

Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) - Pre-Audit Producer Self-Assessment



To help producers become Registered (take part in the voluntary on-farm validation audit), the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program has prepared this Pre-Audit Producer Self-Assessment to help prepare for the audit and registration process. Any documents that are required for producers to become registered in the program are clearly stated in the table below as are any national standards. The standards are excellent resources should you need more information on the various components of VBP+.

The following Self-Assessment must be submitted if you wish to take part in the VBP+ program and can be returned to your Provincial Coordinator when you are ready to register. This lets our coordinators know that you are ready to undertake the audit or if more training or information is needed.

Please if for any reason throughout this process, you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact your provincial coordinator. Our goal is to help you demonstrate to the world the excellent job you do.

Operation Name: _____ Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Section 1 - On-Farm Food Safety

VBP - On-Farm Food Safety Version 7.7

Review of Beef Operation Practices	Most of the time	Sometimes/Aware	Does not happen often
Outcome Area <i>(Please check which of these 3 areas best applies to your operation)</i>			
Animal Health Management			
All animal health products are used according to label direction or written veterinary prescription, and a record of use exists.			
People know what to do if treating with the wrong product or dose.			
If a suspect broken needle incident, animal is permanently identified and incident is recorded.			
Vet is consulted as appropriate and we are aware of need for prudent use of antibiotics.			
Animal health products are stored according to label to ensure product viability.			
Feed and Water			
Medications in feed or water are mixed and used according to label direction or prescription. Records are available for mixing and feeding of these products.			
Ration mixing and delivery is managed to ensure cross-contamination does not happen, for example a system of cleaning or flushing equipment and/or sequencing.			
Scales used to mix medicated feed are tested for accuracy at least once per year.			
Bedding materials such as wood chips do not contain preservatives or other chemicals.			
Feed containing prohibited material (ruminant by-products) are not fed, and access to this feed i.e. pet food is protected from cattle.			
Cattle Shipping			
A record check for animal health products used or fed and any broken needles is done before cattle are shipped. Evidence of check is on a record.			
If cattle are shipped with a suspect broken needle (i.e. to local plant) the next owner is informed and noted in a record.			
Pesticides and Manure			
Herbicides and pesticides for pasture or hay fields are used according to label direction. Usage is recorded and checked before cattle are allowed access or feed is harvested.			
Pens holding cattle destined for slaughter are subject to manure removal at least once annually.			
Training and Communication			
Someone is designated from the beef cattle operation to review "Must Do" requirements including appropriate records each year.			
Family members and/or staff understand tasks relating to standard practices and Must Do requirements.			
If problems or errors occur with Must Do requirements, appropriate action is taken.			

Section 2 - Biosecurity

BIOSECURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT Evaluation/Checklist (check the column that best matches current practices)	Mostly or Always	Sometimes/Don't Know	Never	Actions to Consider
Animal Health Practices	Regular monitoring and treatment of sick or potential diseased cattle assists in halting further transfer to other animals in your herd			
I undertake animal health procedures to address disease within my herd.				
I seek advice from a veterinarian on treatment and other animal health procedures.				
Single-use needles are used on sick animals, and equipment/tools are washed before using on other cattle.				
A record is kept on animal health treatments, vaccinations and deaths/ euthanized cattle.				
Incoming Cattle	Newly purchased cattle or owned cattle returning to the operation may carry pathogens or disease to your operation			
Incoming replacement heifers, cows or bulls are isolated for a time period, monitored for health and vaccinated and/or treated with animal health products as per the existing herd.				
Incoming foster calf or cow is isolated for a time period, monitored for health and vaccinated and/or treated with animal health products as per the existing herd.				
Any returning cattle from 4-H events, cattle shows/sales and vet clinics are isolated for a period of time before re-joining the herd.				
Information on health status on herd of origin for purchased cattle is requested, including vaccinations and any recent disease outbreaks.				
When using commingled pastures (eg. community pastures) herds use common vaccinations, and test bulls for transferable disease.				
Cattle returning from commingled pastures (eg. community pastures) are monitored for potential disease where possible.				
A record is kept on cattle purchases, sales/shipping including date and trucker name/company.				

BIOSECURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT Evaluation/Checklist (check the column that best matches current practices)	Mostly or Always	Sometimes/Don't Know	Never	Actions to Consider
People and equipment / tools	High-risk visitors (those in contact with other cattle) may unknowingly carry disease to the operation, or equipment shared but not clean between uses can transfer pathogens.			
When visiting an auction mart or vet clinic, consider using different footwear and/or clothes, other than what is normally used while working on the operation. Or disinfect prior to using on your own operation.				
Incoming farm workers (including corral cleaners, custom hay/silage harvesters, vets,) wear clean clothing / footwear and use clean tools/ equipment before working on my operation.				
International visitors or returning workers wear clean clothing and footwear, and prior contact with animals or rural regions is identified before arrival. <i>* see 3 suggested questions below</i>				
When traveling internationally in rural areas, adequate caution is taken including complete clothing change, showering, and cleaning/adequate drying of materials before entry on to a Canadian livestock operation. (check with vet as per particular country/region – if a disease outbreak seek further advice)				
No food or otherwise prohibited products are transported back to Canada.				
Cattle are not allowed access to raw untreated human sewage, such as septic pump-outs and disposal of solid sewage waste.				
Family members and employees know who to contact if there is a disease outbreak or disease emergency.				
A visitor logbook is kept, and visitor instruction signage provides biosecurity information / instructions to anyone visiting my operation.				

****Suggested questions to ask incoming visitors prior to coming to the farm/feedlot:**

1. Ask if are from or have been outside Canada in the previous two weeks
2. Ask if have been on farm/ranch or been exposed to livestock from outside Canada and the US
3. Ask if been exposed to situation involving reportable animal health problem in the last 6 months.

Section 3 - Animal Care

General Information

- Are you aware of the requirements in Canada's Beef Code of Practice?
 - Yes No Unsure
- Under normal conditions, how often are cattle checked for illness or injury?
 - Daily in winter, weekly in summer pastures Daily
 - More often during calving Other _____
- Do you seek advice from a veterinary clinic(s) for animal health purposes?
 - Yes (See Below) No don't use a vet clinic regularly
 - Other _____

If yes, please check in general what type of advice is sought?

 - Disease management Herd health consultations
 - Feedlot Animal Health Protocols
 - Other _____
- How are new persons mentored on how to handle cattle in your operation?
 - Instruction by owner Oversight by owner or manager or designate
 - Shadow knowledgeable person and feedback
 - Formal Training
 - Some not allowed to handle cattle Other _____
- What would you do if cattle were being mistreated or improperly handled?
 - Instruct them on proper handling procedures
 - Tell owner/manager in charge Re-train
 - Re-assign to another task Don't invite them back to help
 - Other _____
- If your neighbor or someone in your locality was neglecting or abusing cattle, what options would you consider?
 - Possibly report to another cattle person with expertise
 - Possibly communicate to authorities if necessary
 - Don't know depends on severity Ask expert/cattle association
 - Make someone else aware of actions, depending on incident
 - Actions depend on individual situation
 - Other _____

Other Program Requirements:

- Feedyards over 5,000 head follow a written plan for management of non-ambulatory/downer or injured cattle.
- Feedyards over 5,000 head will complete a cattle handling assessment as part of an on-farm validation audit at a frequency to be determined.

REVIEW OF BEEF OPERATION PRACTICES Please check which of these four areas applies to your operation	All or most of the time	Sometimes/Aware	Does not often happen
Outcome Area			
Shelter is provided in the case of inclement or extreme weather.			
Pens or indoor housing allow for drainage, and comfortable dry resting areas.			
Cattle are fed and allowed access to water in a manner that meets their nutritional needs.			
If snow is a source of water for cows, it is monitored and a backup source exists.			
Decision to euthanize or put down an animal is done in a timely manner to avoid animal suffering.			
Castration and branding is done early and if need for pain control is done with vet advice			
Family members or staff know what to do if there is a power outage or feeding equipment failure			
Operation has an electric prod policy that defines when/how it can and cannot be used			
Those making shipping decisions understand what is not acceptable when loading and transporting cattle. Trailer is ventilated or protection from extreme cold is done where necessary.			

REVIEW OF BEEF OPERATION PRACTICES Please check which of these four areas applies to your operation	All or most of the time	Sometimes/Aware	Does not often happen
Outcome Area			
Someone is designated to manage human resources, including some flexibility/fairness considerations for staff, and policies exist for safe working procedures			
Tail-docking is not allowed, except under vet advice			
Feedlot-Specific Questions			
Rations are formulated in step-wise manner to allow for cattle adjusting to changes in feed			
A plan for management of chronically ill or injured cattle is followed. If over 5,000 head a written plan exists for non-ambulatory or downer cattle.			
Staff know what to do if a feedlot animal calves and appropriate attention is provided			
Castration of belly nuts is handled by trained personnel with appropriate pain medication			
Extra traction is provided in load out and processing areas to assist against cattle injury			

Section 4 - Environmental Stewardship

Reference: Priority practices covered by Environmental Farm Plan and /or confined feeding license/permit

General Information

- Have you completed an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) and if so, what year?
 Yes Completed in: _____ No Not aware of EFP
 Not available in my province
- If an EFP was completed, what were the 2-3 actions on your operation as a result?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- List any training courses relating to grazing management, crop production or environmental best practices you have taken in the past 5 years:

- Are you aware of grazing management strategies that help productivity and practices to assist soil health or reduce erosion?
 Yes No Not Applicable (feedlot)

- If answer to #4 is yes, please identify some of the practices undertaken in the last 1-3 years that have assisted such as:
- Rotational Grazing Riparian Area Practices Cross-fencing
 - Use of Crop Rotations Training Courses
 - Species at Risk Programs
 - Portable windbreaks for changing Wintering Ground
 - Off-site Watering Systems Changing Grasses/Forage Mix
 - Alternate/Cropping/Grazing Local Watershed Planning
 - Other Grazing/Conservation Programs

- Do you have a permit/license for Intensive Livestock or Confinement Feeding?
 Yes: Cow/Calf Backgrounding Lot Feedlot Combination
 No
 Do you have a nutrient or manure management plan?
 Yes No
- Have you participated in McDonald's Beef Sustainability Pilot?
 Yes No Average Score: _____

REVIEW OF BEEF OPERATION PRACTICES <i>Please check which of these four areas applies to your operation</i>	<i>Several Actions on-going</i>	<i>Some actions tried or planned</i>	<i>Awareness but no action</i>
Outcome Area			
Have you had to adjust pasture or rangeland practices to address drought, flooding, soil or wind erosion.			
Have any actions been taken to manage invasive plant species on pasture or rangeland.			
Do manure use/storage practices protect against surface run-off into water bodies and leaching into groundwater.			
Are wintering grounds managed to protect against runoff into water.			
Are deadstock managed so that runoff into water bodies is avoided.			
Are crop and/or forage practices considered beneficial to soil conservation.			
Are on-farm chemicals stored to avoid leakage to water system, and used items/waste recycled where possible.			
Does your operation undertake training or have emergency response for chemical spills/clean up material or in case of fire in chemical storage. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (if needed) _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (see below) <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Extinguishers <input type="checkbox"/> Safety training <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Up Materials (sawdust,litter) <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Call List <input type="checkbox"/> Other		

If someone in your region was possibly disposing of material/products in a manner unsafe to water or soil what options would you consider (could impact your operation or water/air/soil for your cattle) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (if needed) _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly report to authorities where necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know, depends on severity <input type="checkbox"/> Ask expert/cattle association <input type="checkbox"/> Actions depend on individual situation <input type="checkbox"/> Keep cattle away from water and/or situation <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Are any practices related to management of air quality, either outside or in livestock confinement barns _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (list 1 or 2) <input type="checkbox"/> No
What energy efficient practices are undertaken? Any other practices that enhance production efficiency <input type="checkbox"/> Other (if needed) _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Solar power <input type="checkbox"/> Windmill power <input type="checkbox"/> Recycled uses on-site <input type="checkbox"/> Energy efficient equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Improved lighting <input type="checkbox"/> Energy efficient waterbowls <input type="checkbox"/> Not at this time <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain)
If irrigation water is used, how is efficiency of use managed	Explain