



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 senior management of Animal Welfare Approved has based its Policy Document on the guiding principles of capability, consistency, efficiency and transparency as well as on the requirements of ISO 65. The Policy of Animal Welfare Approved provides a framework for establishing and reviewing the quality goals of the organization.

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. Any changes are announced and explained at all levels of the organization and are also publicly available.

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At the point of submitting an application to become Animal Welfare Approved (AWA), and until that application is withdrawn or denied, whether this is in the initial or in subsequent years, the applicant agrees to comply or achieve compliance with all published standards, published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. If a farm chooses to withdraw from the program they must provide notification in writing.

A farm must have submitted a completed application form prior to approval being granted. In certain circumstances audit may take place prior to official submission of application; however approval cannot be granted without this submission.

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 Movement of farm: The Animal Welfare Approved program must be informed when an applicant or approved farmer moves their base of operation to a new site. If a farmer carries out multiple moves within the space of 26 months or less their approved status will be reviewed
P1.1.5 Bringing the program into disrepute: Animal Welfare Approved reserves the right not to accept an application, not enter into a relationship or to end any relationship with any other party that has or may bring the program into disrepute.

p1.1.6 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.

p1.1.7 Staff: All Animal Welfare Approved staff, consultants, or other parties involved with the program, are required to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

P1.1.8 All Animal Welfare Approved staff, consultants, or other parties involved with the program, are required to disclose any conflicts of interest. When conflicts of interest are identified, other staff members can be used to evaluate a specific farmer. See Annex 1 part A for the conflict of interest policy and Annex 1 part B for the register of disclosure form

P1.1.9 Consultants and other advisors who are employed as auditors cannot audit a farm for a minimum of two audit cycles after providing consultancy and advice.

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 The Team

In accordance with our recruitment procedures all of our team members, whether in the Office, Technical, Marketing or Auditing and Compliance Departments are highly qualified, competent and capable of performing all duties assigned to them. All employees have detailed job specifications providing information on their functions and assigned responsibilities. This policy document and its annexes provide further guidance on how the AWA program works. Besides our entry requirements, there are ongoing training programs.

P1.4.1 The Auditors

Our team of auditors are selected based on their experience, skills and abilities to deal with Animal Welfare Approved certification requirements.

In order to ensure that auditing skills remain up to the required standard yearly training programs are compulsory for all auditors to attend. See Annex 2 for details of auditor selection and training.

P1.4.2 Impartiality

All auditors act in an impartial manner. Please see Annex 1 for further information on conflict of interest.

p1.5 Organizational Structure and key team members

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

p1.5.1 Program Director: Responsible for all aspects of the program.

p1.5.2 Director of Marketing and Public Relations: Reports to the Program Director. Responsible for formulating and delivering program marketing and PR messages

p1.5.3 Lead Auditor: Reports to the Program Director. Responsible for managing all auditors and slaughter plant review specialists

p1.5.4 Program Coordinator: Reports to the Program Director with responsibilities to the Director of Marketing and Public Relations and the Lead Auditor. Responsible for program management and administration

p1.5.5 Marketing, Public Relations and Outreach staff members: Report to the Director of Marketing and Public Relations. Responsible for promoting the program and working with farmers in specific regions

p1.5.6 Auditors: Report to the Lead Auditor and send audit reports to the Program Coordinator. Responsible for on-farm audits

p1.5.7 Technical Advisors: Report to the Program Director. Responsible for providing advice and support as required

p1.5.8 Slaughter Plant Review Specialists: Report to the Lead Auditor. Responsible for slaughter plant reviews

p1.5.9 Standards Board and Working Group Secretary: Report to the Standards Board and Approval Board. Responsible for minutes and administration of the Standards Board and Working Groups

p1.5.10 Corrective Action Plan Coordinator: Reports to the Lead Auditor. Responsible for reviewing audits and ensuring consistency and accuracy of CAPs

p1.5.11 Program Assistant: Reports to the Program Coordinator.

p1.6 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. 1.6.1. The audit is conducted by an Animal Welfare Approved auditor. Any compliance issues are raised in a Compliance Action Plan (CAP)

to which the farm or plant must provide an adequate response before being assessed by the Approval Board

1.6.2 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.

1.6.3 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.

p1.7 AWA approval Program Attributes:

p1.7.1 The only free, third-party animal welfare certification program.

p1.7.2 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved.

p1.7.3 The only pasture- and range-based program.

p1.7.4 Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and USDA labeling support provided by our staff.

p1.7.5 Exclusively for independent, family farmers, producer groups and co-operatives of family farmers.

AWA also offers the points below through their dedicated marketing and outreach team:

p1.7.6 Free marketing support.

p1.7.7 Free technical support.

P1.7.8 Loan of poultry stunning equipment, see Annex 3 part A for details of loan policy and Annex 3 part B for stunner loan liability disclaimer

p1.8 Program Terms and Definitions

See Standards and Program Definitions on the program website at <http://www.animalwelfareapproved.org/standards/definitions/>

p1.9 Fees

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

AWA reserves the right to require a farmer to contribute to the cost of staff members' time and travel under the following circumstances

1.9.1 Where re-audit is required to verify that any compliance issues have been rectified before approval to use or continue to use the label or logo is granted.

1.9.2 Where a visit or audit has to be re-arranged due to the farmer being absent or unavailable when the AWA staff member arrives at the previously agreed time and date; or when the farmer cancels a visit or audit at short notice without good reason (see also suspension and termination section 3.4.1)

p1.10 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.

p1.11 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 4 for information on the approval processes in different countries.

p1.12 Approving Authorities

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

p1.13 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 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 1.14.1 for more information on the Standards Board

p1.14 Setting and Publishing of Standards

The “published standards” are the most up-to-date standards and are those that are available on the web site www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org/standards Standards are published and publicly available and will be reviewed annually by the Standards Board. Farmers or groups who have been accepted into the program will be notified of changes in standards via the website or by request can be sent changes by mail. Reasonable consultation time will be given.

p1.14.1 Terms of reference - The Standards Board:

p1.14.1.1 Sets the Animal Welfare Approved standards.

p1.14.1.2 Annually reviews standards.

p1.14.1.3 Evaluates standard review requests as these are submitted.

p1.14.2 Membership of the Standards Board

p1.14.2.1 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.

p1.14.2.2 Animal Welfare Approved Program Director.

p1.14.2.3 Animal Welfare Approved representative: responsible for matters relating to achievability of the standards.

p1.14.2.4 Producer Representative: responsible for representing the farmer's perspective. (As required.)

p1.14.2.5 Production Expert: responsible for providing impartial opinion on subject discussions. (As required.)

p1.14.2.6 Secretary: Animal Welfare Approved Program Coordinator: responsible for minutes, agendas and correlations of required documentation.

p1.14.2.7 Invited representative from species or sector under discussion. (As required.)

p1.14.3 Meetings of the Standards Board

p1.14.3.1 The board meets as required and at least annually.

p1.14.3.2 The board can if necessary convene by phone and email.

p1.14.3.3 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.

p1.14.3.4 Decisions of the board are only binding when the meeting is in quorum.

p1.14.4 Quorums

At minimum a quorum for

standards change must include the AWA representative, the AWA program director and the secretary. In addition either the producer representative or production expert may be present. 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.

p1.14.5 Terms of reference – The Approvals Board

The Approvals Board:

p1.14.5.1 Reviews and decides on farm approvals.

p1.14.5.2 Reviews critical and cumulative non-compliances.

p1.14.5.3 Reviews complaint reports.

p1.14.5.4 Reviews and decides outcome of removal of farms from the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p1.14.6 Membership of the Approvals Board

p1.14.6.1 AWI President

p1.14.6.2 Animal Welfare Approved Program Director.

p1.14.6.3 Animal Welfare Approved representative: responsible for presenting non-compliance reports.

p1.14.6.4 Producer Representative: responsible for representing the farmer's perspective. (As required.)

p1.14.6.5 Production Expert: responsible for providing impartial opinion on subject discussions. (As required.)

p1.14.6.6 Secretary: Animal Welfare Approved Program Coordinator: responsible for minutes, agendas and correlations of required documentation.

p1.14.7 Meetings of the Approvals Board

p1.14.7.1 The board meets as required and at least monthly.

p1.14.7.2 The board can if necessary convene by phone and email.

p1.14.7.3 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.

p1.14.7.4 Decisions of the board are only binding when the meeting is in quorum.

p1.14.8 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 approvals board.

p1.15 The Working Groups

p1.15.1 Working groups

p1.15.1.1 Poultry working group

p1.15.1.2 Pig working group

p1.15.1.3 Sheep and goats working group

p1.15.1.4 Beef working group

p1.15.1.5 Dairy working group

p1.15.2 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.

P1.15.3 Meetings of the Working Groups

Meetings of the Working Groups will be as required.

p1.16 Application for Standard Amendments or Modifications:

p1.16.1 Anyone associated with the program can submit a suggestion or request for a standards amendment.

p1.16.2 Process

The standards amendment form (see Annex 5 part A) 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 (see standards amendment flow chart Annex 5 part B), it will be forwarded to the Standards Board for consideration.

p1.17 Application for Derogation

p1.17.1 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.

p1.17.2 Process

In order for a derogation to be granted, a derogation request form (see Annex 6 part A) 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. The flow chart for the derogation procedure can be found at Annex 6 part B.

p1.18 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).

p1.18.1 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.

P1.18.2 The label and logo can only be displayed on a product that is approved by the program and is compliant with all state and federal regulations.

p1.18.3 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).

p1.18.4 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.

p1.19 Appeals

If the farmer or group disagrees with the result of an audit or the Standards Board or 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.

p1.19.1 Composition of the Appeals Board

p1.19.1.1 An officer of AWI not involved in the initial decision.

p1.19.1.2 An Animal Welfare Approved representative not involved in the initial decision.

p1.19.1.3 A recognized expert in the production system being considered.

p1.19.1.4 The Appeals Board secretary.

p1.19.1.5 AWA Program director

p1.19.1.6 The Program Coordinator for matters of fact.

p1.19.2 The Appeals Process

The farmer or group submits an Appeal Form (see Annex 7) 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.

p1.20 Management Reviews

The purpose of a Management Review is to ensure the continuing stability, adequacy and effectiveness of AWA's quality management system. This means that once per year goals are evaluated against performance, results of Internal Audits are considered, any complaints against our services are investigated and the general state of organizational affairs are evaluated. Findings of such Management Reviews are reported to senior management.

p1.21 Control of Approval

Unfortunately it sometimes happens that people make false claims relating to their status of approval. In order to protect the product of the approval system (our symbol/logo) and the value it has for farmers and other businesses, we control the misuse of Animal Welfare Approved status

p1.22 Document and Record Control

In making sure that all team members know what is expected of them and in order to ensure that everyone always has access to the latest, properly approved version of a document, there is a procedure that defines the processes, requirements and responsibilities for document control

"Records" relate to information gathered and generated during the course of the approval process relating to a specific farm or other business. Animal Welfare Approved safeguards all such records on its main server. The Program Coordinator manages and maintains records and releases information to auditors as appropriate.

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.

Note: The application process flow chart can be found at Annex 8

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 also section 1.11).

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. See compliance action plan flow chart at Annex 9

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 may 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 Repeated critical non-compliances or new critical non-compliances found at re-audit

If at re-audit a farm is found not to have corrected a critical non-compliance, and therefore to have broken their agreed compliance action plan they may be suspended from the program. If a farm is found to have changed their management between audits in such a way as to bring themselves into critical non-compliance, and therefore to have broken their agreement with the program under section 1.1 of this document and also section 15 of the AWA standards, they may also be liable for suspension. See annex 10 for the flow chart of this process

p2.4.10 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.

p2.4.11 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. AWA may require that produce from the farm with the critical non-compliance is excluded from the group's supply chain, marketing or sales.

p2.4.12 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).

p2.5 Showing, FFA and 4H

p2.5.1 If an AWA farmer supplies an animal from an approved herd or flock for FFA or 4H activities the animal can only be sold under the AWA logo, or returned to an AWA herd or flock if it is managed to AWA standards throughout its life.

P2.5.2 If an AWA farmer supplies an animal from an approved herd or flock for FFA or 4H activities and the animal is not managed to AWA standards throughout its life; OR the family member of an AWA farmer buys an animal for FFA or 4H activities; the owner of the animal and the AWA farmer must be able to show separation between the management of the AWA herd or flock and the FFA or 4H animal

P2.5.3 The AWA seal cannot be on any showing equipment or anything else association with an animal that is not managed to AWA standards

p2.6 Slaughter Plants

p2.6.1 Application

In order for a farmer to supply meat with the Animal Welfare Approved logo or label, the accredited animals must be slaughtered in a reviewed 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.

p2.6.2 Application withdrawal

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

p2.6.3 Review arrangements

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

p2.6.4 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 review lies with the Standards Board.

p2.6.5 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.

p2.6.6 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.

p2.6.7 Use of the seal before plant is reviewed

Subject to prior approval animals slaughtered under the supervision of a qualified AWA staff member may be eligible to carry the AWA seal even if the plant has yet to pass a review.

p2.6.8 Change of plants

Farmers must inform the program if they change slaughterplant. Unauthorized change of plant to one that has not passed AWA review may be grounds for suspension from the program. See Annex 11 for a flow chart of this process.

p2.7 Co-operatives/Producer Groups

p2.7.1 Definitions

p2.7.1.1 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.

p2.7.1.2 A producer group is a group of farmers who work together but market some of their produce independently of other farmers in the group.

p2.7.2 Responsibilities

p2.7.2.1 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.

2.7.2.2 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.

p2.7.3 Application process

p2.7.3.1 In a cooperative it is only necessary for one person to fill out the application with details of the entire group.

p2.7.3.2 In a producer group, each farmer will be responsible for applying to the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p2.7.4 Audit arrangements

p2.7.4.1 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.2.7.4.2 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.

p2.7.5 Audit outcomes and decisions

p2.7.5.1 In a cooperative the auditor will give the farmer and the appointed person the result of the audit.

P2.7.5.2 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.

p2.7.6 Corrections of minor non-compliances

p2.7.6.1 In a cooperative the appointed person, and Animal Welfare Approved as required, will work with the farmer to complete the corrective actions.

P2.7.6.2 In a producer group the farmer will work with Animal Welfare Approved or an appointed representative to complete corrective actions.

p2.7.7 Corrective actions process

p2.7.7.1 In a cooperative any suspended farm must be excluded from the cooperative's Animal Welfare Approved branded supply or the entire cooperative will lose this status. The suspended farm must submit a corrective action plan to Animal Welfare Approved.

p2.7.7.2 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.

p2.7.8 Records and documentation

p2.7.8.1 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.

p2.7.8.2 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.

p2.8 Transport and Storage of Finished Products

p2.8.1 Identification

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

p2.8.1.1 On finished product by the Animal Welfare Approved logo.

p2.8.1.2 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.

p2.8.2 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.

p2.8.3 Audit arrangements

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

p2.9 In-Store Handling and Storage

p2.9.1 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.

p2.9.2 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.

p2.10 Further Processing and Added Value

p2.10.1 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.

p2.10.2 Records and documentation

p2.10.2.1 Delivery notes of meat to the further processor must be kept.

p2.10.2.2 Delivery notes must show that meat is accredited to the Animal Welfare Approved program.

p2.10.2.3 Invoices showing the weight of finished product must be available for inspection.

p2.10.2.4 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.

p3.2.3 The farm and livestock audit

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

p3.2.3.1 The annual cycle can be amended in cases of force majeure (unforeseeable circumstances beyond anyone's control) such as natural disaster or serious injury or illness of the farmer.

P3.2.3.2 The annual cycle may also be amended by agreement in cases of major farm infrastructure change such as new facilities or introduction of a new species to be

audited when audit in the normal cycle would necessitate re-audit within a few months to review the new situation.

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.

3.3.3 Any infringements of the standards that are discovered at an unannounced audit will be dealt with by the issue of a supplemental compliance form. The farm must follow the same procedure for responding to this as with an announced annual audit. See Annex 9 for the flow chart of the standard compliance procedure.

p3.4 Suspension and termination

p3.4.1 Suspension and termination of farms

A farm may be suspended or terminated from the program in instances that may include the following:

p3.4.1.1 the documents, application or any information supplied to or audited by AWA are found to be inaccurate, incomplete or otherwise misleading

p3.4.1.2 as a result of any act or omission, the farm fails to comply with the AWA standards.

p3.4.1.3 the farm refuses to allow an audit by AWA

p3.4.1.4 the farm is absent on the agreed day of audit or cancels an audit without reasonable cause within seven days or once the auditor has already travelled to the area – whichever is longer

p3.4.1.5 the farm brings or may bring the program into disrepute

p3.4.1.6 the farm fails to demonstrate competence in farm management

The recommendation to suspend or terminate will be proposed by the Lead Auditor or their delegated authority. The decision to suspend or terminate will be taken by the Program Director or their delegated authority or the Standards Board and will depend on the severity of the issue.

p3.4.2.Suspension

In the event a farm is suspended from the program the farmer will be informed of the suspension and the reasons for it by telephone or email, followed up by written notification. The farmer will be given one month to respond dated from the initial time of contact.

During that period the farmer can continue to use the AWA label and logo on existing leaflets and labels and on their website. However, they cannot actively market their approval under the AWA program by entering into new advertising agreements, using new labels, producing new literature or new press releases.

If no satisfactory response is received within a month the farm will be terminated from the program. See Annex 12 for flow chart of the suspension process.

p3.4.3 Termination

In the event a farm is terminated from the program the farmer will be informed of the termination and the reasons for it by telephone or email, followed up by written notification.

From the date of being informed the farmer must cease to use the AWA label and logo on any and all products and marketing information. This includes but is not restricted to product labels, leaflets, banners, press releases and websites.

Product that has already been packed and labeled with the AWA logo may still be sold provided the AWA logo is removed, covered or otherwise obscured.

On termination of approval AWA may inform parties who may have an interest in the termination and the reasons for it. These parties may include competent authorities, other certification bodies, statutory bodies and others.

Following notification of termination a farm must wait for a minimum of six months before reapplying to the program.

If termination does not follow suspension the farmer may appeal the decision – see section 1.18. During the period of appeal all terms of termination noted above - including an end to the use of the AWA logo – must be met.

If termination follows suspension then there is no further appeal

p3.4.4 Suspension and termination of slaughter plants

As part of the farm approval process the slaughterplant must be reviewed for suitability. If a plant passes a review it is considered suitable for use for slaughter of AWA animals.

A slaughterplant may be considered to be unsuitable for slaughter of AWA animals and may be suspended or terminated from the program in the following instances:

- 3.4.4.1 the documents, application or any information supplied to or reviewed by AWA are found to be inaccurate, incomplete or otherwise misleading;
- 3.4.4.2 as a result of any act or omission, the plant fails to comply with the AWA standards.
- 3.4.4.3 the plant refuses to allow a review by AWA

The recommendation to suspend or terminate will be proposed by the Lead Auditor or their delegated authority. The decision to suspend or terminate will be taken by the Program Director or their delegated authority or the Standards Board and will depend on the severity of the issue.

p3.4.5 Suspension

In the event a plant is suspended from the program the owner or manager will be informed of the suspension and the reasons for it by telephone or email, followed up by written notification. The farmer will be given one month to respond dated from the initial time of contact.

During that period the plant can continue to slaughter AWA animals from existing farm sources. However, they cannot actively market their suitability for the AWA program by entering into new agreements with new AWA farms or farmers.

If no satisfactory response is received within a month the plant will be terminated from the program.

p3.4.6 Termination

In the event a plant is terminated from the program the owner or manager will be informed of the suspension and the reasons for it by telephone or email, followed up by written notification.

From the date of being informed the plant must cease to slaughter AWA animals and must not use the AWA label and logo on any and all products and marketing information. This includes but is not restricted to product labels, leaflets, banners, press releases and websites.

Following notification of termination a plant must wait for a minimum of six months before reapplying for review for suitability for the program unless significant operational changes have taken place since the termination.

Significant operational changes include but are not restricted to; change of ownership or management, appointment of specially qualified staff, rebuilding or redesign. AWA will assess whether such changes merit an earlier review for suitability on a case by case basis.

If termination does not follow suspension the plant may appeal the decision – see section 1.18. During the period of appeal all terms of termination noted above - including an end to the slaughter of AWA animals and use of the AWA logo – must be met.

If termination follows suspension then there is no further appeal

p3.4.7 Information for farmer using plants

On suspension or termination of approval AWA may communicate with parties who may have an interest in the termination and the reasons for it. These parties may include farmers using or seeking to use the plant, competent authorities, other certification bodies, statutory bodies and others affected.

p3.4.8 Slaughter plants that are or have been suspended by the USDA

The USDA publishes a quarterly report that details all plants that have been suspended and the reasons. The reasons are categorized as follows:

- SPS – sanitation performance standards
- INH – inhumane treatment/slaughter
- INT – interference/assault
- HACCP – Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points

The reports can be found at:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&Policies/Quarterly_Enforcement_Reports/index.asp

The relevant information is in Section 5 – Administrative Actions; tables 8, 9 and 10.

p3.4.8.1 Plants put forward for AWA review

When a new plant is put forward for AWA review the USDA Quarterly Enforcement Reports will be examined for any instances of suspension dating back not more than two years.

All plants will be put forward for initial review regardless of past suspensions. At the review the AWA Slaughterplant Specialist (SPS) will request sight of the log book and full details of any suspension. Suspensions classified under INH – inhumane treatment are the most critical for full details to be obtained.

If the plant allows the SPS full access to the log book and any other information including remedial actions relating to past suspensions, there have been no suspensions for at least two years and the SPS review of the plant to AWA standards does not lead to any uncorrected non-compliances the SPS can make the decision as to whether the plant is suitable to slaughter AWA animals.

If the plant allows the SPS full access to the log book and any other information including remedial actions relating to past suspensions but suspensions have occurred within the past two years and/or the SPS does not feel that remedial action was appropriate or effective the SPS will carry out the AWA review but the decision as to whether the plant is suitable to slaughter AWA animals must be made by the full Standards Board.

If the plant does not or cannot allow the SPS full access to the log book and other relevant information relating to past suspensions the SPS will carry out the AWA review but the decision as to whether the plant is suitable to slaughter AWA animals must be made by the full Standards Board.

p3.4.8.2 Plants that are already deemed suitable to slaughter AWA animals

The list of slaughter plants that have been reviewed and are suitable for use for slaughter of AWA animals will be checked against each new USDA Quarterly Enforcement Report.

If an AWA plant has received a suspension for INH – inhumane treatment – the plant will be placed under immediate review by an SPS.

If an AWA plant has a repeat USDA suspension under INH – inhumane treatment - for the same problem within a two year period it will be immediately suspended. There will be no prior review.

See section 3.4.4 “suspension and termination of slaughter plants” for further information

If an AWA plant has received a suspension for any reason aside from INH the suspension will be noted but no further action will be taken unless suspension occurs for the same reason at least three times in the period covered by three quarterly reports. Under these circumstances the plant will be placed under immediate review by an SPS.

p3.4.8.3 Review

A plant that is under review may continue to slaughter animals for AWA farmers. An AWA SPS will carry out an investigation as part of the review which may or may not include a visit to the plant.

If a plant fails to cooperate with the SPS reviewer it will be immediately suspended.

If the plant cooperates with the review the SPS will report to the full AWA Standards Board.

The AWA Standards Board will decide whether to allow the plant to continue slaughter of AWA animals, be suspended or be terminated based on the following criteria:

- Whether the plant informed AWA of the suspension or was found to have been suspended following examination of the USDA Quarterly Enforcement Reports
- Whether the plant cooperated fully with the SPS reviewer and allowed access to all relevant documentation relating to the suspension
- Remedial action planned or taken
- Management of other operational changes that have taken place since the suspension
- Whether the review is for a repeat suspension for any reason within the last two years
- Other details covered by the SPS' review and report

See section p3.4.4 "suspension and termination of slaughter plants" for further information

On suspension or termination of approval AWA may inform parties who may have an interest in the termination and the reasons for it. These parties may include farmers using or seeking to use the plant, competent authorities, other certification bodies, statutory bodies, the press and others.

When a plant is suspended AWA will contact all approved farmers using the plant to inform them of the situation and to assist with finding another suitable plant.

If a plant is suspended a farmer may still have their animals slaughtered at the plant without their own farm approval being affected; however after the date of suspension they may not market any meat products from animals slaughtered at that plant under the AWA logo. Marketing of meat products under the AWA logo may only recommence once the plant suspension is revoked or a new plant suitable for AWA livestock is identified and used.

If a plant is terminated the farmer will be advised by AWA on a case by case basis. In certain circumstances and for a limited period, the Standards Board may permit a farmer to directly oversee slaughter in a terminated plant to enable them to continue to market product while another suitable slaughterplant is found.

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 Appearance of logo

The AWA logo or seal must be reproduced from original artwork. Please contact AWA for a copy of the seal/logo. The logo must appear:

- complete and upright
- in proportion to the product description
- clearly visible
- clear and legible over the whole of a background, for example if used over a photograph

The logo should be:

- on the main face of the label or packaging

The logo must not appear:

- against a background that affects its legibility
- incomplete
- at an angle
- in different colors
- with a different font or typeface

p4.3 Use of the logo by those who are not directly accredited

In certain circumstances those who are not directly approved by AWA but who are marketing AWA products may use the AWA logo. Please see Annex 12 for further details.

p4.4 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.

p4.5 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

p4.6 Conferences

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

p4.7 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.

p4.8 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 Approvals Board for determination and the subsequent appeals procedure can be implemented.

p5.3 Complaints and Appeals from the farm

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 1.9 on appeals. If a farmer or group disagrees with the outcome of an audit or the Standards Board or Approval Board’s decisions they should follow the appeals process for resolution.

p5.4 Complaints against the farm

Most complaints or concerns about farms and farming practices come from misunderstandings. Communication with customers, the local community and others are the key to avoiding such situations. To help AWA to help farmers we strongly recommend that we are contacted about any complaints received.

p5.4.1 *Animal Welfare Approved* should be informed of any complaints against the farm relating to animal welfare and/or environmental matters.

p 5.4.2 A complaints record should be maintained and be available at annual inspection

p5.5 Legal Action against the approved farm

p5.5.1 The *Animal Welfare Approved* program must be informed immediately of any legal action that is taken against the approved farm or farmer relating to animal welfare or environmental damage

p5.5.2 The *Animal Welfare Approved* program must be informed immediately if the farmer or any farm workers are or have ever been knowingly convicted of offences relating to animal cruelty.

p5.5.3 The farm's approval may be suspended pending investigation if animal cruelty allegations or charges are brought against anyone working on the approved farm.

p5.5.4 The *Animal Welfare Approved* program must be informed immediately of any state or federal activities that may affect the integrity of the seal.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 part A – Conflict of interest policy

Animal Welfare Approved Conflict of Interest Policy

Part 1 – Purpose and definitions

Purpose

It is in the interest of Animal Welfare Approved [“the Organization”], individual staff, and board members to strengthen trust and confidence in each other, to expedite resolution of problems, to mitigate the effect and to minimize organizational and individual stress that can be caused by a conflict of interest.

All staff and board members of the Organization will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the Organization on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The appearance of a conflict of interest can cause embarrassment to the Organization and jeopardize the credibility of the Organization. The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the Organization's decision-making process, to enable stakeholders to have confidence in the organization's integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of staff and Board members

Any conflict of interest, potential conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest is to be reported immediately.

Employees and board members are to maintain independence and objectivity with farmers, stakeholders and the Organization. Employees and board members are called to maintain a sense of fairness, civility, ethics and personal integrity even though law, regulation, or custom does not require them.

People Defined

1. "Board members" include anyone who sits on any Working Group, members of the Standards Board, members of the Appeals Board and members of the Honorary Board.
2. "Staff" includes all those employed by the Organization whether on a full time, part time or consultancy basis. "Staff" also includes interns and volunteers.

Conflict of Interest Defined:

A conflict of interest is defined as an actual or perceived interest by a staff member or Board member in an action that results in, or has the appearance of resulting in, personal, organizational, or professional gain.

A conflict of interest occurs when an employee or Board member has a direct or financial interest in another relationship. A conflict of interest could include:

- An ownership or interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement.
- A compensation arrangement with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement.
- A potential ownership or interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
- A staff or board member who is related** to an individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement
- A staff or board member who is also on the committee of another Organization that is competing for the same funding.
- A staff or board member who has shares in a business that may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the Organization or is a director, partner or employee or related to someone who is**.

** A relative may be a child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, brother, sister, spouse or civil partner

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing Board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists (see "Procedures" in Part 2 below).

Examples of conflict of interest could include but is not restricted to the following:

- Being related to, or a personal friend of, a farmer or worker on a farm who is approved or is seeking approval under the AWA program
- Having carried out consultancy or other work (paid or unpaid) on a farm that is approved or is seeking approval under the AWA program

- Having an ongoing relationship such as membership of a CSA or other purchasing arrangement with a farm that is approved or is seeking approval under the AWA program

Part 2 – Disclosure of interest and procedures

Disclosure of interest

Upon appointment each employee and Board member will make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, and posts held that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. This written disclosure will be kept on file and will be updated annually or as appropriate.

In the course of meetings or other activities, employees and Board members will disclose any interests in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict between the organizations' best interests and the employee or Board member's best interests or a conflict between the best interests of two organizations that the employee or Board member is involved with. If in doubt the potential conflict must be declared anyway and clarification sought.

Procedures

1. **Duty to Disclose** In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the interest -whether financial or otherwise - and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the director and other Board members considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.
2. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists** After disclosure of the interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, s/he shall leave the Board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.
3. **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest**
 1. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, s/he shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
 2. The chairperson of the Board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
 3. After exercising due diligence, the Board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
 4. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.
4. **Authorization of a conflict of interest** In the case of a conflict of interests arising for a Board member because of a duty of loyalty owed to another organization or person and the conflict is not authorised by virtue of any other provision in the memorandum or the articles, the unconflicted Board members may authorise such a conflict of interests where the following conditions apply:

1. the Board member who has declared the conflict of interest withdraws from the part of the meeting at which there is discussion of any arrangement or transaction affecting that other organization or person;
 2. the Board member who has the conflict of interest does not vote on any such matter and is not to be counted when considering whether a quorum is present at the meeting;
 3. the other Board members who have no conflict of interest in this matter consider it is in the interests of the Organization to authorise the conflict of interest in the circumstances applying.
 4. any such disclosure and the subsequent actions taken will be noted in the minutes.
5. **Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**
1. If the Board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
 2. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Part 3 – Records, compensation and gifts

Records of Proceedings

The minutes of the Board and all committees with Board delegated powers shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have an interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Acceptance of Gifts:

Staff, members of staff's immediate family, and members of the Board are prohibited from accepting gifts, money or gratuities from the following:

- a. Persons receiving benefits or services from the Organization;
- b. Any person or organization performing or seeking to perform services under contract with the Organization; and
- c. Persons who are otherwise in a position to benefit from the actions of any employee of the Organization.

Note: It is permitted to accept minor gratuities such as food or non-alcoholic beverages offered in the course of carrying out work for the Organization. For example a staff member may accept an offer to eat lunch with a farmer with who they are working on behalf of the Organization.

Employees may, with the prior written approval of the Organization, receive honoraria for lectures and other such activities while on personal days, compensatory time, annual leave, or leave without pay. If the employee is acting in any official capacity, honoraria received by an employee in connection with activities relating to employment with the Organization are to be paid to the Organization.

Annex 1 part B Register of staff and board members interests

Animal Welfare Approved

Register of Staff and Board Members' Interests

Declaration of Interest

Person or organization with whom a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest may arise	Nature of relationship and/or nature of conflict of interest
<i>(e.g. Happy Acres Farm)</i>	<i>(e.g. Personal friend or relation of farmer, regular customer of farm, have provided professional advice to farm)</i>

Name.....

Position

Signed

Date

OR

I declare that I do not have any known conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest

Name.....

Position

Signed

Date

Annex 2 Auditor selection and training

AWA auditors

The Animal Welfare Approved® (AWA) program's standards were developed in collaboration with scientists, veterinarians, researchers, and farmers across the globe. In order to ensure that our standards are audited accurately and consistently AWA has developed protocols for selection and training of auditors. By its very nature farm animal auditing is very technical. In order to ensure that different auditors are assessing and scoring standards in the same way across the program AWA does not subcontract its auditing and compliance activities.

The AWA program includes farm, slaughter and traceability audits which require different knowledge and expertise so has different auditors who are qualified to do these particular inspections. Some auditors are employed full time and others carry out audits on a part time basis.

Application

AWA auditors must have an agricultural science degree, be veterinarians or farmers with at least five years experience in pasture based management. Applicants who wish to become AWA auditors submit a resume detailing relevant experience. These resumes are reviewed by the AWA Lead Auditor.

Those that pass the resume review undergo a telephone interview with the AWA Lead Auditor. This telephone interview explores the relevant livestock experience of the new auditor in more detail as well as touching on communication and reporting ability that will be required.

A background check is carried out and references taken up before an offer is made to any potential new auditor.

New auditor training

All new auditors must undergo initial training before going on farm to represent AWA. This training comprises both classroom sessions and on-farm sessions.

Classroom topics include:

1. Overview of the program
To set the auditor's position in context with the wider work of AWA
2. Standards
To ensure a good understanding of the requirements of the AWA program
3. Pre-audit checks
To ensure that auditors are prepared for each farm audit they undertake and to ensure the farmer is also prepared.
4. Biosecurity protocols
To ensure that auditors are aware of the risks of movement from farm to farm; understand the restrictions on farm visits that are made due to biosecurity risks and are familiar with the biosecurity clothing that must be worn.

5. Completing the audit report

To ensure that auditors understand how to read and complete the forms, what non-compliances are, what critical non-compliances are and where extra information is required or optional.

6. Completing the Corrective Action Plan form

To ensure that the auditor can accurately draw up a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) from the audit report.

7. The compliance process

To outline the process following the farm audit, where the audit report and a CAP (if issued) are reviewed for consistency by the AWA Corrective Action Plan Coordinator. The Coordinator liaises with the auditor as necessary before a final CAP is issued to the farmer for their response. To also ensure that the auditor is aware of the timetable for completion of paperwork post audit.

8. The approval process

To outline the process following return of the completed CAP by the farmer. The completed CAP is reviewed by the AWA Standards Board for a determination of approval. As the Standards Board reviews each and every audit they are a critical part of ensuring that the delivery of the AWA program is trusted and consistent.

9. Derogations

To ensure auditors are aware of the derogation process, how derogations are applied for, standards against which derogations will never be granted and those against which derogations may be issued in certain circumstances. Derogations must be reviewed at least annually

10. Appeals

To ensure that auditors are aware that farmers may appeal any audit finding or the approval process if they disagree with any decision. To additionally make sure auditors are aware of the appeal timetable.

11. Communication and confidentiality

To ensure auditors understand the need for confidentiality within the program for all farmers whether or not they finally meet with approval. To go through the restrictions on the use of photographs, quotes and other information gained from the audit. To also ensure that communication within the program is clear, relevant and up to date and that auditors are aware of the various AWA flow charts showing actions and staff members involved in response to different scenarios.

On-farm topics include:

1. Planning the audit

To ensure auditors know how they will approach the audit, how they communicate with the farmer at the audit, how they plan out both the animal and paperwork assessments, whether this is a single species or multi species audit, whether there needs to be travel to look at animals away from the main farm site and so on.

2. Record and plan assessment

To ensure auditors understand what is and isn't a valid record or plan. The variety of plans and records that may be encountered on farm and how to positively reinforce the need for plans and records not just for audit purposes but for efficient management of the farm business.

3. Animal assessments

To ensure auditors are fully trained in the assessments they need to make of the species they are auditing. To further ensure auditors are able to carry out accurate and repeatable outcome assessments such as body condition scoring and lameness. To ensure that auditors who are intended to audit a particular species are knowledgeable in the general management, breeding and feeding of this species so that they understand what they see on any particular farm site and can communicate well with the farmer when explaining the practical implications of AWA standards requirements.

4. Farmer feedback

To ensure auditors are aware of the importance of farmer feedback, how to finish the audit with a summary of findings, how to ensure that positive feedback as well as any compliance issues are communicated to the farmer and how to ensure that the farmer understands the next steps in the approval process once the auditor has left the farm.

Accompanied training audits

Once a new auditor has completed the initial training they undergo at least three accompanied audits. These audits will be for the species the auditor has experience of and are accompanied by one of the senior auditing team.

The new auditor has responsibility for planning the audit, carrying out the pre-audit checks, auditing the farm and completing the relevant report and compliance action plan. The experienced auditor will offer support and advice as required at all steps of the process and will assess the actions of the new auditor. Feedback is provided and additional accompanied audits may be arranged as required until the senior auditing team is confident that the new auditor is able to meet the high standards required by AWA.

Monthly auditor calls

The AWA program covers the whole of the US and auditors are based in many different states. In order to keep in touch with a geographically spread auditing team there are monthly telephone conferences to ensure everyone is up to date with progress within the program. Auditors are able to raise any general points of interest or queries on the monthly calls. Outside of these times the Lead Auditor is always available to advise his team.

Ongoing training

All AWA auditors additionally undergo annual training. This training acts both as a refresher course to ensure consistency of assessment is maintained between all auditors and also to introduce any new standards or policies.

Like the initial training this annual training consists of both classroom sessions and on-farm instruction. The annual training provides opportunity for auditors to gain experience in species they are less familiar with.

Ongoing training uses both the experience of the senior auditing team and outside expertise.

Outcome assessments

AWA standards contain a mix of input or resource standards and outcome or animal based standards. AWA auditors have access to training in outcome assessments by world class experts from the UK's Bristol University. [See <http://www.animalwelfareapproved.org/2011/02/02/awa-teams-up-with-uk-partners-to-develop-world-class-animal-welfare-assessments/>] For a number of years Bristol University has been at the forefront of developing meaningful and repeatable outcome assessments that are based on sound science. This training and the ability to audit both input and outcome standards ensure that AWA stays at the forefront of farm animal welfare auditing.

Annex 3 part A Poultry Stunner Loan Policy

Animal Welfare Approved Poultry Stunner Loan Policy

In order to promote the growth and development of the Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) poultry program a limited number of poultry stunners; suitable for use as part of an AWA reviewed slaughter process; are available for loan. This document outlines the procedures that have been put in place to provide fair access to this equipment.

I. Availability of AWA Stunners.

- A. AWA poultry stunners are available to approved farmers, farmers associated with the program and other affiliated organizations for processing and training purposes.
- B. Any farmer or affiliated organizations defined in point A (hereafter termed Borrower) may request the loan of AWA stunners.
- C. Requests for stunners will be prioritized on a “first- come, first- served basis”. That is, the earliest requests will be handled first.
- D. A stunner request may be denied if there is sufficient reason to believe that the stunner will be mishandled, improperly used, or not returned. This decision is final.
- E. All loaned equipment shall be made available to the AWA program for AWA sponsored events, or other events deemed necessary.

II. Procedures for Requesting AWA Stunners.

- A. All requests for stunners must be submitted via email to the Program Coordinator. Requests must be made in a reasonable amount of time prior to the date of need. Requests shall contain the following information:
 - Name and contact information of the individual who will be responsible for the equipment while it is on loan
 - Reason for the request (processing, training, etc.)
 - Date(s) that the equipment will be needed
 - Date on which the equipment will be returned to the Program Coordinator or AWA office.
- B. AWA may impose nominal fees or deposits to defray repair costs and encourage responsible use of AWA equipment
- C. AWA reserves the right to impose restrictions on future loans of stunner equipment on Borrowers who do not follow the procedures outlined in this document.
Note: In most instances a written warning will be issued before suspension of loan privileges is implemented

III. Borrower Responsibilities. Borrowers shall be responsible for:

- A. Completion of the AWA Stunner Loan Agreement form and the Liability Disclaimer form including signatures.
- B. All maintenance and upkeep of equipment assigned to them.
- C. Successful completion of an AWA training course in the use of the stunner.

Note: On completion of training, a slaughter specialist must review use of the stunner and other techniques used to slaughter birds. This review must be passed before birds can be marketed under the AWA seal.

- D. All expenses for repair of damage due to abuse or neglect deemed to have been inflicted during the loan period. .
- E. Thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting the stunner prior to return.
- F. Return of assigned stunner in a timely manner at the end of the loan period.

Note: The Program Coordinator will make allowances for good faith attempts to return the equipment prevented by circumstances outside the borrower's control, provided they are notified by telephone or email within 24 hours of the expected date of return, and the equipment is then returned at a mutually agreed time.

- G. Transportation costs and expense of returning the assigned stunner to the AWA office (or other location agreed upon by the Program Coordinator) at the end of the loan period.

IV. AWA Responsibilities.

- A. AWA will provide a working stunner that has undergone maintenance and any minor repairs that have resulted from normal use

Stunner Loan Agreement Form

Period of loan: From ____ / ____ / ____ To ____ / ____ / ____

Borrower Information

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Address at which stunner will be used if different from above:

Signature

I have read and agree to the terms of the AWA Stunner Loan Policy.

Name

Date

Annex 3 part B Poultry stunner liability disclaimer

Poultry Stunner Liability Disclaimer

This poultry stunner is provided “as is” without any guarantees or warranty. Animal Welfare Approved makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, including but not limited to warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, of title, or of non infringement of third party rights in connection with this stunner. Use of the product is at the user’s risk.

Signature of this document denotes agreement with the following terms:

- 1) The poultry stunner has been received in good condition and will be returned in the same condition (ordinary wear and tear accepted).
- 2) The user assumes all responsibility for injuries to persons or damages to property, and agrees to waive, release, discharge and hold harmless Animal Welfare Approved for any and all claims, of whatsoever nature, arising out of use of the stunner while in his/her custody.
- 3) The user agrees not to loan, sublet or otherwise depose of equipment or use it at any location other than that specified and agreed in the Stunner Loan Agreement Form.
- 4) User agrees to pay in full the replacement cost, including labor, for all damages to stunner.
- 5) THERE ARE NO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS EITHER EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED.
- 6) The person/s or organization using this poultry stunner from Animal Welfare Approved will be held responsible and liable for any and all damage or injury occurring for any reason whatsoever.
- 7) The user agrees to thoroughly clean and disinfect the stunner prior to returning to AWA. If the stunner is returned in an unclean condition future use of the stunner may be denied.

I have read the above agreement and fully understand and accept the conditions as above. I am aware that while in my care I am fully responsible for the poultry stunner and will pay for any loss or damages that may occur.

User_____

Date_____

Annex 4 Approval process in different countries



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 5 part A Standards Amendment Form



Animal Welfare Approved Standards Amendment Form

Standard number:
Species affected:
Proposed by:
Date:

Wording of existing standard	
Proposed new wording/new standard	

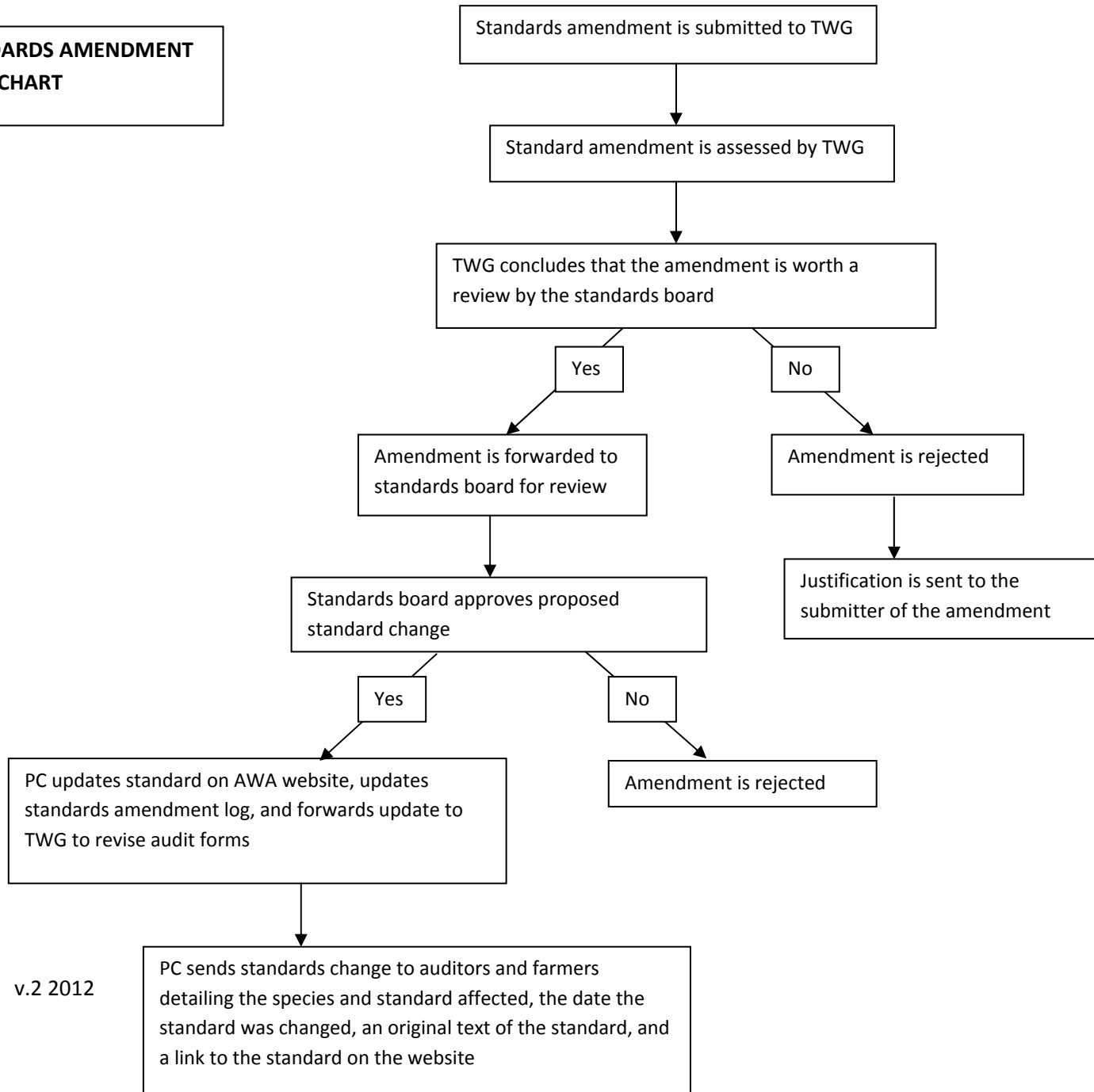
Summary of reasons for the amendment	
Impact on animal health/welfare	
Impact on farmers	

Date submitted for consultation	
Date by which comments must be received	

Annex 5 part B Standards amendment flow chart

**STANDARDS AMENDMENT
FLOW CHART**

PC = Program Coordinator
TWG = Technical Working Group



Annex 6 part A Derogation request form



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

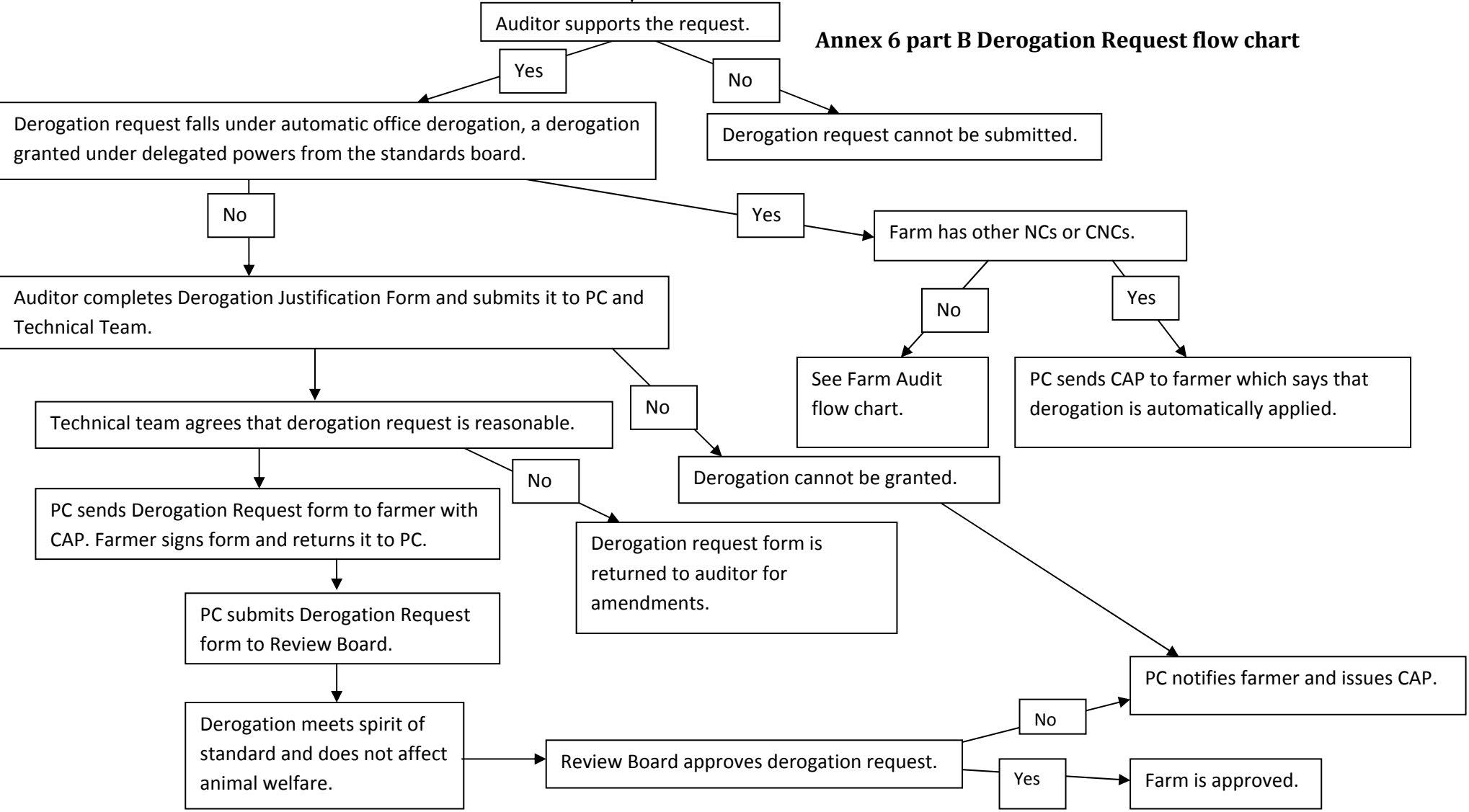
Date submitted	
Date by which comments must be received	
Derogation agreed yes/no	
Derogation agreed until (date)	

**DEROGATION REQUEST
FLOW CHART**

Farmer notifies Auditor that s/he wants to submit a derogation request.

PC – Program Coordinator
CAP – Corrective Action Plan

Annex 6 part B Derogation Request flow chart



Annex 7 Appeal form



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 8 Application flow chart

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

Yes

No

No

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

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

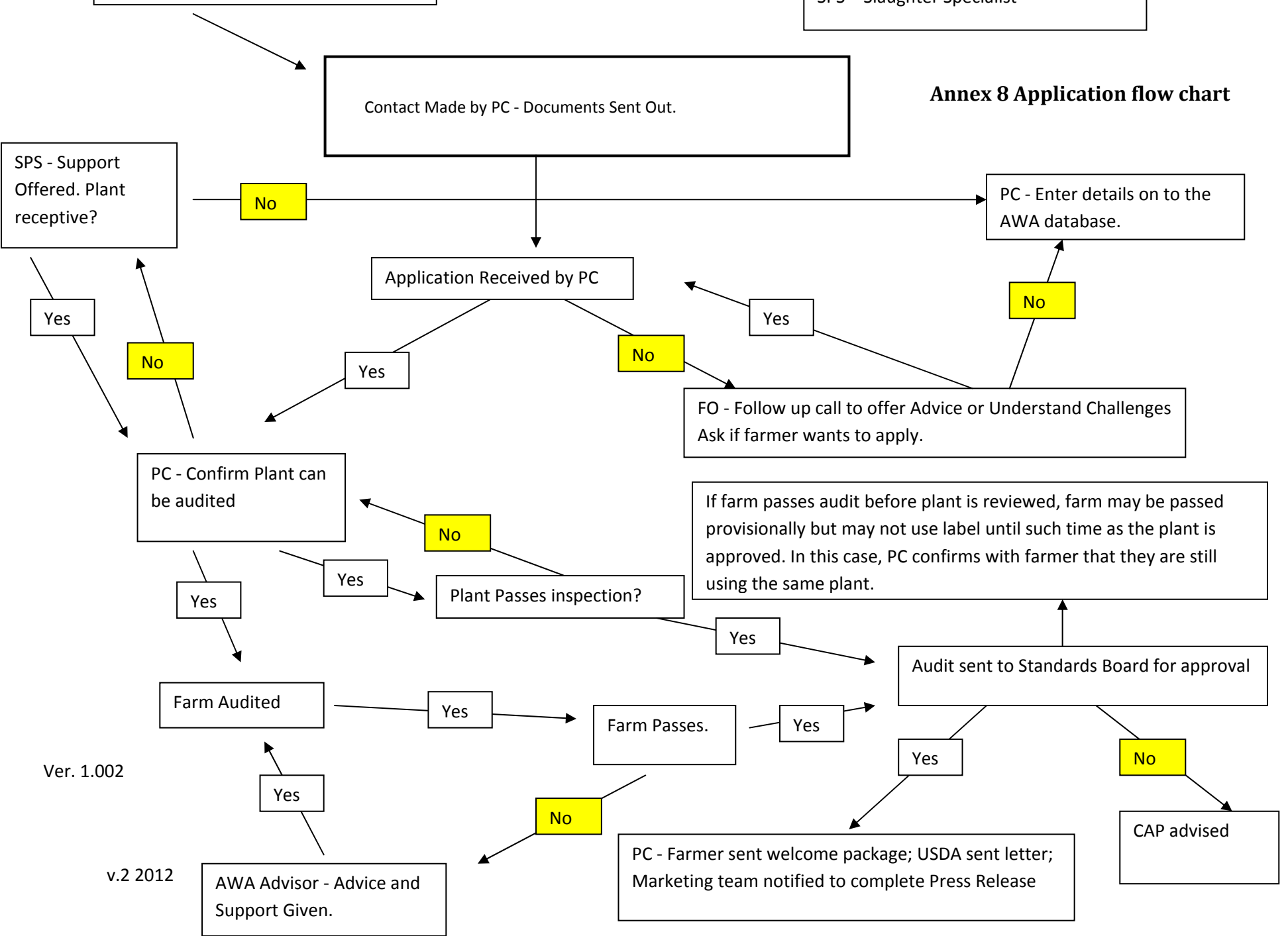
CAP advised

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

AWA Advisor - Advice and Support Given.

Ver. 1.002

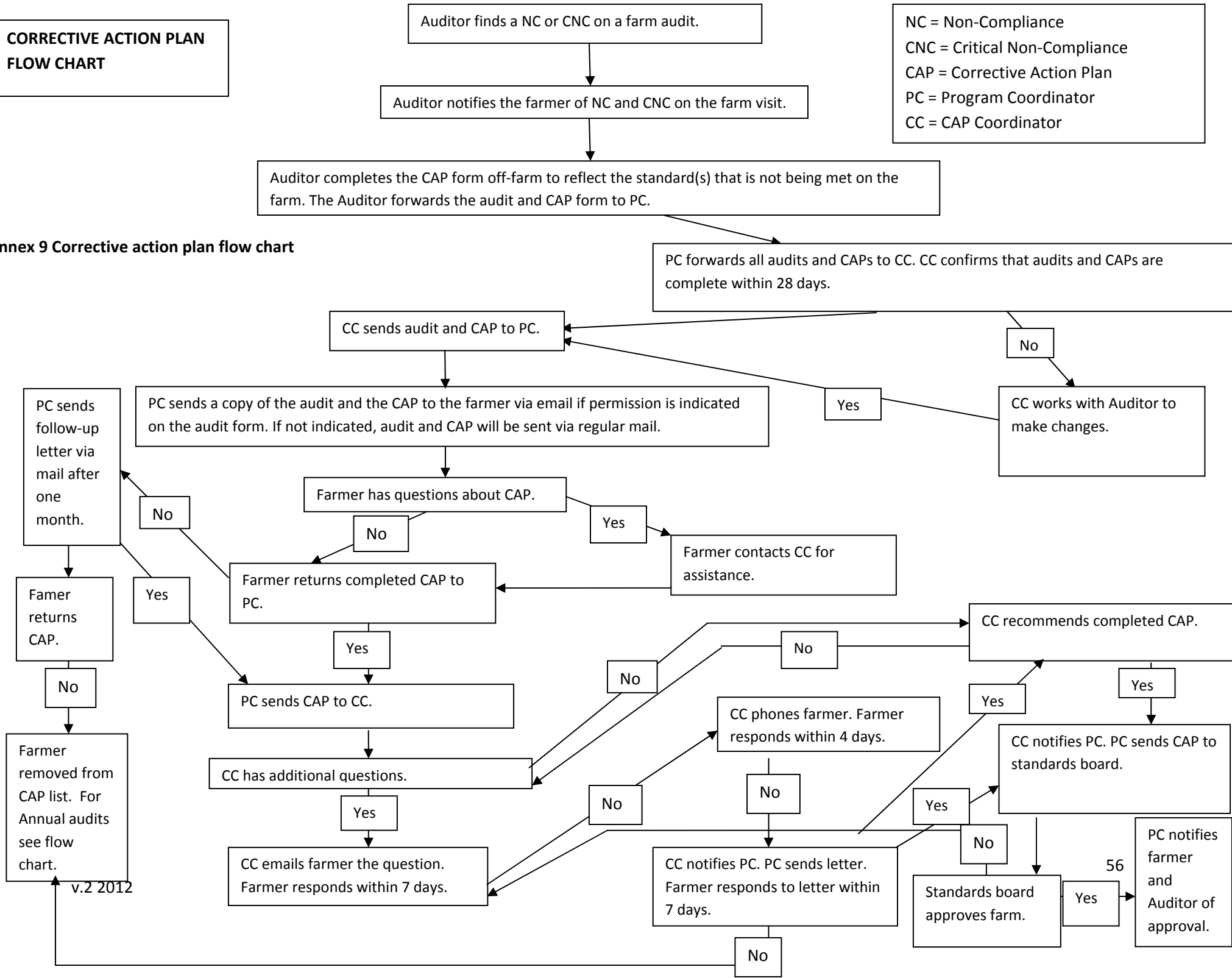
v.2 2012



**CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN
FLOW CHART**

NC = Non-Compliance
 CNC = Critical Non-Compliance
 CAP = Corrective Action Plan
 PC = Program Coordinator
 CC = CAP Coordinator

Annex 9 Corrective action plan flow chart



APPROVED FARM HAS CNC ON ANNUAL AUDIT

Farm receives repeated or new critical non-compliance (CNC) on annual audit.

PC – Program Coordinator
LA – Lead Auditor
PD – Program Director

Annex 10 Repeated CNC flow chart

Auditor notifies LA immediately.

LA notifies PD, technical team and standards board.

LA determines that there are no extenuating circumstances that would allow the farmer to go through the usual CAP process. Refers immediately to standards board.

LA determines that there are extenuating circumstances that allow the farmer to go through the usual CAP process. Makes recommendation to standards board.

PC calls standards board meeting as soon as possible. Supplies details of the farm's history and current situation to board members for review.

Standards Board agrees.

Farm is immediately terminated from the program.

Yes

No

Farm is suspended from the program. See "Farm is Suspended from Program flow chart v2".

No

Yes

Farmer is sent CAP. See "Corrective Action Plan flow chart v6".

Ver. 1.001

**PLANT CHANGE
FLOW CHART**

PC receives notification that a farmer has changed slaughter plants.

PC notifies LA. LA contacts farmer to find out why the farmer changed plants.

Farmer changed plants for acceptable reason – see box below.

No

Yes

PD is informed. Farm is referred to standards board for review of approval. Standards board is happy with farmer's reason for change

Yes

SPS has ten weeks to review new plant. Farmer will remain in program until that time.

No

Farm loses approved status for species slaughtered at the unapproved plant

Acceptable reasons for plant change are situations beyond the farmer's control for example - but not limited to – the following:

Plant closure

Farmer has become aware that plant is not meeting AWA welfare standards

Refusal by plant to take animals from approved farmer

PC – Program Coordinator
LA – Lead Auditor
PD – Program Director
SPS – Slaughter Plant Specialist

Annex 11 Change of slaughterplant flow chart

Ver. 1.001

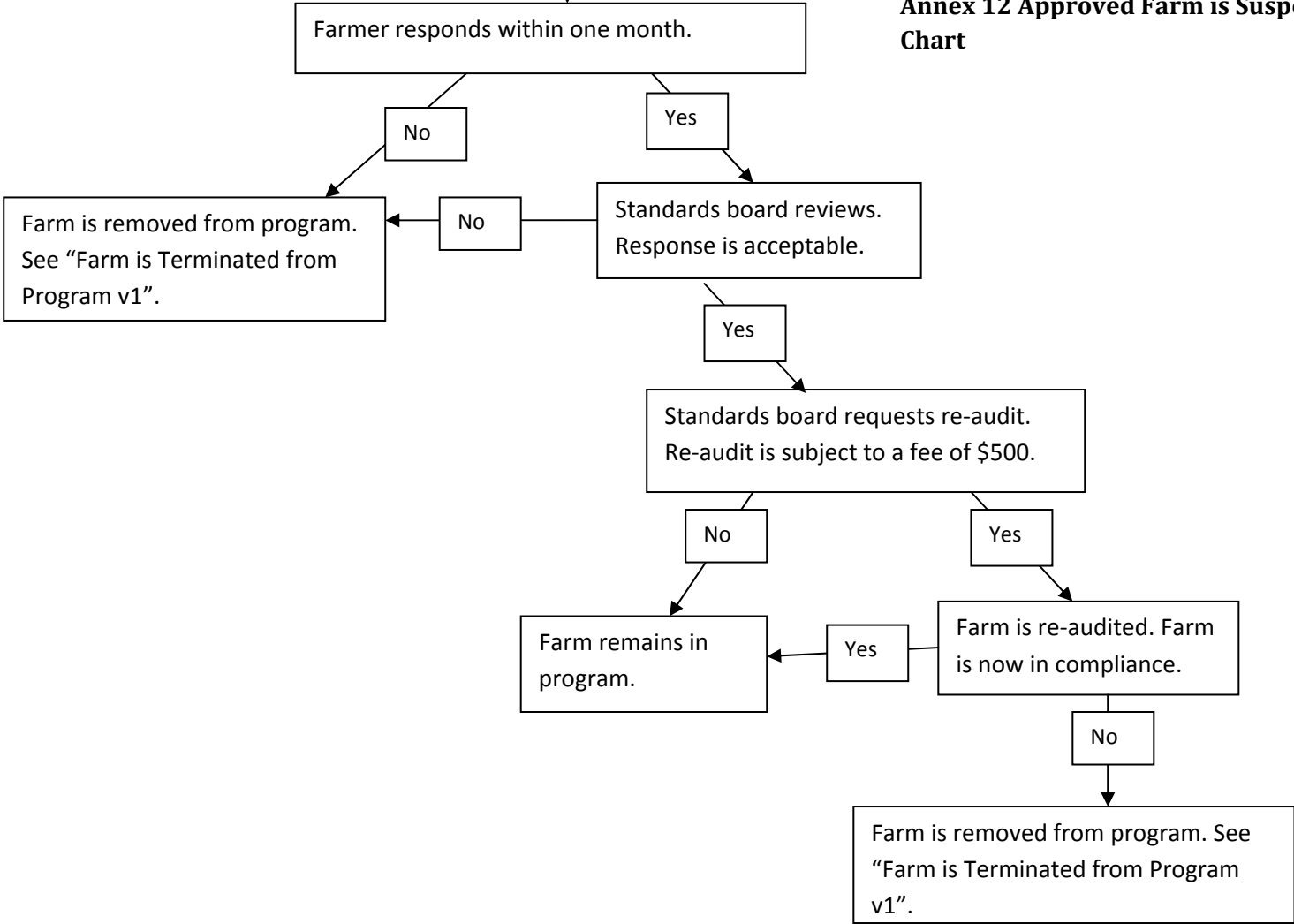
APPROVED FARM IS SUSPENDED

The program receives information (from an audit, complaint, etc.) that leads the LA and PD to feel the farm should be suspended.

PC – Program Coordinator
LA – Lead Auditor
PD – Program Director

PC sends the farm a letter notifying them of its suspension. The letter includes information on the issue and gives the farm one month to respond. See AWA Policy Document for definition of suspension.

Annex 12 Approved Farm is Suspended Flow Chart



Ver. 1.002

v.2 2012

Annex 13 Use of the AWA seal by those not directly accredited



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.