread of Malignant Catarrhal Fever it is prohibited to use a transportation vehicle for bison that has been used for ovine or caprine transportation less than 14 days prior to loading the bison.

13.1 Transport of bison

13.1.1 Transporting downed animals is prohibited.

13.1.2 Not allocated.

13.1.3 The transport vehicle must be constructed or bedded to prevent animals slipping.

13.1.4 Injured or lame animals must not be sold at auctions and if sent off ranch must go directly to slaughter.

13.1.5 Injured or lame animals who are able to travel must not be sent to slaughter in the same compartment as healthy animals.

13.1.6 Animals from different ranches must be separated in transport.

13.1.7 Not allocated.

13.1.8 Transport to slaughter must not exceed 8 hours.

Note: A derogation may be granted if an approved slaughter plant is not available within 8 hours travel from the ranch.

13.1.9 Transporting single or solitary bison is prohibited except in the case of bison such as orphaned calves with regular surrogate contact.

Note: This does not apply to the capture and transportation of escaped animals for the purpose of returning them to the herd.

13.1.10 Before bison are transported the rancher must ensure that the end destination is aware of the estimated time of arrival of the bison and has a suitable area to immediately unload and water them.

13.1.11 If a sub-group of bison are being shipped that sub-group must be put together at least 24 hours prior to loading.

13.1.12 In the event of a transport vehicle pull-unit breakdown, disconnecting the trailer and sourcing an operational pull-unit is preferred over unloading the bison and reloading them.

Note: The stress and trauma of unloading and reloading bison will far exceed a waiting period on the trailer.

13.2 Transport of calves

13.2.1 to 13.2.5 Not allocated.

13.2.6 Transportation of stabilized orphaned calves for the purpose of artificial rearing is permitted.

13.2.7 Transportation of any other bison calves before weaning age for any reason other than veterinary attention or emergency situations is prohibited.

13.3 Sale of animals before slaughter

13.3.1 All animals should be reared on their ranch of birth.

13.3.2 Young stock, feeder or store stock must be sold direct to the ranch where they will be raised.

13.3.3 Animals must not be knowingly sold into systems prohibited by these standards.

13.3.4 Routine sale to feedlots is prohibited.

13.3.5 The routine use of stockyards, auction houses and video auctions to sell animals is prohibited.

13.3.6 The Animal Welfare Approved program is a birth to slaughter program. Ranchers who do not have any outlets for their animals that are acceptable to the Animal Welfare Approved program may still be eligible for approval if they have a plan to develop suitable outlets and can demonstrate year on year progress towards selling all stock through suitable outlets. Ranchers that may come under this standard include:

13.3.6.1 Ranches selling store and feeder stock to non-approved ranches and other outlets.

13.3.6.2 Ranches selling breeding stock to non-approved ranches and other outlets.

13.3.7 Animals ready for slaughter must only be sold to customers who will take them to Animal Welfare Approved slaughter plants.

13.3.8 Selling bison calves to new bison producers or growers without providing, with the animals, written information on bison husbandry, humane handling, and *Animal Welfare Approved* North American bison standards is prohibited.

Animal Welfare Approved recognizes that it may be very difficult for ranches to market all their stock as finished animals or to find acceptable markets for animals that are not being reared to slaughter on the approved ranch.

Animal Welfare Approved will work with ranches entering the program to develop a plan and timescale to end the practice of sale through prohibited outlets.

Please contact us for further information on meeting the standards on sale of animals.

14.0 SLAUGHTER

14.0.1 On-range or on-pasture slaughter is recommended.

Note: The rancher must ensure that on-range slaughter does not traumatize or cause behaviors in the other bison on the ranch that are deemed un-natural stress, or trauma based behaviors specifically linked to the slaughter or predation.

14.0.2 Not allocated.

14.0.3 Slaughterhouses receiving animals in the *Animal Welfare Approved* program, or the process of slaughtering on-ranch, must pass a review by the *Animal Welfare Approved* program for pre-slaughter handling, stunning, and killing.

14.0.4 The person delivering the animals to slaughter should stay with them to ensure that they are slaughtered according to *Animal Welfare Approved* guidelines in 14.0.3.

14.0.5 Downed animals must be euthanized where they lie in a manner that renders them immediately insensible to pain.

Note: Please contact Animal Welfare Approved if further information on appropriate methods of euthanasia is required.

14.0.6 Meat from downed animals must not be sold or carry the *Animal Welfare Approved* seal.

14.0.7 Slaughter of calves for meat at less than four months of age is prohibited.

15.0 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

15.0.1 The *Animal Welfare Approved* program must be informed immediately of any changes on ranch that result in a deviation from the standards.

15.0.2 Temporary deviations will be taken into consideration when unexpected circumstances that are not under the control of the rancher arise.

15.0.3 All other deviations from the *Animal Welfare Approved* standards can be cause for reconsideration of the rancher's participation or removal from the *Animal Welfare Approved* program and use of its seal in conjunction with that rancher's products.

15.1 Derogations

15.1.1 If, in the opinion of the Animal Welfare Approved Standards Board, a system meets all of the principles of the program but does not pass a specific standard or standards, derogation may be granted.

15.1.2 In order for a derogation to be granted, an inspection report must be submitted stating the deviation from the published standard, the reason for this deviation, the length of time this deviation from standards will occur and the welfare outcome should the derogation be granted.