



Animal Welfare Approved Policy Manual

Mission Statement

To improve farm animal welfare by auditing compliance with, and promoting family farmers who adhere to, the highest welfare standards.

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The Policy and guidelines set out the processes and protocols for the fair and transparent operation of the Animal Welfare Approved program. This document will be reviewed and amended annually. In the event that a guideline or policy becomes unworkable or does not achieve its original objectives, interim consent to deviate may be granted by the program’s standards board.

p1 CHAPTER ONE: STRUCTURE AND OWNERSHIP

p1.1 Commitments

At the point of submitting an application to become Animal Welfare Approved (AWA), and until that application is withdrawn or denied, the applicant agrees to comply or achieve compliance with all published standards, published program manuals and to keep the AWA program immediately informed of any action or material change that could affect the applicant's ability to comply with that agreement. Applicants further agree that the standards, as written, are acceptable and either their method of production complies with them or they are willing to make changes in order to comply. Applicants agree to allow AWA auditors reasonable access for the purpose of establishing and ensuring compliance with published AWA standards. Applicants whose farms are approved must continue to meet these commitments.

p1.1.1 Compliance: Compliance with the program is voluntary, although some producer groups and co-operatives have decided to only work with farmers who are approved by the program.

p1.1.2 Confidentiality: Animal Welfare Approved will hold all and any information supplied by applicants and approved farms and groups in confidence. Information will only be shared with the consent of the party.

p1.1.3 Farm information: Farm information will not be shared with anyone outside the review process except to confirm pass, re-audit or fail. Information will only be shared with the consent of the owner.

p1.1.4 Slaughter plant: Slaughter plant information will not be shared with anyone outside the review process except to confirm pass, re-audit or fail. Information will only be shared with the consent of the owner.

p1.1.5 Staff: All Animal Welfare Approved staff, consultants, or other parties involved with the program, are required to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

p1.2 Ownership

Animal Welfare Approved is a program of the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI). All correspondence should be addressed to:

*Animal Welfare Approved
1007 Queen Street
Alexandria, VA 22314*

p1.3 Statement of Intent

It is the intent of the Animal Welfare Approved program to improve farm animal welfare by confirming by audit compliance with the AWA standards; by promoting family farmers who adhere to the highest welfare standards; and to make the label (seal) and logo available to as many qualifying farmers and producers, co-operatives, retailers and restaurateurs as possible. The goal is to reach as many consumers as possible with products from farms that raise their animals according to the highest welfare standard practices in existence for food animals.

p1.4 Organizational Structure

The following roles make up the structure of the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p1.4.1 Program Director: Responsible for all aspects of the program.

p1.4.2 Director of Marketing and Public Relations: Reports to the Program Director.

p1.4.3 Lead Auditor: Reports to the Program Director.

p1.4.4 Program Coordinator: Reports to the Program Director with responsibilities to the Director of Marketing and Public Relations and the Lead Auditor.

p1.4.5 Marketing, Public Relations and Outreach staff members: Report to the Director of Marketing and Public Relations.

p1.4.6 Auditors: Report to the Lead Auditor and send audit reports to the Program Coordinator.

p1.4.7 Technical Advisors: Report to the Program Director.

p1.4.8 Slaughter Plant Review Specialist: Reports to the Lead Auditor.

p1.4.9 Standards Board and Working Group Secretary: Report to the Standards and Approval Board.

p1.4.10 Corrective Action Plan Coordinator: Reports to the Lead Auditor.

p1.4.11 Program Assistant: Reports to the Program Coordinator.

p1.5 Determining Approval for the Program

Whether an applicant becomes Animal Welfare Approved will be determined by the process of an open and transparent audit of the farm and the on-farm slaughter process and/or review of the premises where the slaughter takes place.

1.5.1. The audit is conducted by an Animal Welfare Approved auditor.

1.5.2 The program will allow farmers, producers, co-operatives, and restaurants to use the Animal Welfare Approved label and logo on egg, dairy, natural textiles, and meat products that have come from animals raised on an approved single farm or a network of farms.

1.5.3 The seal may be used on final processed products with the written consent of the Program Director, and provided that it can be shown that any animal product comes from only AWA farms with a current passed audit.

p1.6 Program Attributes

p1.6.1 The only free, third-party animal welfare certification program.

p1.6.2 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved.

p1.6.3 The only pasture- and range-based program.

p1.6.4 Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and USDA labeling support provided by our staff.

p1.6.5 Exclusively for independent, family farmers, producer groups and co-operatives of family farmers.

p1.6.6 Free marketing support.

p1.6.7 Free technical support.

p1.7 Program Terms and Definitions

See Standards and Program Definitions on the program website.

p1.8 Fees

There is currently no charge for joining the Animal Welfare Approved program, for audits or for any other services.

p1.9 Auditor and Agent Status

All auditors and agents are directly contracted by Animal Welfare Approved. Auditors and agents make a recommendation to the Animal Welfare Approved office but do not make the final decision on whether an applicant is accepted into the program.

p1.10 Processes or Production Claims

Applicants who are accepted into the Animal Welfare Approved program are responsible for submitting their label claim to the appropriate authority before marketing or supplying products using the Animal Welfare Approved label or logo.

Please refer to Annex 1 for information on the approval processes in different countries.

p1.11 Approving Authorities

The program is approved by the USDA and the Canadian authorities.

p1.12 The Standards

The standards have been developed over a period of time by a group of welfare experts. These include scientists, farmers and farm animal welfare experts from around the globe. The standards will be reviewed annually by the Standards and Approval Board. A review of an individual standard by the board may occur outside the annual review if new information on its implementation makes this a necessity.

Note: See 1.13 for more information on the Standards and Approval Board.

p1.13 Setting and Publishing of Standards

The “published standards” are those that are available on the web site www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org. Standards are published and will be reviewed annually by the

Standards and Approval Board. The most up-to-date standards are those that are on the Animal Welfare Approved website; these will be known as the “published standards.” Farmers or groups who have been accepted into the program will be notified of changes in standards and the time frame for compliance with these whenever possible by post or electronic mail.

p1.13.1 Terms of reference

The Standards and Approval Board:

p1.13.1.1 Sets the Animal Welfare Approved standards.

p1.13.1.2 Annually reviews standards.

p1.13.1.3 Evaluates standard review requests as these are submitted.

p1.13.1.4 Reviews critical and cumulative non-compliances.

p1.13.1.5 Reviews complaint reports.

p1.13.1.6 Reviews and decides on farm approvals.

p1.13.1.7 Reviews and decides outcome of removal of farms from the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p1.13.2 Membership of the Standards and Approval Board

p1.13.2.1 AWI President: responsible for ensuring that the Animal Welfare Approved program meets the aims and objectives of the Animal Welfare Institute. The president has the casting vote in decisions of the Standards Board if these fall outside of these aims and objectives.

p1.13.2.2 Animal Welfare Approved Program Director.

p1.13.2.3 Animal Welfare Approved representative: responsible for matters relating to achievability of the standards and presenting non-compliance reports.

p1.13.2.4 Producer Representative: responsible for representing the farmer’s perspective. (As required.)

p1.13.2.5 Production Expert: responsible for providing impartial opinion on subject discussions. (As required.)

p1.13.2.6 Secretary: Animal Welfare Approved Program Coordinator: responsible for minutes, agendas and correlations of required documentation.

p1.13.2.7 Invited representative from species or sector under discussion. (As required.)

p1.13.3 Meetings of the Standards and Approval Board

p1.13.3.1 The board meets as required and at least annually.

p1.13.3.2 The board can if necessary convene by phone and email.

p1.13.3.3 The board can seek and obtain any information that enables it to affect a more informed decision. These representations can be made in person or by document.

p1.13.3.4 Decisions of the board are only binding when the meeting is in quorum.

p1.13.4 Quorums

At minimum a quorum for farm approval or removal from the program must include the AWA representative, the AWA Program Director and the secretary. In any matter that agreement cannot be reached, the matter must be referred to the full standards board.

A quorum for standards change must additionally include either the producer representative or production expert. Wording may be modified without a representative for clarity or consistency.

A period of consultation and compliance must be granted when any changes to standards are made.

p1.14 The Working Groups

p1.14.1 Working groups

p1.14.1.1 Poultry working group (current)

p1.14.1.2 Pig working group (2010)

p1.14.1.3 Sheep and goats working group (late 2010)

p1.14.1.4 Beef working group (late 2010)

p1.14.1.5 Dairy working group (late 2010)

p1.14.2 Members of the Working Groups

The Animal Welfare Approved Program Director will appoint a chair for each working group.

The remainder of the group will be made up of producers, scientists and others with relevant knowledge.

The working group secretary will be the Program Coordinator or his/her nominee.

The AWA Program Director will attend or nominate an attendee for each meeting.

P1.14.3 Meetings of the Working Groups

Meetings of the Working Groups will be at least annually, but more frequently as required.

p1.15 Application for Standard Amendments or Modifications

p1.15.1 Anyone associated with the program can submit a suggestion or request for a standards amendment.

p1.15.2 Process

The standards amendment form (see Annex 2) must be completed and submitted to the Animal Welfare Approved office. The amendment will be assessed against current records and if it has not been previously discussed and has merit, it will be forwarded to the Standards and Approval Board for consideration at their next meeting.

p1.16 Application for Derogation

p1.16.1 Definition

Derogation is permission for a farm or group of farms to carry out a practice or use a substance that is not allowed within the Animal Welfare Approved standards. Derogation will only be granted in exceptional cases.

p1.16.2 Process

In order for a derogation to be granted, a derogation request form (see Annex 3) 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.

p1.17 Approval

Animal Welfare Approved will grant the use of its label and logo to the applicant following a review of submitted documentation and a satisfactory farm audit and slaughter plant review (where applicable).

p1.17.1 The approval to use the label and logo is granted from the date given in the formal notification from the office of Animal Welfare Approved, until such time as the license is revoked in writing or 12 months has passed, whichever is the shorter period of time.

p1.17.2 The approved farm or group can only use the label and logo on livestock products derived from animals that originate from an audited farm that has been audited for the species subject to the claim and after a subsequent review of the slaughter plant (where applicable).

p1.17.3 The approval can be revoked at any time. The approved farm or group is responsible for ensuring continued compliance with the published standards. The published standards will be those on the Animal Welfare Approved website and it is the farmer's responsibility to ensure that they keep up to date with these.

p1.18 Appeals

If the farmer or group disagrees with the result of an audit or the Standards and Approval Board's decisions they can submit an appeal to the Appeals Board, which will be formed to hear the appeal.

The appeal will be restricted to an interpretation of the standards or the process and not the material standard. By joining the program the farmer agreed that the published standards were acceptable – see 1.1 – so an appeal cannot be launched on the basis of disagreement with a particular standard.

p1.18.1 Composition of the Appeals Board

p1.18.1.1 An officer of AWI not involved in the initial decision.

p1.18.1.2 An Animal Welfare Approved representative not involved in the initial decision.

p1.18.1.3 A recognized expert in the production system being considered.

p1.18.1.4 The Appeals Board secretary.

p1.18.1.5 AWA Program director

p1.18.1.6 The Program Coordinator for matters of fact.

p1.18.2 The Appeals Process

The farmer or group submits an Appeal Form (see Annex 4) to the Animal Welfare Approved office.

The appeal must be arranged within 30 days of receipt of the Appeals Form.

The appeal may be conducted in person, in written form or on the telephone.

The appellant may provide witnesses or experts or submit reports or other evidence from witnesses or experts to make representations or appear in person - all at their own cost.

In all matters the Board’s decision will be final and the farmer will have no further right of appeal.

p2 CHAPTER TWO: BECOMING LICENSED

p2.1 Production Categories

p2.1.1 Bison

p2.1.2 Cattle – Dairy

p2.1.3 Cattle – Beef

p2.1.4 Chicken – Egg Laying and Meat

p2.1.5 Ducks – Egg Laying and Meat

p2.1.6 Goats – Dairy

p2.1.7 Goats – Meat

p2.1.8 Geese – Egg Laying and Meat

p2.1.9 Pigs

p2.1.10 Sheep – Meat

p2.1.11 Sheep – Dairy

p2.1.12 Turkeys – Egg Laying and Meat

p2.1.13 Rabbits

p2.2 Application

p2.2.1 A farmer applicant to the Animal Welfare Approved program must be an adult.

p2.2.1.1 A minor, as defined by the state in which the farm business operates, may apply to the program as long as a parent or legal guardian co-signs the farm application form.

p2.2.1.2 If the farmer is a minor, an appropriate farm management mentor must be appointed. The mentor may be a parent or other advisor.

p2.2.2 Initial application

Animal Welfare Approved will review the submitted application for completeness and compliance with published standards, and if necessary will seek further information from the applicant.

p2.2.3 Application withdrawal

At any time the applicant can withdraw from the process for whatever reason by giving notice to the program.

p2.2.4 Audit arrangements

The Program Coordinator of Animal Welfare Approved will liaise with the farmer and the auditor and organize the audit visits.

p2.3 Annual Review of Status

p2.3.1 Notification of audit

Animal Welfare Approved will notify the producer of the date the next audit is due.

p2.3.2 Application withdrawal

At any time the applicant can withdraw from the process for whatever reason by giving notice to an Animal Welfare Approved officer.

p2.3.3 Audit arrangements

The Program Coordinator of Animal Welfare Approved will allocate the audit and the auditor will liaise with the farmer to organize the review audit visit.

p2.4 Audit Outcome

p2.4.1 Information on day of audit

Auditors will inform the farmer verbally or in writing on the day of the visit their recommendation for the outcome of the audit.

Applicants must note that the final decision for approval does not sit with the Auditor. Use of the Animal Welfare Approved logo or label can only be used after formal notification of an audit pass from the Animal Welfare Approved office (See 1.10).

p2.4.2 Areas of operation that do not comply

At the end of the audit visit the auditor will provide the farmer with the details of any areas of the operation that do not comply with the standards.

p2.4.3 Compliance form

After the Animal Welfare Approved Corrective Action Plan Coordinator receives the audit report, the compliance form will be issued. This will detail any non-compliances and critical non-compliances that were identified at audit. The farmer must complete and return this form within one month of receipt providing information on the action that has or will be taken to address compliance issues and the time scale for this.

p2.4.4 Using the logo when non-compliances have been issued

A farmer or group that has been previously accepted into the Animal Welfare Approved program may be allowed to continue to use the label or logo while action is taken to rectify any non-compliances. The action taken will be assessed at the next audit or sooner if necessary.

p2.4.5 Repeated non-compliance

Any non-compliance that has not been addressed and is noted at two audits in a row will be upgraded to a critical non-compliance.

p2.4.6 Critical non-compliance

Critical non-compliances may result from failure to meet specific key standards or following a repeat of previously noted non-compliances (see 2.4.5).

p2.4.7 Use of logo with critical non-compliance

If a critical non-compliance is noted at an application audit, the use of the label or logo cannot be approved.

If a critical non-compliance is noted at a review audit, the use of the label or logo will be suspended from the date of issue of the compliance form.

In this situation the label or logo cannot be used until evidence is provided that action has been taken to rectify the critical non-compliance. A re-audit may be required before approval to use or continue to use the label or logo is granted.

p2.4.8 Major critical non-compliance issues

In some cases the critical non-compliance issues on the farm may be so great that Animal Welfare Approved decides not to offer the option of compliance forms and may decline to allow the farm to enter or remain in the program.

p2.4.9 Refusal of entry to the program

Animal Welfare Approved reserves the right to refuse entry to, or to remove a farm from the program, at any time without explanation. At such a time Animal Welfare Approved retains the right to inform any producer member or processor about any suspension or removal from the program.

p2.4.10 Co-operatives and producer groups when a critical non-compliance is issued

If a farm within a co-operative or a producer group is issued with a critical non-compliance, the co-operative or producer group may continue to use the Animal Welfare Approved label or logo, if this has been previously approved, as long as the produce from the farm with the critical non-compliance is excluded from the group's supply chain, marketing or sales.

p2.4.11 When can the label or logo be used

Following audit and acceptance of the actions detailed on the compliance form, the farm or group may supply or market milk, eggs, or natural textiles with the AWA label or logo. However, before any meat can be supplied or marketed with the label or logo the slaughter facilities must be reviewed and approved (see section 2.5).

Note: See flow chart of the process – Annex 5.

p2.5 Slaughter Plants

p2.5.1 Application

In order for a farmer to supply meat with the Animal Welfare Approved logo or label, the accredited animals must be slaughtered in an inspected slaughter plant. It is the farmer's responsibility to identify the plant they wish to use, discuss the Animal Welfare Approved program with the plant, and support the Animal Welfare Approved slaughter plant specialist to gain access to visit.

p2.5.2 Application withdrawal

At any time the applicant can withdraw from the process for whatever reason by giving notice to an Animal Welfare Approved officer.

p2.5.3 Inspection arrangements

The Animal Welfare Approved slaughter plant specialist will arrange with the slaughter plant a mutually acceptable time to visit.

p2.5.4 Review outcomes and decisions

The slaughter plant review specialist will arrange for the farmer to be informed of the outcome of the slaughter plant review. However, final confirmation of the annual review is with the Standards Board.

p2.5.5 Slaughter Plant Specialist's concerns

If the slaughter plant review specialist has any concerns about the suitability of a plant to be part of the Animal Welfare Approved program, they will provide a list of corrections for the plant.

The slaughter plant review specialist may decide that a plant is not suitable to slaughter any animals in the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p2.5.6 Accreditation

When the slaughter plant review specialist is satisfied that the conditions at the slaughter plant comply with Animal Welfare Approved guidelines, he or she will confirm with Animal Welfare Approved who will issue a letter confirming the slaughter plant's status as meeting on the day of review the requirements to slaughter animals in the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p2.6 Co-operatives/Producer Groups

p2.6.1 Definitions

p2.6.1.1 A co-operative is a group of farmers who work together and market all their produce under one name or brand, mutually benefiting from the profits.

p2.6.1.2 A producer group is a group of farmers who work together but market some of their produce independently of other farmers in the group.

p2.6.2 Responsibilities

p2.6.2.1 In a cooperative, an individual must be appointed to liaise with Animal Welfare Approved to ensure compliance with standards and facilitate communications as well as operate a program to ensure the integrity of the Animal Welfare Approved label.

2.6.2.2 In a producer group, each farmer will be responsible for the liaison and communication as well as the integrity of the supply chain. An individual can be appointed at the discretion of the group.

p2.6.3 Application process

p2.6.3.1 In a cooperative it is only necessary for one person to fill out the application with details of the entire group.

p2.6.3.2 In a producer group, each farmer will be responsible for applying to the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p2.6.4 Audit arrangements

p2.6.4.1 In a cooperative, the Animal Welfare Approved Program Coordinator will allocate the audit and the auditor will liaise with the appointed person to schedule audits and visits.

p.2.6.4.2 In a producer group each farmer will liaise with the auditor for the audit visit. An individual can be appointed at the discretion of the group.

p2.6.5 Audit outcomes and decisions

p2.6.5.1 In a cooperative the auditor will give the farmer and the appointed person the result of the audit.

P2.6.5.2 In a producer group the auditor will give the farmer the result of the audit. With the consent of the farmers, their audits can be shared with an appointed person.

p2.6.6 Corrections of minor non-compliances

p2.6.6.1 In a cooperative the appointed person, and Animal Welfare Approved as required, will work with the farmer to complete the corrective actions.

P2.6.6.2 In a producer group the farmer will work with Animal Welfare Approved or an appointed representative to complete corrective actions.

p2.6.7 Corrective actions process

p2.6.7.1 In a cooperative any farm that has critical non-compliances must be excluded from the cooperative's Animal Welfare Approved branded supply or the entire

cooperative will lose this status. The farm with critical non-compliances must submit a corrective action plan to Animal Welfare Approved.

p2.6.7.2 In a producer group the individual farmer with critical non-compliances must submit a corrective action plan. An appointed representative may also support the individual farmer.

p2.6.8 Records and documentation

p2.6.8.1 In a cooperative the appointed person will keep records adequate to allow an Animal Welfare Approved auditor to trace the source of all meat and other livestock products being sold under the Animal Welfare Approved label. This is in addition to the farms' normal farm records.

p2.6.8.2 In a producer group each farmer will keep the records required by the standards. The marketing consolidation group must keep records as required in 2.6.8.1.

p2.7 Transport and Storage of Finished Products

p2.7.1 Identification

All meat or other items being marketed under the Animal Welfare Approved label must be clearly identified:

p2.7.1.1 On finished product by the Animal Welfare Approved logo.

p2.7.1.2 On the wrapper or box containing finished product a clear denomination of the products status as Animal Welfare Approved must be clearly and indelibly marked.

p2.7.2 Records

The farmer will be responsible until the point of change of ownership for keeping records that would allow a competent auditor to trace the meat or other livestock products.

p2.7.3 Audit arrangements

Wherever possible the farmer must facilitate access to records and facilities that transport and store finished product.

p2.8 In-Store Handling and Storage

p2.8.1 Responsibilities

As far as is possible the farmer or cooperative must have records to show the Animal Welfare Approved auditor the source and status of the Animal Welfare Approved meat or other livestock products.

p2.8.2 Records and documentation

As the Animal Welfare Approved program is a production claim the store must be able to satisfy a USDA inspector as to its source. AWA will be working on a retail certification program.

p2.9 Further Processing and Added Value

p2.9.1 Responsibilities

The farmer must ensure that sufficient and accurate documentation is kept at the further processing facility to demonstrate to the Animal Welfare Approved auditor that there is a balance between basic Animal Welfare Approved product going in and the Animal Welfare Approved further processed product coming out.

p2.9.2 Records and documentation

p2.9.2.1 Delivery notes of meat to the further processor must be kept.

p2.9.2.2 Delivery notes must show that meat is accredited to the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p2.9.2.3 Invoices showing the weight of finished product must be available for inspection.

p2.9.2.4 Records must be available to track back the sources of multi-ingredient products if these have come from a number of farms approved under the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p3 CHAPTER THREE: AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE

p3.1 ----- Not Allocated -----

p3.2 Announced Audits

p3.2.1 Arranging announced audits

An announced audit will be arranged by liaison between the farmer and the auditor and will be held on a time and date to suit the farmer.

p3.2.2 Response to application

Animal Welfare Approved will respond to an application to join the program within 21 days to arrange the audit.

p3.2.3 The farm and livestock audit

The audit will be carried out by an Animal Welfare Approved auditor on an annual basis.

p3.2.4 The producer group audit

The audit of each individual farm will be carried out by an Animal Welfare Approved auditor.

p3.2.5 The cooperative audit

The audit will be carried out by an Animal Welfare Approved auditor who will also audit the group record kept by the “Appointed Person” to ensure traceability is maintained.

p3.2.6 Slaughter

The slaughter plant review specialist will liaise with the plant to carry out the visit.

p3.2.7 Further processing

An Animal Welfare Approved auditor may arrange to inspect records of delivery and collection to match volume at operations where further processing is carried out.

p3.2.8 Transport and storage

An Animal Welfare Approved auditor may arrange to inspect transport and storage of Animal Welfare Approved livestock or products.

3.2.9 Storage and in-store handling

An Animal Welfare Approved auditor may arrange to inspect storage and in-store handling of Animal Welfare Approved products.

p3.3 Unannounced Audits

3.3.1 All areas of the supply chain from production to retail may be subject to unannounced audit visits.

3.3.2 All the unannounced audits will be carried out by a senior auditor who has not been responsible for the most recent announced audit.

p4 CHAPTER FOUR: PROGRAM PROMOTION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Animal Welfare Approved program is free and bestows an accolade of welfare excellence on the farmer. In return Animal Welfare Approved asks that farmers meet the following guidelines.

p4.1 Use of Logo

Once a farm has been approved as part of the Animal Welfare Approved program it may use the label or logo and any other promotional material available from the program office, until such time the farm is informed in writing of its removal or suspension from the program.

Continuing to use the label or logo after receipt of a written instruction that the farm has been removed or suspended from the program may result in legal action being taken.

p4.2 Promotion of the Animal Welfare Approved Program

Wherever possible, farmers should wear the Animal Welfare Approved pin when promoting their Animal Welfare Approved products to the public, the media, or any other interested parties.

p4.3 Press Contact

All inquiries requesting information about the program should be referred to the Director of Marketing and Public Relations or Program Director at the following address:

*Animal Welfare Approved
1007 Queen Street
Alexandria, VA 22314*

or by email at mediarelations@animalwelfareapproved.org

p4.4 Conferences

From time to time farmers may be asked to attend a conference to promote the program. Animal Welfare Approved will cover reasonable expenses.

p4.5 On Farm Tours and Visits

Animal Welfare Approved may ask farmers to show or demonstrate the practices they use to other farmers or the press and media.

p4.6 Information

Animal Welfare Approved will not use information about a specific identifiable farm or group, or management practices relating to that identifiable farm or group without the prior permission of that farm or group. Examples could be information provided as case studies for other farms, or media briefings.

p5 CHAPTER FIVE: COMPLAINTS

Animal Welfare Approved takes complaints seriously. In the unlikely event that an unresolved concern does arise, the program has ensured that a process is in place to resolve it.

p5.1 First Recourse

In the first instance all complaints should be referred to the Animal Welfare Approved Program Director.

p5.2 Appeal and Adjudication

If the complaint is not resolved by the Animal Welfare Approved Program Director the matter can be referred to the Standards and Approval Board for determination and the subsequent appeals procedure can be implemented.

p5.3 Complaints and Appeals

Complaints should not relate to the results of an audit unless the complaint refers to the behavior of the auditor at audit. Please see also section 1.18 on appeals. If a farmer or group disagrees with the

outcome of an audit or the Standards and Approval Board's decisions they should follow the appeals process for resolution.

Annex 1



Animal Welfare Approved Policy Manual

- I. Countries: Currently the AWA seal is approved for award in Canada.
- II. Canadian farmers should apply to the AWA program using the farmer application form available on the program website at www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org.

- III. For Further information contact:
Julie Suarez, Program Coordinator
1007 Queen Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(202) 546-5292
info@animalwelfareapproved.org

Annex 2



Animal Welfare Approved Standards Amendment Form

Standard number:
Species affected:
Proposed by:
Date:

Wording of existing standard	
Proposed new wording/new standard	

Summary of reasons for the amendment	
Impact on animal health/welfare	
Impact on farmers	

Date submitted for consultation	
Date by which comments must be received	

Annex 3



Animal Welfare Approved Derogation Request

Date	
Farm	
Auditor	
Species/Standard number	

Wording of existing standard	
Reason farm does not comply	

Summary of reasons for derogation request	
Impact on animal health/welfare	
Farmer signature and date	

Please return to:

Julie Suarez
 Animal Welfare Approved
 1007 Queen St.
 Alexandria, VA 22314
 Fax: (202) 446-2151

Office use

Date submitted	
Date by which comments must be received	
Derogation agreed yes/no	
Derogation agreed until (date)	

Annex 4



Animal Welfare Approved Appeal Form

Name:

Farm Name:

Phone:

Email:

Standard that you are appealing:

Reason for appealing:

(please use extra paper as necessary)

List of attachments, including supporting evidence, expert testimony, etc.

1)

2)

3)

4)

Note: Your final decision will be made within 30 days of the date that the appeal is received by Animal Welfare Approved. All decisions by the appeal board will be final.

For office use only

Date received:

Date of decision:

Final outcome:

Initial Inquiry Passed or received by the PC

PC – Program Coordinator
FO – Farmer Outreach
SPS – Slaughter Specialist

Annex 5

Contact Made by PC - Documents Sent Out.

SPS - Support Offered. Plant receptive?

No

PC - Enter details on to the AWA database.

No

Application Received by PC

Yes

No

FO - Follow up call to offer Advice or Understand Challenges
Ask if farmer wants to apply.

Yes

No

PC - Confirm Plant can be audited

No

If farm passes audit before plant is reviewed, farm may be passed provisionally but may not use label until such time as the plant is approved. In this case, PC confirms with farmer that they are still using the same plant.

Yes

Yes

Plant Passes inspection?

Yes

Audit sent to Standards Board for approval

Farm Audited

Yes

Farm Passes.

Yes

Yes

No

CAP advised

Yes

AWA Advisor - Advice and Support Given.

No

PC - Farmer sent welcome package; USDA sent letter;
Marketing team notified to complete Press Release

Annex 6



Use of AWA seal by those who are not directly accredited by AWA

Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) is a free certification program for farmers and ranchers raising livestock in a humane and environmentally responsible way. The AWA seal is a registered trademark. The seal is awarded to farmers who undertake an annual audit of their farms and farming practices. The use of the seal as a meat label is additionally regulated by the USDA. Use of the seal is only permitted with the written consent of AWA and compliance with USDA regulation.

The seal may be used on all meat products, provided they derive from an animal that has been audited and approved as having been raised to AWA's published standards. AWA recognizes that great value can be added to livestock products by further processing and consolidation. To ensure that its family farmers are able to make the most from their AWA livestock products AWA is therefore committed to allowing the use of the seal by non-farmers, consolidators and marketing entities. AWA itself is not a marketing entity and does not own produce or sell meat or meat products.

Someone who is not directly accredited by AWA; such as a further processor or marketing group can use the seal provided:

1. There is clear traceability to demonstrate how product carrying the seal links back to the originating AWA approved farm from any point in the production process.
2. Records are kept and made available on request to AWA of the source and quantity of AWA livestock products used in the end product. These records must show the type and amount by weight or volume of livestock products used such that an AWA auditor can confirm the amount is commensurate with the source farms production. Records do not need to include proprietary recipes or processes.

3. Any product coming from a farm that is not approved or which fails an AWA audit is not used in any product marketed as AWA approved.
4. An up to date letter of approval for the source farm(s) is kept on file along with the label consent from FSIS. AWA carries out annual audits and approval letters are therefore issued annually.
5. AWA has approved the design and use of the AWA seal on the livestock product label.
6. Any text about the AWA program or the seal has been approved by AWA as being consistent with the program's aims and objectives. Any changes made after the initial approval must be re-submitted for further consideration and approval by AWA before use.
7. Any PR or media used to promote a product which displays the seal or relies on the use of the seal for marketing purposes must be previously agreed with AWA.

AWA is developing a database of agreed labels and terms to assist in designing and submitting labels and text for approval. AWA is committed to supporting family farmers as well as those that promote the work AWA farmers do by marketing and further processing their products. AWA will work to ensure that labels and marketing materials are reviewed in a timely manner.

By using the seal the user agrees to comply with AWA's guidelines and requirements. AWA reserves the right to refuse permission to use the seal or withdraw consent for its use at any time. An appeal against the withdrawal can be made to the standards board as laid out in AWA's policy and guidelines.

Please contact info@animalwelfareapproved.org for further assistance.