



# FARM ANIMAL WELFARE CERTIFICATION GUIDE

*October 2019*

A Farmer and Business Tool for Understanding  
Welfare Certification Programs





Founded in 1866, the ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) is the first animal welfare organization in North America and serves as the nation's leading voice for animals. More than two million supporters strong, the ASPCA's mission is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, the ASPCA is a national leader in the areas of anti-cruelty, community outreach and animal health services. For more information, please visit [aspca.org](http://aspca.org), and be sure to follow the ASPCA on Facebook®, Twitter®, and Instagram®.



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# INTRODUCTION

This guide is a tool for farm and ranch businesses interested in exploring farm animal welfare certification programs (Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Humane®, Global Animal Partnership).



## How to Use This Guide



**Understand** what certification means.

First, read about what it means to participate in the covered certification programs.



**Review** programs.

Second, review and compare program standards, certification processes and costs.



**Explore** case studies.

Explore further and read first-hand farmer certification experiences.



**Learn** more.

Finally, learn about transition financing, labeling guidelines and additional resources.



## Welfare Certifications

### What are farm animal welfare certification programs?

**Independent, non-governmental organizations.** Animal welfare certification programs are not affiliated with government entities. They are independent, non-profit organizations (NPOs) or programs of NPOs.

**Standard-setters.** These programs develop animal welfare standards covering various aspects of farm animal husbandry, including breeding, birth, food and water, health management, housing, pasture access, transport, slaughter and record-keeping. These standards are publicly available online.

**Certifying and labeling programs.** Farm/ranch businesses that are found to meet a program's standards may apply for program certification. Once certified, it may use the program's label (and animal welfare claims) on certified animal products. According to the programs, results of audits and other business information are treated as confidential.

**Beneficial to Business.** These programs can benefit farm animals and businesses through market access, product distinction, brand lift and as a foundation for a good animal management plan. For more on potential business benefits of welfare certification, see the [next page](#).



### Why Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Humane® and Global Animal Partnership?

**Transparency.** Standards and certification processes are publicly available and clear.

**Rigor.** Animal welfare standards are meaningfully better than conventional, with enriched, cage-free environments as a baseline.\* According to each program, 100% of the standards are required to pass an audit, systems are in place to address non-compliance and standards are routinely reviewed to reflect best practices.

**Independent audits.** Generally, require regular, on-site audits to confirm compliance with certification standards.

**National presence.** Each program certifies farm and ranch businesses nationally. The standards are applicable to all climates in the United States (not regional), marketed and recognized across the country.

*\*For GAP, ASPCA recommends Levels 2 and above.*

## Why Certify: The Triple Win

Compliance with farm animal welfare certification is a win-win-win for farm animals, farm/ranch businesses and consumers.



### **Farm animals win.**

Improved animal welfare means higher quality of life, increased ability to perform natural behaviors and more humane methods of slaughter.



### **Farmers/Ranchers win.**

In addition to providing a strong, welfare-focused management structure, welfare certification can offer access to new markets, a marketing edge against competitors and enhanced credibility with consumers.



### **Consumers win.**

Welfare certification programs allow consumers to easily identify products that are certified to meet more humane standards.



*Improved animal welfare conditions may also benefit the environment and public health.*

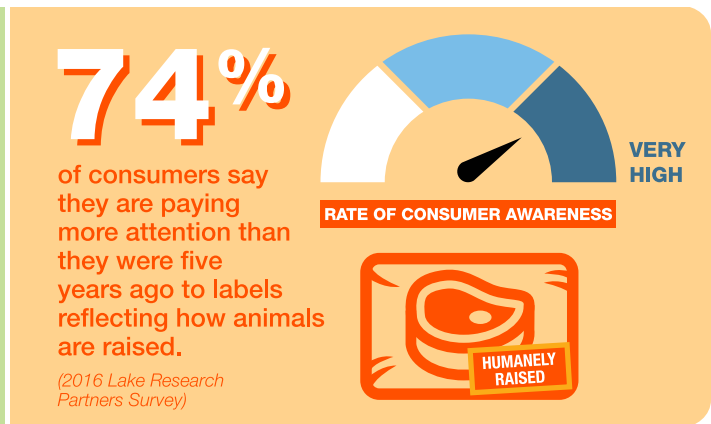
## Why Certify: The Business Benefit

Consumers are increasingly interested in, and willing to pay more for, animal products from farms using more humane animal husbandry practices. Accordingly, retailers, distributors, institutions, food service companies and restaurants are increasingly seeking to buy welfare-certified animal products. Meanwhile, major media outlets and consumer organizations are addressing farm animal welfare and helping consumers navigate food labels. These trends present farmers and ranchers with the opportunity to independently verify improved welfare for farm animals and tap into the fast-growing market for animal welfare-certified products.



### Consumers care

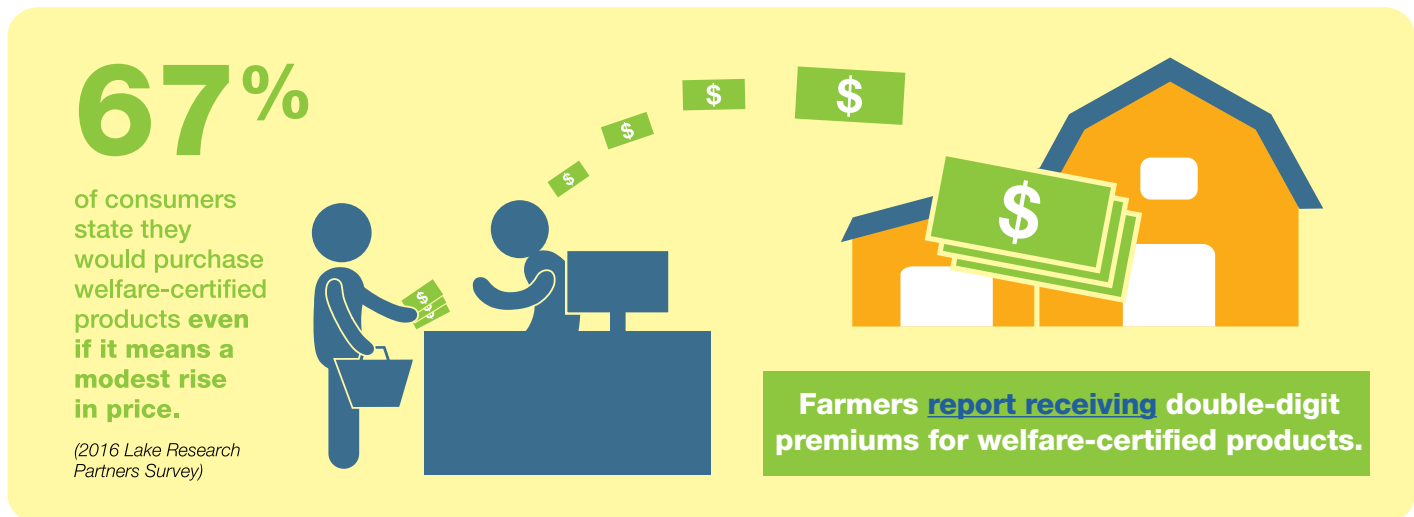
Consumers nationwide are increasingly interested in purchasing animal products that are certified as reflecting more humane animal husbandry practices. A 2018 survey found that 76% of consumers are concerned about the welfare of animals raised for food, with high levels of concern found across demographic groups (2018 Lake Research Partners survey). Concern remained high regardless of factors such as gender, race, age, education, household income, or political affiliation. Consumers who frequently purchase meat products are more concerned about animal welfare (83%) than those who purchase meat products less frequently (69%). Almost three-quarters of consumers (71%) report paying attention to food labels regarding how the animal was raised (2018 Lake Research Partners survey). 62% of consumers place a high degree of trust in certification by an independent animal welfare organization. Far fewer indicate trust in government, industry associations or self-reported business records (Animal Welfare Institute citing 2012 Just Bare Chicken survey).





## Premium Pricing

Consumers are willing to pay a premium for welfare-certified products that they know have been independently verified to a set of higher animal welfare standards. A large majority (81%) of the consumers in a 2018 survey who indicated that they would like more higher welfare options where they shop maintained that desire even if that meant a moderate increase in price (2018 Lake Research Partners survey). A 2015 survey found that millennial consumers are the most willing (73%) to pay more for sustainable or socially responsible products, and represent a fast-growing segment of the market (2015 Nielsen survey).



## Committed Purchasers

In response to consumer demand, a growing number of companies, retailers, food service companies, and institutions are committing to buying and selling welfare-certified animal products. Of particular note is the growing number of institutional purchasers who have committed to food sourcing policies that include humane sourcing requirements based on third-party animal welfare certifications. Through policies like the [Good Food Purchasing Program](#), the [Real Food Challenge](#), the [Leadership Circle](#), and Healthcare Without Harm's [Healthier Hospitals](#) initiative, public institutions ranging from individual hospitals and universities to entire counties and cities are committing to more sustainable, humane sourcing. All four of these responsible sourcing programs rely on third-party animal welfare certifications to ensure that humane sourcing requirements are met. There are currently over 550 hospitals across the country participating in the Healthier Hospitals program – too many to list in this guide.

## Good Food Purchasing Program Adopters (as of September 2019)

Austin Independent School District	Cook County, Illinois	Oakland Unified School District
Chicago Parks District	City of Boston	San Francisco Unified School District
Chicago Public Schools	City of Los Angeles	Washington, D.C. Public Schools
Cincinnati Public Schools	Los Angeles Unified School District	



**Real Food Challenge Participants** (as of September 2019)

Antioch College	The Hotchkiss School	University of Denver
Bard College	Johns Hopkins University	University of Maine system
California State University system	Lehigh University	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Case Western Reserve University	Lyndon State College	University of Montana
Clark University	Macalester College	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
College of the Atlantic	Marlboro College	University of Oklahoma
Cornell College	McDaniel College	University of Pittsburgh
Colorado Mountain College system	Middlebury College	University of Utah
Drew University	Northwestern University	University of Vermont
The Evergreen State College	Oberlin College	Warren Wilson College
Florida Gulf Coast University	Occidental College	Wesleyan University
Fort Lewis College	Saint Mary's College Notre Dame, IN	Western State Colorado University
George Washington University	Siena College	Western Washington University
Gonzaga University	Smith College	
Haverford College	Sterling College	
	Stonehill College	
	University of California system	

**Leadership Circle Members** (as of September 2019)

Airbnb	The Institute of American Indian Arts	Vassar College
Bon Appétit	The Northwest School	Villanova University Dining Services
Case Western Reserve University	Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens	Washington University in St. Louis
The Colburn School	The Thacher School	Willamette University
Dr. Bronner's	University of California Berkeley	
Harvard Business School		
Hazon		

## Trending Issue

As more individuals, institutions and companies examine where their food comes from and demand more of producers, third-party certification programs play a key role in ensuring transparency and enforcement of rigorous standards. Consumers are wary of empty, misleading marketing claims like “natural” and “free range” and are looking to source from producers that can verify their farming practices with meaningful animal welfare certifications. In addition to the ASPCA, major media and consumer organizations are educating consumers about the value of welfare-certified foods and helping them navigate humane labeling claims. The topic has been addressed in well-known publications including: *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *NPR (National Public Radio)*, *Chicago Tribune*, *National Geographic*, *Consumer Reports* and *Market Watch*. Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Humane, and GAP have consistently been recognized as standouts in the marketplace, with meaningful animal welfare standards and rigorous auditing schemes. Organizations that have recognized the three certifications include the ASPCA, Consumers Union/Consumer Reports, the US Healthful Food Council, Food Animal Concerns Trust, Farm Forward, the Center for Food Safety, School Food Focus, Compassion in World Farming and the Rodale Institute. The ASPCA’s consumer education campaign, [Shop With Your Heart](#), directs consumers to the three welfare certifications, using a [label guide](#) to educate shoppers about the differences between welfare certifications and unverified claims. The ASPCA also helps connect consumers to higher welfare food by publishing a [list of welfare-certified brands](#) and a [state-by-state directory of welfare-certified farms](#).



# FARM ANIMAL WELFARE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

## OVERVIEW

This guide covers three animal welfare certification programs:



**Certified Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) by A Greener World (AGW)**



**Certified Humane® (CH), a program of Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC)**



**Global Animal Partnership (GAP)**

First, this guide provides a [“Quick Compare”](#) chart highlighting key characteristics and distinctions between these three programs. Following this programmatic overview chart are multiple [“Standards Comparisons”](#) charts focusing on particular welfare standard distinctions between the three certifications. These charts are organized by species, including beef cattle, broiler chickens, dairy cattle, dairy goats, laying hens, pigs and turkeys\*. After these comparative overviews, [“In Depth”](#) sections for each certification program describe:

- Program history
- Standards
- Certification & audit processes
- Labeling rules
- Marketing support
- Costs

Additionally, this guide provides [case studies](#) illustrating farmers’ experiences with program participation, examples of different sources of [funding for transitioning](#) farms and an overview of federal product [labeling requirements](#).

*All information in this guide is derived from publicly available information from the sources listed on page 95.*

*\* These charts are not an exhaustive comparison of all the species covered by welfare certification programs. The chosen species are those that are most commonly reared throughout the United States. Animal welfare certifications also have standards that cover: bison, ducks, geese, meat goats, rabbits and sheep.*

## QUICK COMPARE

	CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW	CERTIFIED HUMANE®	GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP
<b>Farming System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pasture-based farms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enriched indoor and free-range/pasture-based farms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cage/crate-free, enriched indoor and free-range/pasture-based farms</li> </ul>
<b>Who Can Become Certified?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent family farms</li> <li>• Cooperatives of family farms</li> <li>• Producer groups</li> <li>• Marketing groups</li> <li>• Restaurants</li> <li>• Retailers</li> <li>• Distributors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farms (family or otherwise)</li> <li>• Producer groups</li> <li>• Pooled product operations*</li> <li>• Beef marketing groups</li> <li>• Product manufacturing operations</li> <li>• Restaurants</li> <li>• Retailers</li> <li>• Distributors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farms (family or otherwise)</li> <li>• Producer groups</li> <li>• Marketing groups</li> </ul>
<b>Animals Covered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bison</li> <li>• Beef cattle</li> <li>• Dairy cattle</li> <li>• Broiler chickens</li> <li>• Laying hens</li> <li>• Dairy goats</li> <li>• Meat goats</li> <li>• Pigs</li> <li>• Dairy sheep</li> <li>• Meat sheep</li> <li>• Turkeys</li> <li>• Ducks</li> <li>• Geese</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bison</li> <li>• Beef cattle</li> <li>• Dairy cattle</li> <li>• Broiler chickens</li> <li>• Laying hens</li> <li>• Dairy goats</li> <li>• Meat goats</li> <li>• Pigs</li> <li>• Dairy sheep</li> <li>• Meat sheep</li> <li>• Turkeys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bison</li> <li>• Beef cattle (no dairy cattle)</li> <li>• Broiler chickens</li> <li>• Laying hens and pullets</li> <li>• Meat goats (no dairy goats)</li> <li>• Pigs</li> <li>• Meat sheep (no dairy sheep)</li> <li>• Turkeys</li> </ul>
<b>Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Application fee:</b> \$100</li> <li>• <b>Audit fee:</b> \$90-\$120</li> <li>• <b>Certification fee:</b> None</li> <li>• <b>Note:</b> Discounts available for multiple certifications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Application fee:</b> \$75</li> <li>• <b>Audit/inspection fee:</b> \$700/day for farm inspection and \$800 per day for slaughter/processor inspection</li> <li>• <b>Certification fee:</b> Based on amount of product processed and/or numbers of certified animals or animal products sold and paid monthly. See Fee Schedule.</li> <li>• <b>Annual Certification Renewal fee:</b> \$75, \$125 or \$300 depending on postmark date</li> <li>• <b>Note:</b> Subsidized inspection fees for small operations. If two farms can be audited in the same day, those farms can split audit fee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Application fee:</b> None</li> <li>• <b>Audit/inspection fee:</b> \$1,650 flat fee</li> <li>• <b>Certification fee:</b> None</li> <li>• <b>Other:</b> For retail-ready labeled products with GAP certified meat ingredients, fee of \$0.05 per case</li> <li>• <b>Note:</b> Audit rates for multiple operations/locations potentially discounted</li> </ul>

\* "Pooled product operations" are HFAC-certified operations that buy products from individual production operations that are inspected by HFAC and meet HFAC standards but not certified individually; sell the pooled product under the PPO's name; and pay HFAC for the inspections and certification fees for the pooled product.



## QUICK COMPARE *continued*

	<b>CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW</b>	<b>CERTIFIED HUMANE®</b>	<b>GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP</b>
<b>Slaughter Inspection?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, Certified AWA farms must use AGW-inspected and certified slaughter facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, CH farms must use CH-inspected and certified slaughter facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No, GAP farms may use any slaughter facility so long as it has an existing third-party animal welfare audit that covers GAP’s core slaughter criteria and is from an approved third-party audit company.</li> </ul>
<b>Split Operations Certified?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, but not within 1 species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, including within 1 species. However, 1 species split operations must keep animals at different geographic locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, including within 1 species. 1 species split operations may be at same geographic location if animals are appropriately segregated and identified</li> </ul>
<b>Who Audits?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AGW employee(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CH independent contractor(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GAP-accredited independent verification companies</li> <li>• Within US: EarthClaims</li> </ul>
<b>Extent of Audit in Multi-farm Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All farms in supply chain of certified product every 12 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All farms in supply chain of certified product every 12 months, except with Producer Groups</li> <li>• Producer Groups may audit themselves using Internal Control Systems, as determined by HFAC, but HFAC still audits at least 10% of all producers every 12 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All farms in supply chain of certified product every 15 months (in order to see a farm in each season)</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, offers promotional support, technical assistance and marketing materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, offers promotional support, technical assistance and marketing materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, offers promotional support, technical assistance and marketing materials</li> </ul>

# STANDARDS COMPARISONS

## Beef Cattle Standards

	CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW (2018)	CERTIFIED HUMANE® (2014)	GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP (2009) No Tier 3 for Beef
<b>Outdoor Access</b>	Continuous pasture access required whenever the welfare of the animal would not otherwise be affected	Continual outdoor access required	<b>Tiers 1-2:</b> 2/3 of life on range/pasture when conditions permit <b>Tier 4:</b> 3/4 of life on range/pasture when conditions permit <b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> Continuously on range or pasture
<b>Feedlots</b>	Prohibited	Permitted, with requirements for space, dry mounds, sun shades and wind breaks and drainage slopes	<b>Tiers 1-2:</b> Permitted, with space and weather protection requirements <b>Tier 2:</b> Permitted, with requirements for space, shade and enrichment <b>Tiers 4-5+:</b> Prohibited
<b>Weaning</b>	Natural weaning recommended Calf must be ≥ 6mo, with average of 8mo	Average weaning age of calves must be ≥ 6mo average	<b>Tiers 1-4:</b> Calf must be ≥ 6mo <b>Tier 5:</b> Calf must be ≥ 8mo; fence line or 2-stage weaning required <b>Tier 5+:</b> Natural weaning required
<b>Physical Alterations</b>	<p><b>Dehorning/Disbudding</b> Dehorning <i>prohibited</i> Disbudding permitted using caustic paste ≤ 7d or by hot iron w/ anesthetic and analgesia ≤ 2mo</p> <p><b>Branding</b> All branding is <i>prohibited</i>, unless otherwise required by law, financial institutions or breed societies. If required, freeze branding should be used.</p> <p><b>Castration</b> ≤ 7d using rubber bands/rings or ≤ 2mo using scalpel/emasculator</p>	<p><b>Dehorning/Disbudding</b> Disbudding and dehorning permitted between 2-6mo using pain control. Disbudding permitted using caustic paste ≤ 7d or by hot iron w/ pain control ≤ 2mo</p> <p><b>Branding</b> Face branding <i>prohibited</i></p> <p><b>Castration</b> ≤ 7d using rubber band/ring or ≥ 7d using burdizzo clamp, emasculator or surgical castration w/ pain control</p>	<p><b>Dehorning/Disbudding</b> <b>All Tiers:</b> Dehorning &amp; routine tipping <i>prohibited</i> <b>Tiers 1-4:</b> Disbudding permitted &lt; 6wks, with pain control for hot iron. If disbudding is practiced, must have breeding program to select for polled cattle. <b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> Disbudding is <i>prohibited</i>.</p> <p><b>Branding</b> <b>All Tiers:</b> Face branding <i>prohibited</i> <b>Tiers 5 - 5+:</b> All branding <i>prohibited</i></p> <p><b>Castration</b> <b>Tier 1:</b> &lt; 6mo using rings, surgery or burdizzo; high tension bands may be used &gt; 3mo <b>Tiers 2-4:</b> &lt; 3mo using rings, surgery or burdizzo <b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> <i>Prohibited</i></p>
<b>Feeder Cattle</b>	Must come from Certified AWA farms	No restrictions on origin	<b>All Tiers:</b> Cannot come from sale or auction barns
<b>Slaughter Transport Duration</b>	8hr limit	8hr limit	<b>Tier 1:</b> 25hr limit <b>Tier 2-4:</b> 16hr limit <b>Tier 5:</b> 8hr limit <b>Tier 5+:</b> Transport prohibited

# Broiler Chicken Standards

	CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW (2018)	CERTIFIED HUMANE® (2014)	GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP (2017)
<b>Outdoor Access</b>	Continuous pasture access required whenever the welfare of the animal would not otherwise be affected	Not required; free-range and pasture standards require daily access to outdoors	<b>Tier 1-2:</b> Not required <b>Tier 3:</b> Continuous outdoor access <b>Tiers 4-5+:</b> Continuous pasture access
<b>Breed Health Requirements</b>	Must be able to thrive in pasture-based, free-range outdoor systems Max avg growth rate of 0.088 lb/day	Must select for high welfare traits and avoid genetic strains with undesirable traits	<b>All Tiers:</b> Must be chosen for good leg health and low levels of mortality <sup>1</sup> <b>Tiers 4-5+:</b> Must be chosen for ability to range and for good immune system <b>Tier 5-5+:</b> Must be able to perch throughout their lives <b>Tiers 1-3:</b> Max avg growth rate of 0.15 lb/day <b>Tier 4:</b> Max avg growth rate of 0.11 lb/day <b>Tier 5:</b> Max avg growth rate of 0.099 lb/day <b>Tier 5+:</b> Max avg growth rate of 0.077 lb/day
<b>Space Allowance</b>	Minimum of 4 ft <sup>2</sup> of outdoor range per bird (vegetative cover must be maintained) 0.67 ft <sup>2</sup> per bird indoors (2.0 ft <sup>2</sup> per bird if excluded from ranging and foraging area)	At least 2.5 acres of outdoor range per 1000 birds Indoor stocking density 6 lb/ft <sup>2</sup>	<sup>2</sup> <b>Tier 1-2:</b> 6.5 lb/ft <sup>2</sup> <b>Tier 3:</b> 6 lb/ft <sup>2</sup> <b>Tier 4:</b> 5.5 lb/ft <sup>2</sup> <b>Step 5-5+:</b> 5 lb/ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Air Quality</b>	Ammonia must be < 5 ppm	Ammonia should be < 10 ppm and must not exceed 25 ppm	<b>All Tiers:</b> Ammonia must be ≤ 20 ppm
<b>Natural Light</b>	Natural light required, ≥ 15 lux 8 hours continuous darkness in every 24	Natural light not required, ≥ 20 lux 6 hours continuous darkness in every 24	<b>All Tiers:</b> ≥ 20 lux <b>Tiers 1-2:</b> Natural light not required, 6 hours continuous darkness in every 24 <sup>3</sup> <b>Tiers 3-5+:</b> Natural light required, 8 hours continuous darkness in every 24
<b>Enrichment</b>	Ranging area provides foraging opportunities (denuded area ≤ 20%) If excluded from range during the daytime, vegetative material must be provided to enrich indoor housing. Raised perches or platforms must be provided in housing.	Requires at least one type (straw bales, perches, pecking objects), guidance given on quantity	<b>Tier 1:</b> Requires at least one type of enrichment, with one for every 1000 ft <sup>2</sup> (straw bales, scattered grains, brassicas, etc.) <b>Tiers 2-3:</b> Requires at least two types of enrichment, with one for every 750 ft <sup>2</sup> <b>Tier 4:</b> Requires at least two types of enrichment, with one for every 500 ft <sup>2</sup> <b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> Provided via pasture requirement (vegetated ground cover or added foraging materials)
<b>Slaughter Transport Duration</b>	4hr limit	10hr limit, including loading and unloading	<b>Tier 1-5:</b> 6hr limit, including catching and loading time <b>Tier 5+:</b> Transport prohibited

<sup>1</sup> GAP is currently reviewing its breed standards and will have new guidance by 2024.

<sup>2</sup> By 2020, 6.0 lb/ft<sup>2</sup> will be the max stocking density.

<sup>3</sup> By 2022, natural light will be required at Tier 2 and evidence of transition towards natural light will be required from 2019 onwards.

## Dairy Cattle Standards

	CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW (2018)	CERTIFIED HUMANE® (2014)
<b>Outdoor Access</b>	Continuous pasture access required whenever the welfare of the animal would not otherwise be affected	Regular outdoor access required, weather permitting
<b>Space Allowance</b>	Tethering prohibited; tie stalls permitted only for milking and/or feeding immediately pre or post-milking There must be 5% more stalls than cattle Space requirements based on weight class and range from 16 ft <sup>2</sup> of bedded lying area per 220 lb calf to 54 ft <sup>2</sup> of bedded lying area per 1100 lb cow Calves and cows must have additional loafing area when excluded from ranging and foraging area, ranging from 16 ft <sup>2</sup> per 220 lb calf to 40 ft <sup>2</sup> per 1100 lb cow	Tethering prohibited; tie stalls prohibited as a means of housing When using free stalls, group size must be < number of stalls and clean, dry, comfortable beds and a loafing area must be provided Lying area must provide sufficient room for all cattle to lie down together. In loose housing, there must be at least 60 ft <sup>2</sup> of space per mature cow.
<b>Housing of Calves</b>	Tethering <i>prohibited</i> Artificial rearing in individual pens permitted for ≤ 28d, before transitioning to forage Raising individual calves in isolation <i>prohibited</i>	Tethering <i>prohibited</i> Group housing of calves required once calves are 8 wks Outdoor exercise area must be provided, weather permitting
<b>Weaning</b>	Weaning ≥ 12 wks weaning recommended No weaning < 6 wks	No weaning < 5wks and weaning cannot coincide with transition from individual pens to group housing
<b>Physical Alterations</b>	<b>Dehorning/Disbudding</b> Dehorning <i>prohibited</i> Horn tipping permitted Disbudding permitted using caustic paste ≤ 7d or by hot iron w/ anesthetic and analgesia ≤ 2mo Disbudding > 2mo <i>prohibited</i> <b>Tail Docking</b> Tail docking <i>prohibited</i> <b>Marking</b> Branding <i>prohibited</i> , unless otherwise required by law, financial institutions or breed societies If required, freeze branding should be used Ear notching permitted, but must be carried out using a notching tool, not a knife <b>Castration</b> Chemical castration <i>prohibited</i> ≤ 7d using rubber bands/rings or ≤ 2mo using scalpel/burdizzo	<b>Dehorning/Disbudding</b> Disbudding and dehorning permitted. Must use pain control. Disbudding permitted using caustic paste ≤ 7d or by hot iron ≤ 3wks. Dehorning must not be routine and can only be performed by a veterinarian. <b>Tail Docking</b> Tail docking <i>prohibited</i> <b>Marking</b> Face branding and ear notching <i>prohibited</i> <b>Castration</b> ≤ 7d using rubber band/ring or ≤ 6mo using other banding methods, burdizzo clamp, emasculator or surgical castration w/ pain control
<b>Bull Calves</b>	Euthanasia of healthy bull calves prohibited Cannot be sold to farms that have confinement, crated or slatted veal systems	On-farm euthanasia of healthy bull calves prohibited No restrictions on sale
<b>Slaughter Transport Duration</b>	8hr limit 3hr limit for calves within 7d of weaning	8hr limit



## Dairy Goats Standards

	CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW (2018)	CERTIFIED HUMANE® (2014)
<b>Outdoor Access</b>	Continuous access to pasture or browse area (taller shrubs) required whenever the welfare of the animal would not otherwise be negatively affected	Must have free, voluntary access to pasture or an outdoor exercise area when climatic and geographic conditions allow
<b>Space Allowance</b>	Space requirements based on weight class and range from 4 ft <sup>2</sup> of bedded lying area per 44 lb goat to 16 ft <sup>2</sup> per 176+ lb goat. Goats with one kid require 22 ft <sup>2</sup> ; +4 ft <sup>2</sup> for each additional kid. Goats and kids must have additional loafing area when excluded from ranging and foraging area, ranging from 5.4 ft <sup>2</sup> per 44 lb goat to 27 ft <sup>2</sup> per 176+ lb goat. Goats with one kid require 33 ft <sup>2</sup> ; +5.4 ft <sup>2</sup> for each additional kid.	Total floor space for goat housing must be > 1.5 times the minimum lying area per goat Lying areas: Adult Does up to 230 lb: 18 ft <sup>2</sup> Kids up to 75 lb (~5mo): 8-10 ft <sup>2</sup> Bucks up to 265 lb: 30-40 ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Housing of Kids</b>	Kidding pens are permitted for does and newborn kids for up to 72h. If used, minimum size is 25 ft <sup>2</sup> . Artificially reared kids must be kept in groups; Recommended that kids are reared by their mothers	Housing must include a dry bed and effective ventilation at all times
<b>Weaning</b>	No weaning < 6wks; natural weaning recommended Separation of kids must be designed to cause as little stress as possible and separated kids and mothers must be kept either in adjacent pens or completely out of sight/hearing of each other	No weaning < 6wks Kids must have access to dry feed (e.g., creep feed, hay, grass) from 2wks to encourage proper rumen development
<b>Physical Alterations</b>	<b>Dehorning/Disbudding</b> Dehorning and disbudding with caustic paste <i>prohibited</i> Disbudding permitted < 10d, using hot iron with pre- and post-treatment anesthetic and analgesic <b>Castration</b> Immunocastration and other chemical castration <i>prohibited</i> Castration permitted < 7d using rubber ring, scalpel, emasculator, or Burdizzo, but only if breeding cannot be controlled through management	<b>Dehorning/Disbudding</b> Dehorning with rubber rings and disbudding with cautery paste <i>prohibited</i> Disbudding permitted only when necessary, between 3 and 10d <b>Castration</b> Permitted between 24hr and 7d. Surgical castration preferred; rubber rings permitted. If castrated between 1-4wks, must be performed by veterinarian.
<b>Slaughter Transport Duration</b>	8hr limit 3hr limit for kids within 7d of weaning	8hr limit

## Laying Hen Standards

	CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW (2018)	CERTIFIED HUMANE® (2018)	GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP (2017) <sup>4</sup>
<b>Outdoor Access</b>	Continuous daytime ranging and foraging area access required for all hens ≥ 4wks, unless climatic conditions pose risk to welfare	Not required; free-range and pasture standards require outdoor access	<p><b>Tiers 1-2:</b> Not required</p> <p><b>Tiers 3-4:</b> Pasture access for ≥ 183d per laying cycle for at least 4 daylight hrs per day</p> <p><b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> Pasture access at least 6 daylight hrs per day; Removal from pasture for extreme weather permitted if not longer than 5 consecutive days and 25 days per year total</p>
<b>Space Allowance</b>	Minimum of 4 ft <sup>2</sup> of range per hen (vegetative cover must be maintained) 1.8 ft <sup>2</sup> per hen indoors (5.8 ft <sup>2</sup> when excluded from ranging and foraging area)	<p><b>Aviary:</b> 1.0 ft<sup>2</sup> per hen</p> <p><b>Floor + Slats:</b> 1.2 ft<sup>2</sup> per hen</p> <p><b>Floor:</b> 1.5 ft<sup>2</sup> per hen</p> <p><b>Mobile Pasture Housing:</b> 1 ft<sup>2</sup> indoors</p>	<p><b>All Tiers:</b> 1.5 ft<sup>2</sup> per hen if indoors</p> <p><b>Tiers 3-5+:</b> 5 ft<sup>2</sup> per hen on pasture</p>
<b>Air Quality</b>	Ammonia must be < 5 ppm	Ammonia should be < 10 ppm and must not exceed 25 ppm	<b>All Tiers:</b> Ammonia must be < 20 ppm
<b>Natural Light</b>	Natural light required indoors ≥ 15 lux 8hr continuous darkness in every 24	Natural light not required Lux allowing hens to see and be inspected 6hr continuous darkness in every 24	<p><b>All Tiers:</b> Indoors ≥ 20 lux</p> <p><b>Tiers 1-2:</b> Natural light not required; 6 hrs continuous darkness in every 24</p> <p><b>Tiers 3-5+:</b> Natural light required; 8 hrs continuous darkness in every 24</p>
<b>Enrichment</b>	1 nest box for every 5 hens or 20 in <sup>2</sup> of nest space per hen 7 in of perch space per hen Hens must be able to dustbathe Ranging area must provide foraging opportunities (denuded area ≤ 20%). If excluded from range during daytime, vegetative material must be provided to enrich indoor housing.	9 ft <sup>2</sup> of nest space per 100 hens 6 in of perch space per hen Hens must be able to dustbathe, ≥ 15% floor space must have litter substrate	<p><b>All Tiers:</b> 1 nest box for every 6 hens or 1 ft<sup>2</sup> of communal nesting space for every 10 hens; 5 in of perch space per hen</p> <p><b>Tier 1:</b> No enrichment requirement</p> <p><b>Tier 2:</b> Must have 1 indoor enrichment for every 1000 hens</p> <p><b>Tier 3:</b> Must have 2 types of indoor enrichment for every 750 hens</p> <p><b>Tier 4:</b> Must have 2 types of indoor enrichment for every 500 hens</p> <p><b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> Pasture access provides enrichment</p>
<b>Physical Alterations</b>	Break trimming and de-beaking <i>prohibited</i>	De-beaking <i>prohibited</i> . Beak trimming permitted ≤ 10d	<p><b>All Tiers:</b> De-beaking <i>prohibited</i></p> <p><b>Tiers 1-3:</b> If pullets have trimmed/conditioned beaks, it must have been done using infrared treatment to remove no more than 1/3 of the beak at one day old</p> <p><b>Tiers 4-5+:</b> Pullets must not have trimmed/conditioned beaks</p>
<b>Slaughter Transport Duration</b>	4hr limit	10hr limit, including loading and unloading	<p><b>Tiers 1-5:</b> No limit beyond federal requirements (GAP is currently exploring potential standards)</p> <p><b>Tier 5+:</b> Transport <i>prohibited</i></p>

<sup>4</sup> GAP requires all producers certified at Tiers 2 and above to also certify their pullets to GAP's pullet standards.

## Pig Standards

	CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW (2015)	CERTIFIED HUMANE® (2013)	GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP (2015)
Outdoor Access	Continuous ranging and foraging access required	Not required	<p><b>Tiers 1-2:</b> Not required</p> <p><b>Tier 3:</b> Access to outdoor area</p> <p><b>Tier 4:</b> Access to pasture</p> <p><b>Tier 5-5+:</b> Continuous access to pasture</p>
Space Allowance	<p><b>Gestating Sows</b> 32 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig bedded lying area, plus 32 ft<sup>2</sup> exercise area per pig when excluded from ranging and foraging area</p> <p><b>Farrowing Sows</b> 64 ft<sup>2</sup> per sow bedded lying area, plus 48 ft<sup>2</sup> exercise area per pig when excluded from ranging and foraging area</p> <p><b>Grower Pigs</b> Depends on weight class and ranges from 6.5 ft<sup>2</sup> lying area per 66 lb pig to 14 ft<sup>2</sup> lying area per 242 lb pig. Pigs must have an additional exercise area when excluded from ranging and foraging area, ranging from 4.5 ft<sup>2</sup> per 66 lb pig to 11 ft<sup>2</sup> per 242 lb pig.</p>	<p><b>Gestating Sows</b> Lying area must be at least equal to the square of the length of the pig (~16 ft<sup>2</sup>) Minimum total floor space of 37.6 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig for mature sows and 28.9 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig for first and second parity animals</p> <p><b>Farrowing Sows</b> Pen must have at least 48 ft<sup>2</sup></p> <p><b>Grower Pigs</b> Depends on weight class and ranges from 2.9 ft<sup>2</sup> lying area per 22 lb pig to 8.04 ft<sup>2</sup> lying area per 264+ lb pig. Total floor space including lying area ranges from 4.5 ft<sup>2</sup> per 22 lb pig to 12 ft<sup>2</sup> per 264+ lb pig.</p>	<p><b>Gestating Sows</b> <b>Tiers 1-2:</b> 32 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig <b>Tier 3:</b> 56 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig (20 ft<sup>2</sup> of outdoor space) <b>Tier 4:</b> If removed from pasture, 40 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig (20 ft<sup>2</sup> of outdoor space) <b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> On pasture continuously; only removed for emergencies. If removed, must have 16 ft<sup>2</sup> of lying space.</p> <p><b>Farrowing Sows</b> <b>All Tiers:</b> Pen must have 48 ft<sup>2</sup> of farrowing space</p> <p><b>Grower Pigs</b> <b>Tier 1:</b> 7 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig if between 56 and 112 lb; 10 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig if &gt; 112 lb <b>Tier 2:</b> 7 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig if between 56 and 112 lb; 12 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig if &gt; 112 lb <b>Tier 3:</b> 7 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig if between 56 and 112 lb; 18 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig if &gt; 112 lb (6 ft<sup>2</sup> of which must be outdoor space) <b>Tiers 4-5+:</b> 5.25 ft<sup>2</sup> of lying space per pig if between 56 and 112 lb; 9 ft<sup>2</sup> of lying space per pig if &gt; 112 lb If Tier 4 pigs are removed from pasture, must have 1.75 ft<sup>2</sup> of exercise, feeding and digging area per pig outdoors if between 56 and 112 lb; 9 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig if &gt; 112 lb (6 ft<sup>2</sup> of which must be outdoor space)</p>
Enrichment	Must have continuous access to forage either outside on range or provided as both feed and foraging material when excluded from range	Must have materials for rooting and manipulating (e.g. straw/sawdust/woodchips, rope)	<p><b>Tier 1:</b> Not required other than bedding</p> <p><b>Tiers 2-4:</b> Must have enrichment materials (e.g. straw/hay/woodchips, rope)</p> <p><b>Tier 4:</b> ≥ 25% of occupied pasture covered with vegetation</p> <p><b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> ≥ 50% of occupied pasture covered with vegetation</p>
Physical Alterations	<p><b>Docking/Clipping</b> Tail docking and teeth clipping <i>prohibited</i></p> <p><b>Ear notching</b> Ear notching carried out with a knife <i>prohibited</i>, but permitted if using notching tools</p> <p><b>Castration</b> Castration ≤ 7d</p>	<p><b>Docking/Clipping</b> Teeth clipping permitted (during first 48hr)</p> <p>Routine tail docking <i>prohibited</i>, but permitted on case-by-case basis if recommended by vet</p> <p><b>Ear notching</b> Ear notching <i>prohibited</i></p> <p><b>Castration</b> Castration ≤ 7d</p>	<p><b>Docking/Clipping</b> <b>All Tiers:</b> Tail docking and teeth clipping <i>prohibited</i></p> <p><b>Ear Notching</b> <b>Tiers 1-4:</b> Ear notching permitted &lt; 10d with notch tools <b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> Ear notching <i>prohibited</i></p> <p><b>Castration</b> <b>Tier 1-4:</b> Castration ≤ 10d <b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> Castration <i>prohibited</i></p>
Slaughter Transport Duration	8hr limit	8hr limit	<p><b>Tiers 1-5:</b> 16hr limit</p> <p><b>Tier 5+:</b> Transport <i>prohibited</i></p>

## Turkey Standards

	CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED by AGW (2018)	CERTIFIED HUMANE® (2014)	GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP (2019)
Outdoor Access	Continuous daytime ranging and foraging access required for birds > 4wks whenever climatic conditions do not pose a risk to welfare	Not required; free-range systems require daily access to outdoors	<p><b>Tiers 1-2:</b> Not required</p> <p><b>Tier 3:</b> Continuous outdoor access</p> <p><b>Tiers 4-5+:</b> Continuous pasture access</p> <p><b>Tiers 5-5+:</b> Can only be removed from pasture during extreme weather</p>
Breed Health Requirements	Breed must be chosen with consideration for their ability to thrive in a pasture-based, free-range outdoor system Growth rate may not exceed 0.15 lb/day for hens and 0.19 lb/day for toms	Avoid genetic strains with undesirable traits, particularly aggressiveness, broodiness, bone fragility, hysteria, cannibalism and tendency to feather peck No max avg growth rate	<p><b>All Tiers:</b> Breed must be chosen for good leg health and low mortality</p> <p><b>Tiers 1-2:</b> Max avg growth rate &lt; 0.35 lb/day for toms and &lt; 0.213 lb/day for hens</p> <p><b>Tiers 3-4:</b> Max avg growth rate &lt; 0.3 lb/day for toms and &lt; 0.192 lb/day for hens</p> <p><b>Tier 5:</b> Max avg growth rate &lt; 0.215 lb/day for toms and &lt; 0.13 lb/day for hens</p> <p><b>Tier 5+:</b> Max avg growth rate &lt; 0.143 lb/day for toms and &lt; 0.083 lb/day for hens</p>
Space Allowance	Minimum of 20 ft <sup>2</sup> of range per bird with minimum pen size of 18x10 ft Minimum of 5 ft <sup>2</sup> of indoor space per bird (Plus 11 ft <sup>2</sup> per bird when excluded from ranging and foraging area)	Must not exceed 7.5 lb/ft <sup>2</sup> , which equates to 4ft <sup>2</sup> per tom and 5ft <sup>2</sup> per heavy tom	<p><b>Tier 1:</b> 10 lb/ft<sup>2</sup></p> <p><b>Tier 2:</b> 7.5 lb/ft<sup>2</sup></p> <p><b>Tier 3:</b> 6.5 lb/ft<sup>2</sup></p> <p><b>Tiers 4-5+:</b> 6 lb/ft<sup>2</sup></p>
Air Quality	Ammonia must be < 5 ppm	Ammonia should be < 10 ppm and must not exceed 25 ppm	<b>All Tiers:</b> Ammonia must be ≤ 15 ppm
Natural Light	Natural light required, must be kept at average ≥ 20 lux Daylight cannot be extended > 16hr	Natural light not required, at least ½ floor area must be at 20 lux, with minimum 5 lux 8hr continuous darkness in every 24	<p><b>Tiers 1-2:</b> Natural light not required, ≥ 20 lux 6 hours continuous darkness in every 24</p> <p><b>Tiers 3-5+:</b> Natural light required, ≥ 50 lux 8 hours continuous darkness in every 24</p>
Enrichment	Ranging area provides foraging opportunities (denuded area ≤20%). If excluded from range, vegetative material must be provided to enrich indoor housing.	Required when birds > 10d (straw bales, perches, pecking objects). No specific number of enrichments required.	<p><b>Tier 1:</b> Not required</p> <p><b>Tiers 2-4:</b> For houses &lt; 1000ft<sup>2</sup>, must have at least two enrichments; For houses &gt; 1000ft<sup>2</sup>, must be min of one enrichment for every 1,000ft<sup>2</sup></p> <p><b>Tier 2:</b> Must have one type of enrichment (straw bales, scattered grains, brassicas, etc.)</p> <p><b>Tiers 3-4:</b> Must have two types of enrichment</p> <p><b>Steps 5-5+:</b> Provided via pasture requirement (vegetated ground cover or added foraging materials) Perches required.</p>
Physical Alterations	All alterations, including toe clipping and beak-trimming, <i>prohibited</i>	Toe clipping <i>prohibited</i> Beak-trimming permitted ≤ 10d	<p><b>Toe Clipping</b></p> <p><b>All Tiers:</b> <i>Prohibited</i></p> <p><b>Beak-Trimming</b></p> <p><b>Tier 1-3:</b> Permitted at hatchery using infra-red</p> <p><b>Tier 4-5+:</b> <i>Prohibited</i></p>
Slaughter Transport Duration	4hr limit	10hr limit, including loading and unloading	From when loading begins to when transport arrives at its destination: <p><b>Tiers 1-3:</b> 8hr limit</p> <p><b>Tiers 4-5:</b> 4hr limit</p> <p><b>Tier 5+:</b> Transport prohibited</p>



## In Depth: Certified Animal Welfare Approved by A Greener World



### AWA Case Studies

This section provides background on Certified Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) by A Greener World (AGW) and an overview of AGW's:

- Standards
- Certification process
- Audit process
- Label use guidelines
- Marketing support
- Costs

### **AWA Background**

**Mission.** AWA is a program of A Greener World (AGW) whose goal is to improve farm animal welfare by certifying family farmers who adhere to what AGW describes as “the highest animal welfare and environmental standards.” According to AGW, “[t]he way we raise our animals, the nutritional quality of the meat, milk and eggs they produce, and the impact of farming systems on the environment, are all intrinsically linked.” AGW describes itself as promoting animal welfare, the environment and public health.

**History.** The Animal Welfare Institute created AWA in 2006. In 2014, AGW took over responsibility for the program. AGW is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which also manages the certifications Certified Grassfed by AGW and Certified Non-GMO. Notably, AWA is the only animal welfare certification program accredited as meeting the requirements of the International Organization for Standardization’s ISO/IEC 17065, which sets forth requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.



**For Family Farmers.** AGW certifies and audits independent family farmers and cooperatives and producer groups of family farmers. It also certifies marketing groups, distributors, retailers and restaurants. AGW defines a “cooperative” as “a group of farmers who work together and market all their produce under one name or brand, mutually benefiting from the profits.” It defines a “producer group” as “a group of farmers who work together but market some of their produce independently of other farmers in the group.”

**Standards.** According to AGW, “[t]he basic premise of all the standards is that animals must be able to behave naturally and be in a state of physical and psychological well-being.” In turn, as discussed in detail below, AWA’s standards cover birth through slaughter and require that animals have continuous access to pasture or range.

**Animals covered.** AWA’s standards cover the following animals:

- Bison
- Beef and dairy cows
- Broiler chickens
- Laying hens
- Meat and dairy goats
- Pigs
- Meat and dairy sheep
- Turkeys
- Ducks
- Geese



**Where Sold.** Certified AWA products can be found for sale on farms and at farmers markets, restaurants and in retail stores. See [AWA Product Search](#) for more information.

**Looking Forward.** In addition to Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW, A Greener World also offers Certified Grassfed by AGW and Certified Non-GMO by AGW labels, optional additional accreditations for AWA farmers. Certified Grassfed certified that ruminant animals are fed a 100% grass and forage diet and Certified Non-GMO certifies that food products are produced without the use of genetically engineered feed, supplements or ingredients. These certifications can be audited during the AWA visit, which can add value to farm products while minimizing time spent on auditing. A Greener World’s labels continue to achieve high regard among consumers, with a recent Hartman Group survey finding that AWA has the highest impact on consumer purchasing of any food label.

# AWA STANDARDS

Each certification program covered in this guide requires compliance with standards covering various aspects of farm animal husbandry. Below is an overview of how AGW develops its standards; which stages of life AWA's standards cover; and AWA's record-keeping requirements. To review all AWA standards, visit [animalwelfareapproved.us](http://animalwelfareapproved.us).

## Standards Development

AGW states that it developed its standards in collaboration with scientists, farmers and farm animal welfare experts from around the world. A Standards Board reviews AWA's standards annually and periodically revises them. For more information on the standards development process, read the AWA Policy Manual (Part 1.14).

## Stages of Life Covered

AWA's standards cover birth through death, including breeding, hatching, weaning, on farm life, transport and slaughter. While all the standards are worth reading, AWA's breeding and transport/slaughter standards are key to address right off the bat. Producers must ensure that they have a compliant source for their animals and either find a slaughterhouse that's already Certified AWA, or work with their current slaughterhouse to get certified.

## Record-Keeping Requirements

AWA's record-keeping requirements are in place to allow auditors to review what has occurred on the farm in between audits. Farmers are allowed one year from their initial audit to get all of their records and farm plans into place. Exact requirements vary slightly between species, but AWA generally requires:

### A FARM PLAN REGARDING:

- Compliance with AWA standards
- Feeding and water
- Animal health management strategy
- Management of pasture
- Emergency procedures (natural disaster, etc.)
- Transportation

### A RECORD OF:

- Traceability of animals, from birth to slaughter
- Any sale or transfer of certified animals or products
- What you're feeding the animals and how much
- Any close confinement of animals
- Any medication and treatment of animals and the reason for treatment
- Any mortality, morbidity and culling (including reason if known)

### Note: Applications for Derogation

A farm or group of farms may apply through a Derogation Request Form to carry out a practice or use a substance that AWA standards generally do not permit. According to AGW, derogation is only granted in exceptional cases when the principles of the program are still met even if an individual standard is not.



Most of AWA's record-keeping requirements include things many farmers will already be doing, such as recording the dates of animal births, tracking medication use, and noting all animal sales or transfers. In addition to providing a record for AGW auditors to review, record-keeping helps producers spot trends on their farms and operate their businesses effectively by measuring key outcomes. AGW does not require records to be kept in any specific way. Farmers are welcome to keep their records the old-fashioned way, putting pen to paper in notebooks, logs or calendars. Similarly, AGW happily accepts Excel sheets and Word documents.

AWA's farm plans generally require more effort to put together than the daily record-keeping requirements but serve an important purpose on any farm. The various required plans function as an operating manual for the farm, covering everything from feeding plans and pasture rotation to biosecurity and what to do in inclement weather. AGW offers multiple [template plans](#) for farms to build off of, including species specific health plans, pasture, emergency and transport plans.





## AWA CERTIFICATION PROCESS

AGW certifies independent farmers, cooperatives and producer groups of family farmers, and retailers, distributors and restaurants. The certification process described below applies to independent farms. Information about the certification processes for other entities can be found on the next two pages, and in further detail in the AWA Policy Manual.

### STEP ONE

#### Review AWA Standards & Policies

- Read the AWA standards for the species you wish to certify and the AWA Policy Manual to confirm your farm will comply with relevant standards and policies.
- Confirm that your slaughter facilities are agreeable to being inspected for compliance by an AGW Slaughter Specialist.

### STEP TWO

#### Submit Application

- Submit an application form and signed affidavit to AGW online or by mail.
- **Note:** AGW treats all information supplied by applicants, approved farms, slaughter facilities, or other businesses and groups as confidential.

### STEP THREE

#### Schedule & Facilitate an Audit

- After you apply, an AGW Eligibility Coordinator will contact you to discuss certification. An AGW auditor will then contact you to schedule a visit to your operation to review your practices, records, facilities and animals. To learn more about the audit process, [click here](#).
- **Note:** AGW treats observations and information collected during the course of the audit as confidential.

### STEP FOUR

#### Obtain Certification & Use Label

- The AGW Approvals Board will make a certification determination.
- You will only receive certification if you are 100% compliant with AWA standards.
- Certification is valid for a maximum of 18 months. You may use the AWA label/seal on your products for 18 months from certification notification.
- **Note:** You may appeal a certification decision or enter a dispute resolution process for other program concerns.

### STEP FIVE

#### Recertification & Changes to Certification

- AGW conducts re-certification audits of member farms annually, with a maximum of 18 months between inspections. AGW will notify you of the date on which your next audit is scheduled.
- You are not required to submit an annual application unless there has been a change in the scope of your operation since your last application, in which case you would submit an amended application.
- Once certified, you must inform AGW immediately of any actions or material changes that could affect your ability to comply with the AWA standards, including if you change slaughter plants or start or stop using on-farm slaughter.
- **Note:** Your certification may be suspended or terminated for nonconformities, as set forth in the AWA Policy Manual (Part 3.4).

# AWA SLAUGHTER CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Certified AWA farms must use slaughter facilities that have been audited by AGW, so it's beneficial for farmers and slaughter employees alike to understand the slaughter certification process. The certification process described below applies to processing and slaughter facilities.

## STEP ONE

### Review AWA Standards & Policies

- Read the AWA standards for slaughter and processing facilities to confirm that your facility will comply with relevant standards and policies.

## STEP TWO

### Schedule & Facilitate an Audit

- An AGW slaughter plant specialist will contact you to schedule a visit.
- **Note:** The farmer must give the slaughter plant specialist at least one month notice prior to the planned slaughter date to ensure the review process is carried out. Three month notice is recommended.

## STEP THREE

### Review Period

- If the slaughter plant specialist has any concerns about the suitability of the plant, they will supply a list of corrections.
- When the specialist is satisfied that the facility complies with AWA guidelines, they will confirm with the certification.

## STEP FOUR

### Obtain Certification & Use Label

- The AGW Approvals Board will make a certification determination and issue a letter confirming the facility's certification status.
- Approved facilities may use the logo along with the appropriate language on the facility's website/information provided to farmers.

## STEP FIVE

### Recertification & Changes to Certification

- AGW conducts recertification audits of slaughter facilities annually, with a maximum of 18 months between inspections. AGW will notify you of the date on which your next audit is scheduled.
- You are not required to submit an annual application unless there has been a change in the scope of your facility since your last application.
- Once certified, you must inform AGW immediately of any actions or material changes that could affect your ability to comply with AWA standards.
- **Note:** Your certification may be suspended or terminated for nonconformities, as set forth in the AWA Policy Manual (Part 3.4.5)

## AWA Certification Process for Cooperatives/Producer Groups

The certification process described below applies to producer groups and cooperatives. AGW defines a producer group as “a group of farmers who work together but market some of their produce independently” and defines a cooperative as “a group of farmers who work together and market all their produce under one name or brand, mutually benefitting from the profits.” In cooperatives, one farmer is designated the liaison to AGW, while all the farmers in a producer group must communicate with the certification program.

**Cooperatives.** In a cooperative, only one person needs to submit an application, providing details about the entire group. The AGW Eligibility Coordinator then allocates the audits and connects with the liaison to schedule audits. The liaison will work to complete any corrective actions with farmers as necessary to obtain certification. The results of the audit will be shared with the farmer and the liaison. If any individual farms are suspended or require corrective action after certification, that farm must be excluded from the cooperative’s AWA branded supply until the correction is made, or the entire cooperative will lose its status. The liaison is responsible for keeping adequate records for the entire cooperative. (An AGW auditor should be able to trace the source of all the products being sold under the AWA label by the cooperative.)

**Producer Groups.** In a producer group, each farmer must submit an application and coordinate an audit for their farm. The results of the audit will only be shared with the farmer. (Producer groups may consent in advance to sharing individual audit results with the group.) AGW will work with individual farmers in the producer group to address any non-compliances before issuing the certification. Farmers are required to keep their own records as required by AWA standards.



## AWA AUDIT PROCESS



**Step 1  
Facilities**



**Step 2  
Animals**



**Step 3  
Records**

AGW conducts audits of facilities, animals and records to assess and potentially certify your operation's conformance with AWA standards and policies.

### When Are Audits Required?

- **Initially:** AGW conducts an audit as part of the initial application process.
- **Annually:** After certification, AGW conducts audits annually (with a maximum of 18 months between inspections) as a part of certification maintenance.
- **Unannounced:** These may be triggered by major changes in how the farm operates, a complaint against a farm or to verify that a required change has been made.
- **For Program Assessment:** Periodically, AGW selects random member farms to audit (also unannounced) in order to assess the effectiveness and consistency of the AGW auditing program, as well as the performance of its auditors. Random audits may cover a full farm or just a particular species or management practice.

### Who Conducts Audits?

- **Generally:** AGW employs approximately 20 auditors. Auditors are assigned based on availability, geographic location, knowledge and expertise.
- **Background & Training:** AGW auditors must have an agricultural science degree and be veterinarians or farmers with at least five years' experience in pasture-based management or a similar qualification. All auditors are required to attend a "new auditor training." After the initial training, each auditor is accompanied by a more experienced auditor during at least his or her first three audits. Every auditor is also required to attend yearly training programs. AGW Slaughter Specialists also have access to trainings provided by experts at Bristol University, UK.
- **Impartiality:** All AGW staff, auditors and board members are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest and adhere to the AGW Conflict of Interest Policy. Further, an auditor is prohibited from conducting three consecutive audits on the same farm.
- **Management Reviews:** In order to maintain the program's compliance with ISO/IEC 17065 (which sets forth requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services), AGW conducts annual management reviews to evaluate the effectiveness of the auditing program as well as other aspects of the AGW quality management system.



## What Happens During an Audit?

The audit process varies somewhat depending on the type of entity being audited. However, all audits are based upon AWA standards and ISO/IEC 17065, if applicable. (For information about the audit and certification process for specific kinds of business entities, review the AWA Policy Manual Parts 2 & 3.) Generally, the audit process involves the following steps:

### Pre-audit: *Off-farm Activity*

- **First Contact.** An AGW auditor will contact you to schedule the audit visit. The auditor will ask questions to confirm the scope of the farm activity and the species to be audited and explain and answer questions about the audit process.



### Audit Part 1: *On-farm Activity*

- **Discussion.** The auditor will meet with farm managers and employees to discuss their roles and responsibilities as well as their knowledge of key AWA requirements.
- **Observation of Procedures, Facilities, Animals.** The audit will observe the farm facilities and practices involved in housing the farm animals (if applicable) and the storage of feed and medicines. The auditor may also arrange to inspect storage and in-store handling of products. The auditor will also observe the animals, their physical condition and all of the practices involved in raising them. The auditor will carry out some welfare outcome measurements – e.g. body condition score, lameness, dirtiness, as part of the audit. The auditor may also arrange to inspect transport of livestock.
- **Review of Records.** The auditor reviews records related to the source of all meat and livestock products, the management of the farm business and other relevant AWA standards (see record requirements above under “AWA Standards”).
- **Exit Interview.** At the end of the audit, the auditor will meet with you to summarize his or her findings and provide you with an overview of the observed nonconformances, if any. During this meeting, you have the opportunity to provide corrections, clarifications and additional information.
- **Overall Length.** The length of the audit varies depending on the size and complexity of the operation. According to AGW, most audits take half a day to one day. Farmers are required to be present and available for the duration of the audit.

## Audit Part 2: Slaughter Facility

AWA is a birth through slaughter program, and production and slaughter standards should be read in conjunction. For an animal product to be Certified AWA, the accredited animal must be slaughtered in a facility that has undertaken the AWA review process and met AWA's published slaughter standards. A Greener World states that the slaughter standards are rooted in science and represent achievable best practice, applying both to slaughter on the farm or in a separate plant. For example:

### For red meat species, slaughter facilities must:

- Prohibit the use of electrical prods except as a last resort in the case of risk to health and safety of animals or employees
- Unload animals from transport vehicles within one hour of their arrival
- Render animals insensible on the first stun attempt, and re-stun immediately if any sign of sensibility is observed at any time after stunning

### For poultry species, slaughter facilities must:

- Unload birds individually within one hour of the transport vehicle's arrival
- Slaughter birds within two hours of arrival at the plant
- Ensure that chickens are not inverted for more than 60 seconds before they are stunned/slaughtered (120 seconds for turkeys)
- Ensure that, if used, shackle lines not exceed 35 birds per minute

AWA slaughter standards also have requirements for transport to slaughter, both in terms of method and duration. For poultry, the maximum period of transport allowed is 4 hours, and for all other species the maximum is 8 hours. The slaughter facility review entails the same general steps as a farm audit, described above.

- **Process for a Separate Slaughter Plant:** If your slaughter facility is not on your farm, you must identify to AGW the slaughter facility you wish to use, discuss the AWA program with the facility and help to coordinate the plant inspection by the AGW Slaughter Plant Specialist (SPS). If the slaughter is not regularly conducted throughout the year, the SPS conducting the inspection must be provided with at least one month (three months is preferred) of notice prior to the planned slaughter. During separate slaughter facility audits, an AGW SPS reviews a plant's handling, stunning and slaughter practices, examining holding pens, alleyways, stunboxes and stunning equipment. The SPS will also review the facility's humane handling training requirements and operating procedures, which must be clearly recorded. After inspecting the facilities, the SPS will have a short meeting with the plant owner to discuss their findings. (The outcome of the review is completely confidential.) The entire process generally takes a couple of hours, depending on the number of animals and species at the facility.
- **Corrections:** If the Slaughter Plant Specialist has any concerns about the suitability of including a plant or on-farm slaughter facility in the AWA program, they will provide a list of needed corrections. In some instances, the SPS may decide that a plant or on-farm facility will never be suitable for the AWA program given the extent of nonconformance or its management structure.
- **Compliance Confirmation:** The SPS produces a review report and collects any corrective actions required of the plant. This information is reviewed by AGW and when the program is satisfied that the slaughter facilities and conditions comply with AWA requirements, the plant will be sent a letter confirming compliance and the farm(s) that wished to use the plant will be informed.

## Post-Audit: *Follow-Up & Corrective Action*

- **Determination.** Once the results of both the farm and the slaughter inspections have been obtained, AGW will make a determination based on published AWA standards.
- **Corrective Action Plan.** If AGW deems that you have correctable nonconformances, it will provide you with a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) form identifying and describing them. You must complete and return the CAP within one month, describing the steps you have taken or will take to correct the nonconformances and a schedule for doing so. The AGW Approvals Board will not grant certification until all compliance concerns identified on the CAP have acceptable corrective actions.
- **Program Assistance.** AGW has employees who will work with you to develop your CAP and make necessary changes.
- **Denial.** If your farm is denied certification, you must wait six months before reapplying. If your farm is denied certification due to an administrative termination, such as losing an approved slaughter facility, you may reapply at any time. If a violation is severe, AGW may refuse reapplication to the program entirely.



## Additional Audit Information

For additional information on the AWA audit process, review AWA Policy Manual Parts 2 and 3 and the following Annexes:

Corrective Action Plan Flow Chart	Annex 9
Conflict of Interest Policy	Annex 1, Part A
Register of Staff and Board Members Interests	Annex 1, Part B
AWA Management Review Procedure	Annex 20

# AWA LABEL USE GUIDELINES



**Label Approval.** When a farm is certified by AWA, it may begin using the appropriate AWA label or seal on its products.

- If animals have been raised on Certified AWA farms and slaughtered at Certified AWA plants, their meat and hides may carry the AWA label.
- If dairy animals are raised on Certified AWA farms, their milk may carry the AWA label.
- Fiber from animals on Certified AWA farms may carry the AWA label.

**Label Requirements.** As a general matter, the AWA label must be reproduced from original artwork directly obtained from AGW. The label's use must also be:

- Complete and upright
- In proportion to the product description
- Clearly visible
- Legible over the whole of a background
- On the main face of the label or packaging

**USDA-FSIS Label Approval.** As described in the [USDA-FSIS section](#), prior to using the AWA label, approval by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) is required.

## Additional Label Use Information

For more information about the use of AWA's label and seal, review AWA Policy Manual Chapter 4 and the following Annexes:

General Label Use	Annex 25
For Those Not Directly Accredited by AWA	Annex 13
For Slaughter Facilities Approved by AWA	Annex 14
For Multi-Ingredient Products	Annex 25
For Agricultural Products and Equipment	Annex 27
Dual Production and Sale of Product	Annex 26



## AWA MARKETING SUPPORT

A Greener World provides free marketing support to Certified AWA farmers. According to AGW, its marketing, public relations and outreach teams have the capacity to assist you by:

### Marketing Your Farm

- Writing and distributing press releases about your farm
- Featuring news about your farm on AGW's website, blog, print newsletter and press releases
- Listing your farm and retailers offering your products on AGW's online searchable database

### Facilitating Networking and Events

- Helping you develop relationships with retailers, restaurants and farmers markets
- Hosting events to promote your products
- Attending conferences or workshops with you to help improve your and the program's visibility

### Providing Marketing Materials

- Offering materials to help promote your certification, including brochures, signs, hats, aprons and other marketing materials available for purchase
- Providing you free signage (metal gate signs and farmers market banners available)
- Providing reduced cost [AWA egg cartons](#)



### Offering Marketing Advice

- Supporting your online marketing, social media ([Guide to Using Social Media](#)) and more traditional forms of marketing
- Supporting you with label design and USDA-FSIS approval
- Resources on using photos for marketing purposes ([Taking Pictures of Your Farm](#))

**For more on AGW marketing support, visit the [AGW Marketing Support Webpage](#).**

## AWA COSTS

AWA has an initial application fee and annual audit fees. The below is a fee schedule for Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW.

Applicant-Specific Fee	Cost	Description	Date Due
Application Fee	\$100*	One-time, non-refundable fee for all program applicants	Due at the time of application submission
Audit Fee	\$90 < 10 acres \$100 10-40 acres \$110 40-100 acres \$120 > 100 acres	Non-refundable fee to help cover the cost of audit. Must be paid in full prior to farm audit.	Due prior to the farm audit, both initial and annual. Invoices will be sent three months prior to expected audit date.

*\*Discounts available for multiple certifications.*

**To review AWA's full fee schedule, [click here](#).**

**Transition Costs.** Additionally, there may be costs associated with transitioning a farm to meet AWA standards in preparation for an application for certification. For more information on funding available to afford some of these transition costs, see [Transition Funding Opportunities](#).

## In Depth: Certified Humane®, a program of Humane Farm Animal Care



### HFAC Case Studies

This section provides background on the Certified Humane® (CH) certification program, a program of Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC), and an overview of HFAC's:

- Standards
- Certification process
- Audit process
- Label use guidelines
- Marketing support
- Costs

### HFAC Background

**Mission.** The Certified Humane® certification program (CH) is an international program of Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to “improving the lives of farm animals in food production from birth through slaughter” by “driving consumer demand for kinder and more responsible farm animal practices.”

**History.** HFAC was founded in 2003 to promote and administer CH. Since then, HFAC has certified over 144 companies and over 5,000 farms for compliance with HFAC standards.





**For a Range of Farm Businesses.** HFAC certifies single operations, producer groups, beef marketing groups and its own category of “pooled product operations” – entities that (1) buy products from individual production operations that have been inspected by HFAC and found to be in conformance with HFAC standards (but are not certified individually), and (2) sell the pooled product under the PPO’s name. Additionally, HFAC certifies “Product Manufacturing Operations” (PMOs) – entities producing products that include animal-based raw materials from HFAC-certified operations. Restaurants may apply to be certified as PMOs, as well.

**Standards.** HFAC’s standards cover birth through slaughter and are driven by HFAC’s philosophy that “animals must be free to do what comes naturally.” Accordingly, HFAC states, “chickens must be able to flap their wings and dust-bathe, and pigs must have the space to move around and root.” Likewise, cages, crates and tie stalls are prohibited, and animals must be fed a diet of “quality feed, without animal by-products, antibiotics or growth hormones.” Finally, “producers must comply with food safety and environmental regulations,” and “livestock processors must comply with the American Meat Institute (AMI) guidelines, a slaughter standard written by Dr. Temple Grandin, a member of HFAC’s Scientific Committee.” Poultry producers must comply with the Poultry Slaughter Standards written by the HFAC Scientific Committee.

**Animals covered.** HFAC’s standards cover the following animals:

- Bison
- Beef and dairy cows
- Broiler chickens
- Laying hens
- Dairy, fiber and meat goats
- Pigs
- Dairy, fiber and meat sheep
- Turkeys

**Where Sold.** Relative to AWA and GAP, products with CH’s Certified Humane Raised and Handled® label are sold by the widest variety of distributors, retailers and restaurants. They can be found in the United States, Brazil, Canada, Chile and Peru. To search for CH products, visit [certifiedhumane.org/shop](https://certifiedhumane.org/shop).

**Looking Forward.** HFAC states that, in 2003, the CH program covered approximately 143,000 farm animals, and that, today, it covers over 100 million. According to HFAC, they are unlikely to cover other animal species in the near future. Rather, they are focused on continuing to promote the existing program, including its newer “Free Range” and “Pasture Raised” labels.



# HFAC STANDARDS

Each certification program covered in this guide requires compliance with standards covering various aspects of farm animal husbandry. Below is an overview of how HFAC develops its standards; which stages of life its standards cover; and HFAC's record-keeping requirements. To review all HFAC standards, visit [click here](#).

## Standards Development

HFAC states that it developed its standards in conjunction with a “40 member Scientific Committee...comprised of animal scientists and veterinarians from the United States, Canada, Europe, and South America.” Typically, according to HFAC, proposals for new or modified standards originate within this committee. However, HFAC staff, operators and other interested parties may also generate new or modified standards for review by the committee.

After the Scientific Committee agrees on the text of a new or revised standard, HFAC distributes the draft to producers potentially impacted by the proposed standard for their comments. HFAC's Standards Committee compiles comments from this “public comment” period, incorporates other comments from the Scientific Committee, considers the proposed standards and then presents final recommendations to the HFAC Board of Directors, which makes the final decision on whether to adopt the recommendations or make no change.

## Stages of Life Covered

HFAC's standards cover “birth through death.” They focus on feed and water, environment, animal management, health, transportation and slaughter. In addition, HFAC does traceability audits on all products to ensure they're coming from HFAC-certified producers and animals.

## Record-Keeping Requirements

HFAC's record-keeping standards are in place to allow auditors to review what has occurred on the farm in between audits and vary slightly across species. However, HFAC generally requires:

### A FARM PLAN REGARDING:

- Training program for caretakers
- Animal health and care of sick/injured animals
- Emergency procedures (for fire, flood, interruption of food, water, electricity, etc.)

### A RECORD OF:

- Animal feed provided
- Dated production data (alterations, castration, temperature, ammonia levels, etc.)
- Building features (total floor area, max capacity, etc.)
- Quarantine procedures and use of medication
- All incoming and outgoing animals, including transport records
- Complaints

Most of HFAC's record-keeping requirements include things many farmers will already be doing, such as recording the dates of physical procedures (castration, etc.), tracking medication use, and noting all animal sales or transfers. In addition to providing a record for auditors to review, record-keeping helps producers spot trends on their farms and operate their businesses effectively by measuring key outcomes. HFAC does not require records to be kept in any specific way. Farmers are welcome to keep their records the old-fashioned way, putting pen to paper in notebooks, logs or calendars. Similarly, HFAC accepts Excel sheets and Word documents.

**Note: Standards Deviation Requests**

If you believe you are complying with the spirit of a standard, but achieving that result through practices different than the standard specifies, you may contact HFAC and request a deviation. The relevant species subcommittee of the Standards Committee will determine whether or not to permit it.

# HFAC CERTIFICATION PROCESS

HFAC certifies farms, producer groups, beef marketing groups, product manufacturing operations (including restaurants) and “pooled product operations,” described above. The certification process described below applies to individual farms. Information about the certification process for Producer Groups, Pooled Product Operations (PPOs), and Product Manufacturing Operations can be found on the following pages, and in further detail in the [HFAC Policy Manual](#).

## STEP ONE

### Review HFAC Standards & Policies

- Read the HFAC standards for the species you wish to certify and the HFAC Policy Manual to confirm your farm will comply with relevant standards and policies.
- Confirm that your slaughter facilities are agreeable to being inspected for compliance by an HFAC auditor.

## STEP TWO

### Submit Application

- Review the application process and submit an application form and a \$75 application fee to HFAC.
- **Note:** HFAC treats your business information as confidential.

## STEP THREE

### Schedule & Facilitate an Inspection

- After you apply, HFAC will undertake an Initial Review of your application to evaluate whether your operation is capable of complying with HFAC standards.
- If your application satisfies the Initial Review, an HFAC inspector will contact you to schedule and conduct an inspection (audit). To learn more about the inspection process, including costs, [click here](#).
- **Note:** HFAC treats observations and information collected during the course of the inspection as confidential.

## STEP FOUR

### Obtain Certification & Use Label

- HFAC will make a certification determination.
- Approved operations will be provided a Certification Mark License Agreement governing label use.
- The certification fee will follow the HFAC Fee Schedule.
- Certification is valid for 1 year.
- **Note:** You may appeal a certification decision or enter a dispute resolution process for other program concerns.

## STEP FIVE

### Recertification & Changes to Certification

- HFAC-certified businesses must renew their certification annually by submitting a completed application form and application fee. The renewal process begins about 60 days before a business' certification expires, and includes generally the same steps as the initial certification.
- You must notify HFAC if you change the types or amounts of products certified or you make significant changes to your management or organizational structure. You must withhold products produced under the changed procedures until HFAC has reviewed the changes (possibly resulting in an Amended Certificate of Certification).
- **Note:** Your certification may be suspended or revoked for nonconformances, as set forth in the HFAC Policy Manual.

## HFAC CERTIFICATION PROCESS FOR PRODUCERS GROUPS

The certification process described below applies to Producer Groups, which are defined as a “close-knit group of producers that uses similar production practices, markets their products in common, and is managed by an Internal Control System (ICS). The ICS is the system used by the Producer Group to provide oversight of the group’s activities and conformance with certification standards. The ICS inspects production operations, monitors minor nonconformances and keeps records for the group.

HFAC requires that producers seeking certification as a Producer Group must:

- Use uniform farming practices that reflect a consistent process or methodology
- Produce similar products
- Be managed under one central, uniform and consistent administration
- Establish and implement their own system of internal control, supervision and documentation of producer practices to ensure conformance with HFAC certification standards
- Maintain an education program to ensure that all members understand the applicable certification standards and how they apply to their specific operations
- Utilize central processing, manufacturing, distribution and marketing facilities
- Maintain an operator complaints log

When a Producer Group applies for certification, HFAC determines whether it will conduct 100% of the audits or whether the Group’s Internal Control System may instead provide information to HFAC to evaluate conformance with HFAC standards and procedures. HFAC may choose to rely on the ICS for a portion of inspections if it determines that the ICS’s records mirror HFAC’s own findings and the ICS:

- Inspects all producers at least annually
- Inspects all new producers before including them in the Producer Group
- Performs inspections in a manner rigorous enough for HFAC to use the resulting findings to determine conformance with HFAC’s standards
- Appropriately address any instances of nonconformance
- Maintains adequate records of its inspections
- Assists producers in understanding and conforming with HFAC’s standards

The ICS must be established and functional before HFAC will accept the Producer Group. If HFAC determines that the ICS can carry out its own inspections, the ICS must complete its inspections and send all records and documentation to HFAC according to a predetermined schedule. HFAC will conduct annual inspections of the ICS and at least 10% of the Producer Group’s farmers to ensure compliance, with inspection fees of \$800 per day per inspector.



Producer Group inspections have three main components – assessments done in the ICS office, assessments done in the field and any activities done to conclude the inspection. Assessments in the office focus on evaluating the Producer Group’s ICS to ensure that all management systems are fully implemented and to review producer files for accuracy and completeness. Assessments done in the field focus on inspecting some of the group’s farms and comparing those results with the results of the ICS’s inspection of the same operation. The inspection concludes with an Exit Interview, where the inspector discusses any nonconformances and presents a summary of the audit activities and findings to the managers of the Producer Group. The inspector submits his/her findings to HFAC in a written Inspection Report. From there, the certification process mirrors that of farmers, with a certification determination and annual recertification audits.

## HFAC CERTIFICATION PROCESS FOR POOLED PRODUCT OPERATIONS

The certification process described below applies to Pooled Product Operations (PPOs) that buy products from individual producers that have been inspected by HFAC and found to be in conformance with HFAC standards. PPOs are not certified individually, but they sell product under the PPO’s name. PPOs pay HFAC for the inspections of the producers from which they buy products and pay the certification fees for the pooled product that is being sold as Certified Humane® under the PPO’s name.

The certification process generally mirrors that of farmers, with an initial review of standards, submission of application (including the \$75 fee), scheduled audit (\$800 fee), certification determination and annual recertification audits. The PPO submits its own application along with the individual application for each of the producers participating in the pool. If all of the PPO’s documents are turned in together, the PPO pays a single application fee and pays the audit fees for all of the producers being inspected. PPOs are responsible for maintaining an audit trail of all certified products contributing to the pool and their sale, handling and processing. HFAC inspects PPO processing/slaughter facilities annually to confirm that there has been no co-mingling of certified and non-certified product during processing. Notification of the certification determination is sent to the PPO, along with copies of the inspection reports for the individual farms and any necessary corrective actions forms.

# HFAC CERTIFICATION PROCESS FOR PRODUCT MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS (AND RESTAURANTS)

The certification process described below applies to Product Manufacturing Operations (PMOs) looking to sell products using Certified Humane® ingredients and bearing the Certified Humane® logo. PMOs are entities producing products that include ingredients or raw materials from HFAC-certified operations.

EXAMPLES OF PRODUCT MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS				
Animal Based Raw Materials	➔	Product Manufacturing Operation	➔	Manufactured Products
Raw Milk	➔	Dairy Processor	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pasteurized whole milk</li> <li>• Skim milk</li> <li>• Cream</li> <li>• Dry milk powder</li> <li>• Ice cream (multi-ingredient)</li> </ul>
Eggs in the Shell	➔	Egg Processor	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bulk liquid eggs</li> <li>• Egg whites</li> <li>• Powdered eggs</li> <li>• Baked goods containing eggs (multi-ingredient)</li> </ul>
Whole Meat Carcass	➔	Food Processor	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut &amp; packaged fresh meat</li> <li>• Jerky sticks</li> <li>• Pre-cooked chicken chunks</li> <li>• Canned meat in meat broth</li> <li>• Vegetable beef stew (multi-ingredient)</li> </ul>
Raw Animal Hide	➔	Tannery	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leather</li> <li>• Leather shoes (multi-ingredient)</li> <li>• Leather furniture covers</li> </ul>
Wool Fleece	➔	Wool Mill	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaned fleece</li> <li>• Wool yarn</li> <li>• Wool sweater (multi-ingredient)</li> </ul>

Certified Humane® requires food manufacturers to be audited to ensure that all the ingredients going into the product are coming from Certified Humane® producers. The certification process generally mirrors that of farmers, with an initial review of standards, submission of application (including the \$75 fee), scheduled audit (\$800 fee), certification determination and annual recertification audits.

HFAC determines PMO certification by reviewing each product to ensure the PMO:

- Has a sourcing plan to ensure that all the animal-based ingredients are produced by HFAC-certified operations
- Ensures sufficient product identification and segregation of HFAC-certified ingredients during storage, handling, and/or manufacturing
- Keeps sufficient records to show conformance with HFAC standards for:
  - Sourcing ingredients,
  - Product segregation, and
  - Complaints to operators. (Must maintain a complaints log)
- Has product label(s) that conform to HFAC's label and seal use regulations



## HFAC INSPECTION PROCESS



HFAC employees conduct audits, which it calls “inspections,” to assess and potentially certify your operation’s conformance with HFAC standards and policies. HFAC inspects processes, facilities, animals and records.

### When Are Inspections Required?

- **Initially:** HFAC conducts an inspection as part of the initial application process.
- **Annually:** After certification, HFAC conducts inspections annually as a part of the certification renewal process.
- **Unannounced:** HFAC may perform unannounced inspections in order to assess an operation’s continued conformance with HFAC standards and policies.
  - Unannounced inspections are performed using the same procedures as routine inspections except that the inspector does not contact the operator about the inspection more than 24 hours prior to arrival at the certified operation.
  - Inspectors are permitted to perform unannounced inspections without any prior notice to the operator, but, according to HFAC, some notice is normally given to ensure that the needed personnel can participate.
- **For Program Assessment:** Periodically, HFAC selects random member farms to audit (also unannounced) in order to assess the effectiveness and consistency of the HFAC auditing program, as well as the performance of its auditors. Random audits may cover a full farm or just a particular species or management practice.

### Who Conducts Inspections?

- **Generally:** HFAC contracts with approximately 30 inspectors. In creating a plan for the inspection, HFAC first determines which aspects of your business need to be inspected and then determines who from the HFAC list of inspectors is most qualified to conduct the inspection.
- **Background & Training:** All of HFAC’s inspectors are required to either have a Masters or Ph.D. in animal science or a veterinary degree. Additionally, each inspector has expertise in a specific species. All inspectors participate in an inspection-training program. After the initial training, each auditor is accompanied by a more experienced auditor during at least his or her first two audits. After the apprentice inspections, the experienced inspectors evaluate the new inspectors to determine whether or not the new inspector needs additional training.



- **Impartiality:** HFAC states that it seeks to ensure that the chosen inspector has not been involved in (or employed by a business or person involved in) the design, supply, installation or maintenance of products related to your operation within 24 months of the inspection. All inspectors fill out a declaration of interest form so that HFAC can ensure they are not inspecting an entity with which they have a relationship. If you object to the use of a particular inspector, you may contact the Director of Certification to explain the objection. At HFAC's discretion, another inspector may be assigned.

## What Happens During an Inspection?

The inspection process varies somewhat depending on the type of entity being inspected. However, it generally involves the following steps. (For information about the inspection and certification process for specific kinds of business entities, review the HFAC Policy Manual Part 3.)

### Pre-audit: *Off-farm Activity*

- **First contact.** An HFAC inspector will contact you to schedule the inspection visit. The inspector will explain and answer questions about the inspection process.

### Audit Part 1: *On-farm Activity*

- **Discussion.** The inspector will meet with you to discuss the inspection schedule and procedures. Next, the inspector will meet with farm managers and employees to discuss their roles and responsibilities and determine their knowledge of HFAC requirements.
- **Observation of Procedures, Facilities, Animals.** The inspector will observe the procedures you use to manage and care for the farm animals in order to determine the level of conformance with HFAC standards and policies. Observed practices and procedures include animal nutrition and animal condition, housing, sourcing stock, animal identification methods, husbandry practices, handling systems, implementation of animal health plans, availability of emergency action plans, management of casualty animals and the general environment of the operation.
- **Review of Records.** The inspector reviews records listed on [page 34](#); documents referenced on the Application for Certification; records related to tracing animals; records documenting the products used in the management of your operation; and information provided by veterinarians, feed suppliers and other parties who provide goods and services to your farm.
- **Exit Interview.** At the end of the inspection, the inspector will meet with you to summarize the inspection findings and provide you with an overview of the observed nonconformances, if any. During this meeting you have the opportunity to provide corrections, clarifications, and additional information.
- **Overall Length.** The length of the inspection varies depending on the size and complexity of the operation, but average between a half day and full day.

## Audit Part 2: Slaughter Facility

HFAC will inspect your slaughter facility to ensure it is compliant with HFAC standards. If it is not, either the slaughter facility must make the necessary changes to become compliant, or you will have to use another compliant slaughter plant in order to become certified. For livestock, HFAC requires that producers applying to the program have their animals slaughtered at facilities that meet American Meat Institute (AMI) guidelines. For poultry, HFAC requires that producers applying to the program have their animals slaughtered at facilities that meet the Poultry Slaughter Standards written by HFAC's scientific committee, which include:

- Slaughtering birds within four hours of arrival at the plant and within 12 hours of feed withdrawal on farm
- Ensuring that birds are not suspended for more than 90 seconds before they are stunned
- Ensuring at least 90 seconds have elapsed post-slaughter before putting birds in the scalding tank

### Post-Audit: Follow-Up & Corrective Action

- **Determination.** After the inspections, the inspector compiles an inspection report. Based on that report, HFAC makes one of three written certification determinations:
  - 1) Your operation complies with all relevant HFAC policies and standards and is awarded certification;
  - 2) Your operation has one or more “minor nonconformance” with the relevant HFAC standards and policies, and must make the required corrections within a 30-day period;
  - 3) Your operation has one or more “major nonconformance” with the relevant HFAC standards and policies, and is therefore denied certification.
- **Conditional Certification.** An operation is granted “Conditional Certification” if it has one or more minor nonconformance with HFAC standards and policies. During the Initial Certification Process, HFAC may issue a “Certificate of Conditional Certification” to allow an operation with one or more “minor nonconformance” to use the HFAC seal while it is undertaking corrective actions. If operations with conditional certification do not correct “minor nonconformances” within 30 days, they are denied certification.
- **Denial.** If your farm is denied certification, you must wait six months before reapplying.

### Additional Inspection Information

For additional information on the HFAC inspection process, review HFAC Policy Manual Part 3, including the following charts:

Initial Certification Process Flowchart	Part 2, D
Renewal of Certification Process Flowchart	Part 2, E

## HFAC LABEL USE GUIDELINES



**License Agreement.** HFAC controls ownership, use and display of its certification mark through the Certification Mark License Agreement. This Agreement describes HFAC's legal rights to address incorrect references to the certification system or misleading use of licenses, certificates or marks found in advertisements. The Agreement also requires members to supply HFAC with samples of their packaging, advertising or promotional materials bearing the HFAC mark upon HFAC's request. HFAC's Certification Mark License Agreement is not publicly available. For questions on label topics not covered here, contact HFAC directly.

**USDA-FSIS Label Approval.** As described in the [USDA-FSIS Labeling](#) section, prior to use of the Certified Humane Raised and Handled® label, approval by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) is required.



## HFAC MARKETING SUPPORT

According to HFAC, the program provides the following marketing support to its members:

- **Internet Visibility.** According to HFAC, the CH website averages over 12,000 unique visitors a month. The website directs visitors to where they can buy products with the Certified Humane Raised and Handled® label, lists CH-certified producers and profiles CH farmers.
- **Social Media.** New products and producers are posted on the HFAC Facebook®, Instagram® and Twitter® pages. HFAC also distributes a monthly newsletter with readership in the thousands which highlights special products, new farm stories and world news.
- **Downloadable Free App.** This app lists stores that sell products with the Certified Humane Raised and Handled® label, as well as which products are in each store. HFAC standards, a list of CH-certified producers, FAQs, a media kit and a donation platform are also available on the app for easy access for farmers.
- **Press Releases.** HFAC issues press releases for all new producers that successfully complete the Certified Humane® certification process.
- **Sourcing Outreach.** HFAC actively works with supermarkets and other retailers to find buyers for CH-certified products.
- **Promotion by Welfare Organizations.** HFAC claims that over 70 “humane organizations” promote its program on their websites, in their publications and in targeted direct mailings, reaching national audiences.
- **Media Visibility.** HFAC highlights that numerous publications have profiled the CH program and directed readers to where to find products with the Certified Humane Raised and Handled® label.

## HFAC COSTS

As set forth below, HFAC has annual application, inspection and certification fees. For some qualified “small operations,” HFAC partially or fully subsidizes inspection costs.

### Annual Application & Inspection Fees

Application for Initial Certification	\$75
Application for Renewal Certification Fee (annual)	\$75
Inspection Fee: Farm	\$700/day/inspector
Inspection Fee: Processor, Product Manufacturing Operation, Pooled Product Operation, Slaughter and Handling Facility	\$800/day/inspector



## Annual Certification Fees

HFAC's certification fees are based on the amount of product processed and the number of animals or animal products sold because they are certified, not because there is a label on the package. Certification fees are generally paid on a monthly basis, but small operations may be allowed to pre-arrange quarterly payments at the discretion of HFAC's Executive Director.

CERTIFICATION FEES		
Cattle	0-25,000 animals	\$1.10/head
	25,001-50,000 animals	\$0.82/head
	50,001-75,000 animals	\$0.62/head
	75,001-100,000 animals	\$0.47/head
	100,001-200,000 animals	\$0.37/head
	200,001-300,000 animals	\$0.22/head
	300,001-400,000 animals	\$0.07/head
Pigs	0-35,000 animals	\$0.55/pig
	35,001-65,000 animals	\$0.45/pig
	65,001-100,000 animals	\$0.35/pig
	100,001-200,000 animals	\$0.25/pig
	>200,000 animals	\$0.15/pig
Dairy Cows	Hundredweight of milk	\$0.015 (1/8 <sup>th</sup> cent/gallon)
Goats	For milk	\$0.008/gallon
	For meat	\$0.23/head
Laying Hens	Case of 30 dozen eggs	\$0.07
Broiler Chickens	1-6,000,000 birds	\$0.003/lb
	6,000,001-15,000,000 birds	\$0.0025/bird
	15,000,001-30,000,000 birds	\$0.002/bird
	>30,000,000 birds	\$0.0015/bird
Sheep/Lamb	Per head	\$0.23
	Per gallon	\$0.008
Turkeys	Per pound	\$0.0023
Young Dairy Beef	Per head	\$0.55
Bison	0-500 animals	\$1.00/head
	501-2500 animals	\$0.75/head
	> 2500 animals	\$0.50/head

*Used with permission from HFAC*

**Subsidies for “small operations.”** Upon request, HFAC may partially or fully subsidize the costs of inspections for qualified “small operations.”

SIZE OF OPERATIONS ELIGIBLE FOR SUBSIDIZED INSPECTION FEES	
Species covered by the certificate application	Number of animals being certified is not greater than:
Beef Cattle	50 head
Broilers	100 head
Dairy	30 head
Goats	50 head
Layers	100 head
Pigs	50 head
Sheep	70 head
Turkeys	70 head
Young Dairy Beef	30 head

*Used with permission from HFAC*

**Transition Costs.** Additionally, there may be costs associated with transitioning a farm to meet CH standards in preparation for an application for certification.

To review HFAC’s Fee Schedule, [click here](#).



## In Depth: Global Animal Partnership



### GAP Case Studies

This section provides background on Global Animal Partnership (GAP) and an overview of GAP's:

- Standards
- Certification process
- Audit process
- Label use guidelines
- Marketing support
- Costs

### **GAP Background**

**Mission.** Global Animal Partnership (GAP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Austin, Texas, dedicated to “working collaboratively to facilitate and encourage continuous improvement and higher welfare in animal agriculture.” GAP maintains multi-tiered certification standards (“Levels” 1-5+) for each species. The more rigorous an operation’s welfare standards, the higher the level it may receive. Notably, GAP neither audits nor certifies farm businesses; it simply sets standards. It accredits independent certification companies to conduct audits and award GAP certifications on its behalf.

**History.** GAP began as the Animal Compassion Foundation, a program of Whole Foods Market® (WFM) created in 2005. In 2008, WFM renamed the program and spun off GAP as its own independent non-profit entity so that GAP could partner with other retailers and foodservice outlets. Notably, WFM and GAP are still significantly intertwined. First, they continue to share some management personnel, though GAP is looking to develop its next generation of leadership from outside WFM’s ranks. Second, in 2011, WFM established a procurement policy of buying only GAP-certified fresh meats. As a result, according to GAP, the vast majority of current GAP-certified farm and ranch businesses maintain GAP certification in order to sell (or continue to sell) fresh meats into the WFM supply chain. GAP is currently working to build relationships with other retailers and foodservice outlets nationally and internationally.



**For a Range of Farm Businesses.** GAP certifies individual farm businesses, producer groups and marketing groups. Notably, GAP provides certifications to “multi-tier operations” (where the entire operation is GAP-certified but holds different levels at the same time), “split operations” (where only part of the operation is GAP-certified) and “shared operations” (where two or more suppliers share one operation). GAP defines “operation” as a “farm, ranch, or other location that raises animals.” Ultimately, every “operation” along the supply chain of a GAP-certified product must be audited and certified.

**Standards.** Distinctively, GAP establishes standards but does not conduct audits or issue certifications. Farmers must apply to GAP-accredited independent verification companies for GAP-certification. Further, GAP maintains multi-tiered standards for each covered species, allowing farm operations to become certified at six different tiers, forthcoming (1-5 or 5+), depending on which species-specific tier of GAP standards their operations meet. For example, according to GAP:

**Pigs raised in level 1 systems typically live in a permanent housing structure and are provided the space to express natural behavior. In level 2, they live in an enriched indoor environment. Pigs in level 3 systems have access to the outdoors. In level 4, they live continuously on pasture, with access to housing. In level 5 and level 5+, pigs live continuously outdoors on pasture and may only be housed during extreme weather conditions. At level 5+, pigs spend their lives on a single farm, and are processed at a mobile or on-farm slaughter facility.**

**Animals covered.** GAP currently covers the following animals:

- Bison
- Beef cattle (not dairy)
- Broiler chickens
- Laying hens
- Meat goats (not dairy)
- Pigs
- Meat sheep
- Turkeys

**Where Sold.** As mentioned, WFM supported the development of GAP for its own producers and now purchases only GAP-certified fresh meats. As a result, the vast majority of farm businesses maintaining or seeking GAP-certification are doing so to participate in the WFM supply chain (directly or indirectly). GAP is actively developing new retail and foodservice partners, most recently announcing a partnership with Compass Group USA. To see a full list of where GAP products are sold, visit [globalanimalpartnership.org](http://globalanimalpartnership.org).

**Looking Forward.** GAP will publish new standards for broiler chickens and beef cattle. Additionally, according to GAP, it will continue to broaden its relationships beyond WFM. Specifically, GAP intends to develop its next generation of leadership from non-WFM personnel and continue building new partnerships (beyond WFM) in the retail and foodservice industries.



## GAP STANDARDS

Each certification program covered in this guide requires compliance with standards covering various aspects of farm animal husbandry. Below is an overview of how GAP develops its standards; which stages of life its standards cover; and its record-keeping requirements. To review all GAP standards, visit [globalanimalpartnership.org/standards](https://globalanimalpartnership.org/standards).

### Standards Development

GAP uses a multi-stakeholder approach in developing (or revising) its standards. GAP seeks guidance and input from species-specific working groups, including producers and industry experts. Next, GAP creates draft standards, posts them for public comment; acknowledges comments and responds where appropriate; reviews comments and re-drafts where necessary; and submits draft standards to the Board of Directors for final review and approval. Once GAP finalizes a set of standards, it issues a Certification Manual to the accredited certification companies with audit-specific details for the new standards. Recently, GAP added a “field testing” component to their standard development process, where standards are trialed in the field prior to being finalized.

### Stages of Life Covered

GAP’s standards cover breeding, hatching, weaning, on-farm life, transport and slaughter. GAP has its own standards for slaughter, based on American Meat Institute (AMI) guidelines and industry audit norms. However, GAP does not require that slaughter facilities undergo an additional audit showing compliance with GAP slaughter standards if the facility has a current third-party animal welfare audit that meets its criteria (NOTE: Not all third-party animal welfare audits of slaughter facilities are acceptable, so farms should check in with GAP to confirm a company would be accepted). Currently, GAP does not have slaughter standards for beef cattle, but is launching v2.0 of the beef standard later this year, which will include slaughter requirements.



## Record-Keeping Requirements

GAP's record-keeping requirements are in place to allow auditors to review what has occurred on the farm in between audits and vary slightly across species. However, GAP generally requires:

### A FARM PLAN REGARDING:

- Feeding and water
- Animal health (including preventative measures) and care of sick/injured animals)
- Routine husbandry practices
- Management of outdoor areas and pasture (if applicable)
- Emergency procedures (natural disasters, fire, water shut off, power failure, etc.)
- On-farm euthanasia
- Biosecurity policies for bringing animals onsite and for employees and visitors
- Environmental management (extreme weather, excessive humidity, etc.)

### A RECORD OF:

- Traceability of animals from birth to slaughter; movement on and off farm
- Daily flock/herd incidences
- Any medication and treatment of animals
- Any mortality, morbidity and culling (including reason if known)
- All employee training
- Species specific animal measures (lameness, body condition, lesion scoring etc.)

Most of GAP's record-keeping requirements include things many farmers will already be doing, such as recording the dates of animal births, tracking medication use, and noting all animal sales or transfers. In addition to providing a record for auditors to review, record-keeping helps producers spot trends on their farms and operate their businesses effectively by measuring key outcomes. GAP accepts records in multiple formats, including but not limited to, recording sheets and cards, calendars, notebook and computer documents. They also have [species-specific templates](#) (both paper and electronic for use on tablets and smartphones) for farmers to help them get started.

### Note: Requests for Deviation

A farm may apply to carry out a practice or use a substance that GAP standards generally do not permit. To do so, they submit a Deviation Request Form to GAP and the certifier. (While GAP-accredited certifiers make certification decisions, GAP must evaluate all deviation requests.)

# GAP CERTIFICATION PROCESS

GAP certifies individual farms, producer groups and marketing groups. Every individual farm within the supply chain of a product must be certified in order for the final product to be marketed as GAP-certified. The certification process described below applies to individual farms. For more information about the certification process for individual farms and other entities, review the GAP Policy Manual.

## STEP ONE Review GAP Standards & Policies

- Read GAP standards, standard clarifications and the GAP Policy Manual to confirm your farm will comply with relevant standards and policies.
- Formally confirm that your slaughter facilities comply with relevant GAP and industry association standards and audit norms by supplying a copy of the third-party industry audit.

## STEP TWO Submit Application

- Contact a GAP-accredited certifier for a quote on audit costs, to schedule an audit and to inquire about the audit process.
- Submit an application for certification to the certifier.
- **Note:** Certifiers and GAP treat your business information as confidential.

## STEP THREE Facilitate an Audit

- Your GAP-accredited certifier will conduct an audit in accordance with GAP standards.
- Generally, an audit consists of one auditor spending one day on-site examining your facilities, animals and records.
- **Note:** Certifiers and GAP treat observations and information collected during the course of the audit as confidential.
- For more information on the audit process, see [next page](#).

## STEP FOUR Obtain Certification & Use Label

- The certifier will make a certification determination.
- Your operation will be rated at the highest tier on the scale (1-5+) for which all aspects of it qualify.
- Certification status is good for 15 months.
- **Note:** You may appeal certification decisions and submit formal complaints regarding other program concerns.

## STEP FIVE Recertification & Changes to Certification

- Every 15 months, you must apply for recertification and undertake a recertification audit.
- At any time, you may seek a level upgrade by providing the certifier relevant evidence (documents, photographs, statements).
- During the certification cycle, you are responsible for reporting to the certifier any changes that may potentially impact your certification. You must report these changes prior to the change going into effect; failure to report changes can result in suspension or revocation of certification.
- **Note:** Your certification may be suspended or terminated for various reasons, as set forth in the GAP Policy Manual Chapter 6.

## GAP AUDIT PROCESS



**Step 1  
Facilities**



**Step 2  
Animals**



**Step 3  
Records**

GAP-accredited certifiers conduct audits of facilities, animals and records to assess and potentially certify your operation's conformance with GAP standards and policies.

### When Are Audits Required?

- **Initially:** A GAP-accredited certifier conducts an audit as part of the initial certification application process.
- **For recertification:** To maintain certification, you must undertake an audit between the 13th and 15th months of your certification periods. This 15-month time frame allows GAP-accredited auditors to audit farms in different seasons.
- **Unannounced:** GAP-certifiers do not conduct unannounced audits.

### Who Conducts Audits?

- **Generally:** GAP does not conduct GAP-certification audits. Instead, it requires that farmers and ranchers seeking GAP certification apply to one of two independent, GAP-accredited certification companies to be audited and certified:

#### GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP CERTIFIERS



**EarthClaims, LLC**  
(USA & Canada)



**AUS-Meat Limited**  
(Australia & New Zealand  
– beef & sheep only)

- **Background & Training:** Certifiers must apply to GAP's Certifier Accreditation Program and become accredited by GAP before conducting any audits. Certifiers must submit an annual application for each species they perform audits for, which includes:
  - **Proof of an auditor and reviewer training program specific to the GAP program**
  - **Proof of an administrative team training specific to the GAP program**
  - **A list of auditors and reviewers that will be conducting GAP audits, complete with a description of each individuals relevant education and experience**
  - **All of their audit forms and related certification documentation for approval prior to use**



- **Impartiality:** According to GAP, the fact that they work with independent certifiers means that “farmers, consumers, and retailers alike can be confident that certifications are fair, accurate, and free of any conflict of interest.”

## What Happens During an Audit?

The audit process varies somewhat depending on the type of entity being audited. However, all audits are based on GAP standards and GAP-approved audit forms. Generally, the audit process involves the following steps. (For more information about the audit and certification process for specific kinds of business entities, review GAP Policy Manual Chapters 4-6.)

### Pre-audit: *Off-farm Activity*

- **First contact.** After you submit your application to the GAP-accredited certifier, an auditor will contact you to schedule a time for the audit. During that call, the auditor will explain the audit process and answer your related questions.
- **Note: One choice.** If you are in the United States, you currently have one choice for GAP-accredited certifiers/auditors: EarthClaims LLC. You can contact EarthClaims to receive a quote before applying:

EarthClaims LLC: [info@earthclaims.com](mailto:info@earthclaims.com) or 202-596-5592

### Audit: *On-farm Activity*

- **Discussion.** The auditor will meet with the individual responsible for the farm’s day-to-day management to discuss what the audit will entail and to address questions. The auditor may also meet with employees, transporters and catching crew members, depending upon the operation.
- **Observation of Facilities and Animals.** The auditor will observe the facilities and animals for compliance with relevant GAP standards.
- **Review of Records.** The auditor will review relevant records, examining farm policies and processes; ensuring a traceable “chain of custody” demonstrating that each species was born, raised on and transported between only GAP-certified operations; medical treatments; incidences of lameness; and other records listed on [page 51](#).
- **Exit Interview.** At the end of the audit, the auditor will meet with you to summarize his or her findings and provide you with an overview of observed nonconformances, if any. During this meeting, you have the opportunity to provide corrections, clarifications and additional information.
- **Overall Length.** The length of the audit varies depending on the size and complexity of the operation. According to GAP, most audits of individual operations take one day or less.



- **Note: Video & Technology Alternative.** In place of on-site observation by an auditor, a farm or ranch may submit video or other “electronic monitoring records” to enable certification review of limited, specific operational procedures, including:
  - **Catching (broiler chickens)**      – **Herding (turkeys)**
  - **Crating (broiler chickens)**      – **Loading (turkeys, pigs, beef cattle)**

For more information on video & technology, review GAP Policy Manual Chapter 4.

### **Post-Audit:** *Follow-Up & Corrective Action*

- **Determination.** After the exit interview, the auditor submits the audit form to a separate reviewer, who makes one of three determinations:
  - 1) Your operation complies with GAP standards for a specific level and is certified accordingly;
  - 2) Your operation has correctable (non-“critical”) nonconformances;
  - 3) Your operation fails the audit because the auditor was denied entry to areas of the operation, there is a “critical” nonconformance or there are significant animal welfare concerns.
- **Corrective Action.** If the certifier deems that your operation has correctable nonconformances, it will provide you with a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) form identifying and describing them. You must complete and return the CAP within three weeks (to avoid the certification period being shortened), describing the steps you have taken or will take to correct the non-compliances and a schedule for doing so. The certifier will not grant certification until all compliance concerns identified on the CAP are corrected.
- **Denial.** If your farm is denied certification, you may reapply at any time.

## Do GAP-Certifiers Audit Slaughter Facilities?

Generally, no, but some slaughter facilities will need to undergo an audit for GAP producers to use them. GAP's standards allow GAP farms to use any slaughter facility so long as it has passed a third-party animal welfare audit that covers all the areas listed in GAP's slaughter standards. GAP's slaughter standards generally follow industry humane handling guidelines and industry-specific audit norms. For example, for pigs and "red meat species" at all levels, the animals must be:

- Stunned and rendered insensible prior to slaughter
- Slaughtered at a facility that has passed and holds a current annual third-party animal welfare audit using the American Meat Institute's *Recommended Animal Handling Guidelines and Audit Guide (July 2013 edition)*, where the plant must pass all the core criteria and all secondary criteria, have an overall minimum score of 90%, and an effective stun/kill rate of at least 95% on the first attempt

For broiler chickens and turkeys at all levels, the birds must be:

- Stunned and rendered insensible prior to slaughter
- Slaughtered at a facility that has passed and holds a current third-party animal welfare audit, where the plant must pass all core criteria and have an overall minimum score of 90%

### Core criteria include:

- At least 99% of the chickens must be properly stunned (on a sample of 500)
- No more than 1% may have broken or dislocated wings
- If hung live, both legs must be shackled (1 in 500 is a failure)
- No birds may have broken legs (1 in 500 is a failure)
- No more than 1% bruised thighs and drumsticks; and
- No birds may enter the scalding live

If the slaughter facility already has a third-party animal welfare audit, GAP accredited certifiers conduct a desk audit of those findings to ensure the facility is in line with GAP slaughter standards. All slaughter facilities used by GAP certified producers must be audited once every 15 months. Slaughter facilities must also provide a copy of their written in-plant segregation and traceability protocol outlining how GAP certified animals are kept segregated from non-certified animals and product.

Currently, GAP has no slaughter requirements for beef cattle operations. However, GAP has stated that it plans to publish v2.0 of their beef standard later this year, and that the standards will take a similar approach to those for pigs described above.

## Additional Inspection Information

For additional information on the GAP audit process, review GAP Policy Manual Chapters 4-6, including the following figures:

<b>Audit Process Flowchart</b>	<b>Chapter 4, Figure 1</b>
<b>Certification Process Overview</b>	<b>Chapter 4, Figure 2</b>

## GAP LABEL USE GUIDELINES



In 2019, GAP released brand new labels for use by GAP certified producers and businesses. GAP also released a brand book for partners and will be releasing a detailed labeling guide in fall of 2019.

### Labeled Product Authorization Program – Approval Needed

GAP permits makers of retail-ready packaged items containing GAP-certified ingredients to join a Labeled Product Authorization (LPA) Program in which they pay a \$0.05 licensing fee (per case) to utilize the relevant GAP 5-tier certification seal. The party that will ultimately be marketing the product is the party responsible for the fee. The licensing fee is only charged to the end product, not at every point in a given supply chain. LPA program participants need to complete an application and receive program approval prior to using the GAP seal. The application is available online and includes the following information:

- Identification of retail-ready items
- Animal product ingredients in items
- Sources of animal product ingredients
- Manufacturers of items
- Chain of custody
- Sample labels for approval

To use the relevant GAP tier label on a bulk product—any product that is not retail-ready—the entire supply chain used to produce the bulk product must be GAP certified. There is no fee to use the GAP label on bulk products, but approval is required by GAP prior to submission to USDA-FSIS.

### USDA-FSIS Label Approval

As described in the [USDA-FSIS](#) section, prior to use of the GAP label, approval by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) is required.



## GAP MARKETING SUPPORT

### Marketing Your Products

In order to build awareness for GAP certified products and the GAP label, GAP promotes producers, manufacturers, brands, retailers and foodservice partners currently labeling and selling GAP certified products on its website and through social networking platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn). GAP offers additional information for farms to include in sales presentations and will also attend sales calls with farmers as requested. In addition, GAP provides its partners with customized supply chain support. GAP's marketing focuses on the program's comprehensive approach to enforcement, requiring audits of every farm, every 15 months through different seasons, their GAP partner brands and farms, and the GAP certified products they produce.

### Next Steps: Support to Producers

In 2020, GAP will support GAP certified partners by:

- Offering dedicated social media support and promotional activity. GAP is hoping to feature producer partners and market partner products through its website blog, monthly e-newsletters, and on all of its social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. GAP also encourage consumers to #MakeItGAP when they are shopping for products in the grocery store and frequently uses the hashtag on social media.
- Offering specific marketing features in its new “GAP Farm Life” program launched in 2019. This video, photo and blog series on Instagram and the GAP website provides consumers with a real-world view of GAP animal welfare standards in action on partner farms. GAP is actively looking to highlight farm and ranch partners and encourages its farmers and business partners to participate in the ongoing social media and blog marketing platform: #GAPFarmLife. Farms interested in more information can contact GAP at [info@globalanimalpartnership.org](mailto:info@globalanimalpartnership.org).
- Providing partners with marketing collateral files for use on websites, at conferences/shows, social communication platforms etc. Farmers can request these marketing materials at [info@globalanimalpartnership.org](mailto:info@globalanimalpartnership.org)
- Providing supply chain and carcass utilization support for processors and raw material providers. GAP's business team offers to connect farmers to different parts of the supply chain, depending on their needs.
- Providing critical Producer Resources and Audit Prep tools on the GAP website. GAP recently launched tracking “smart sheets” with video webinars of how to use them in order to help producers successfully plan for their audits and continually stay in adherence to GAP standards. See the species-specific pages on <https://globalanimalpartnership.org/> for details.
- Providing a more comprehensive list of GAP certified products and participating retail outlets on GAP's new website.
- Providing partners with a password-protected information and application portal within which to communicate important updates with partners as well as a library of necessary documents for reference in one easy-to-access place (from the GAP website).

## GAP COSTS

**Just the Audit.** Applicants pay the costs of the certification audit (initially and again every 15 months as part of recertification) directly to the certifier. The certifier pays \$100 from every audit to GAP. The applicant does not pay GAP any fees directly.

	EARTHCLAIMS, LLC
Cost	\$1,650 flat fee
Auditor Travel Costs Extra?	No
Group/Integrator Discounts Negotiable?	Yes

**Transition Costs.** Additionally, there may be costs associated with transitioning a farm to meet GAP standards in preparation for an application for certification.



# CASE STUDIES



**CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED (AWA) by A GREENER WORLD (AGW)**

[Kinderhook Farm](#)  
[Central Grazing Company](#)  
[Consider Bardwell Farm](#)



**HUMANE FARM ANIMAL CARE'S (HFAC) CERTIFIED HUMANE®**

[Echo Farm Puddings](#)  
[Pete & Gerry's Organic Eggs](#)  
[Teton Waters Ranch](#)



**GLOBAL ANIMAL PARTNERSHIP (GAP)**

[Cold Spring Ranch](#)  
[Mary's Free Range Chicken](#)  
[Rancho Llano Seco](#)



# KINDERHOOK FARM

## Ghent, New York



*Animals grazing on Kinderhook Farm.*

### Operation Profile:

- 400-500 Black Angus and Red Devon cattle
- 400 Dorper sheep
- 450 laying hens
- 500 broiler chickens
- 4 heritage breed pigs & 30 piglets

**Certification:** Certified Animal Welfare Approved by A Greener World (beef cattle, sheep, laying hens)

### Background

Kinderhook Farm is situated on over 1200 acres in Ghent, New York, that were previously used for a conventional dairy operation. Along with business partners Steve and Renee Clearman, who bought the land, farmers Lee and Georgia Ranney have transformed the property into a grazing farm. Today, the Ranneys raise Black Angus and Red Devon cattle, Dorper sheep, laying hens, broiler chickens and heritage breed pigs. Kinderhook Farm's products are sold at its farm stand and to restaurants and smaller retail markets throughout New York.

According to Georgia, Kinderhook Farm employs an intensive rotational grazing system, providing their cattle and sheep with a 100% grass and legume diet. She says they grow and harvest hay on their farm to feed the cattle and sheep during the winter, and use Maremma and Akbash livestock guardian dogs to protect their animals from predators – namely a significant coyote population.



## Getting Certified

Kinderhook Farm is certified by Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) for its beef cattle, sheep flock and laying hens. Kinderhook Farm first sought AWA-certification in order to maintain an existing, valuable business relationship. It was selling beef cattle to Grazin' Angus Acres (GAA), a farm in Ghent owned by Dan and Susan Gibson, when GAA sought and received AWA certification. By AWA standards, GAA was then required to purchase only Certified AWA animals. Kinderhook Farm obtained AWA certification for its cattle and have since pursued and received certification for most of its other species. (Kinderhook Farm is currently seeking certification for its broiler chickens. Georgia says the farm has not been able to certify its pigs because it has not found an AWA-certified seller of piglets, but hopes to overcome that constraint in the future.)

According to the Ranneys, by the time the farm sought AWA certification, it was already largely compliant with AWA requirements. To achieve certification the Ranneys only had to make “minor tweaks,” like removing certain ingredients from their feed for broiler chickens. (Georgia reports that AWA's Corrective Action Plans have always been manageable.)



**“We feel that it’s important to be part of a program that provides third-party auditing, and shows our customers that we are dedicated to the highest possible welfare standards.”**

*A closer look at the cattle on Kinderhook Farm.*

## AWA Certification Outcomes

**Enhanced Marketing & Branding.** The Ranneys use the AWA label as an independent validation of their practices. They use the label on the farm's website, newsletter, egg cartons, brochures and farm store signs.

**Marketing Support.** According to Georgia, AGW also provides tremendous marketing support to increase the reach of AWA products. This support includes providing member farms with AWA labels and brochures, and listing all members on the AGW website.

**Better Record-Keeping & Farm Awareness.** Georgia believes that keeping records for AWA certification will add value to any farmer's business. First, the business will be better organized. Second, strong record-keeping practices serve as a valuable avenue for tracking and understanding the status of animal stocks.

**Support Meeting Welfare Standards.** The Ranneys have found the AGW audits to be very rigorous. However, Georgia notes that in her experience, "AGW wants to help you achieve or maintain certification. I believe that their inspectors have deep understanding of how animals should be raised, including recent developments in animal husbandry." As a result, AGW has been willing to assist in developing a plan for needed changes. In that regard, she has found AGW "extremely easy" to work with.

## Why Certify with AWA?

Georgia believes AWA certification is one way of giving consumers confidence that they are supporting a farm whose livestock is being raised according to AWA's high animal welfare standards. Georgia also notes the importance of transparency: "Especially in light of recent videos of animals being subjected to abuse by workers in factory conditions, we feel that it's important to be a part of a program that provides third-party auditing, and shows our consumers that we are dedicated to the highest possible welfare standards."



*An example of Kinderhook's welfare-certified product.*



# CENTRAL GRAZING COMPANY

## Lawrence, Kansas



*Animals grazing at the Central Grazing Company farm.*

### **Operation Profile:**

- ≈ 1,000 sheep
- Partners with 19 farms across the United States

**Certification:** Certified Animal Welfare Approved by A Greener World (sheep)

### **Background**

Jacqueline Smith and ReGina Cruse purchased their 80-acre farm in northeast Kansas to raise sheep as a means of promoting prairie restoration while allowing the sheep to “live natural and instinctive lives.” The surrounding land had formerly been used for crop and hay fields, leaving the soil depleted of nutrients. To restore the prairie and mimic the natural predator/prey relationship, Jacqueline and ReGina holistically graze their 150 sheep by rotating them among different areas. This practice allows the grasses to develop longer root systems, making the land more resilient to extreme weather events. The farm has been Certified Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) by A Greener World (AGW) since its founding in 2015.

Prior to purchasing this land, Jacqueline was a certified AWA dairy sheep farmer. When her original dairy sheep operation expanded, the number of lambs also increased, but Jacqueline realized there was no market for them. In response, she created Central Grazing Company to clean up the supply chain and sell the animals into the pastured meat market rather than put them up for auction and increase the chance they would end up in feedlots.

Central Grazing Company began operating with two farms—including Jacqueline and ReGina’s—and approximately 75 sheep. It now works with nineteen different farms across the country to aggregate, brand and distribute lamb to wholesale and retail markets. Last year, it processed over 700 sheep and anticipates it will process approximately 1,000 this year.

To find farm partners, Jacqueline and ReGina reach out to sheep farms that are already Certified AWA, or they are contacted by farmers who want to supply to Central Grazing Company and may or may not already be Certified AWA. Jacqueline works with potential farm partners who aren’t currently Certified AWA to help them achieve that requirement. If the farms are not raising their sheep on grass, they must also agree to make that change. Jacqueline works closely with the AGW program throughout the process of certifying potential farm partners. While she does not see what specific corrective measures AGW has suggested, she does know if the farms become certified and when they are audited. Once a farm has earned AWA certification, Jacqueline personally visits the farm to ensure that it meets Central Grazing Company’s specifications. The farms that contract with central Grazing Company receive 50% of the company’s net profits and are paid competitive market rates for their lamb.

Central Grazing Company adheres to several goals that guide its operations: (1) raising lambs ethically; (2) regenerating grasslands; (3) creating economic incentives for “independent, regional, or organic farmers”; (4) providing livable wages; and (5) building a “traceable supply chain.”



**“The networking and resulting partnerships have allowed Central Grazing Company to grow and scale up in a manner that is consistent with the company’s goals.”**

## Getting Certified

When deciding on an animal welfare certification, Jacqueline looked into other programs but decided on AWA because of its “higher” standards that align with her values. Jacqueline has always respected AWA’s strict guidelines and its alignment with Central Grazing Company’s mission and goals.

Jacqueline, among other farmers, finds the audits to be rigorous, but noted that the auditors are friendly, respectful and understanding. For example, when AGW visited Jacqueline’s farm, the auditor noted that the farm did not have the breed of animal appropriate to the type of operation she was running, as she had dairy sheep rather than meat sheep. Jacqueline was able to explain that she was culling the animals naturally; she had dairy sheep remaining from her previous farm but once they were culled, she would introduce meat sheep to the farm. In addition, she was able to negotiate a feeding requirement that met the needs of her animals. In her experience, providing information to AGW prior to a farm visit can make the process more efficient.



## **AWA Certification Outcomes**

**Benefits to Animals.** Central Grazing Company was founded to ensure that lambs would not enter the feedlot system. By requiring that supplying farms become Certified AWA, Central Grazing Company ensures that higher welfare standards are applied across a larger number of farms. As the company scales up, so does the number of AWA-certified farms.

**Marketing Access.** Central Grazing Company markets its lamb as Animal Welfare Approved on its website, promotional materials and packaging. Because the AWA certification is considered the most rigorous, Jacqueline and ReGina have found that they are able to differentiate their products and increase market share over their competitors. Due to its certification, Central Grazing Company is also a gold partner with Natural Grocers, a national retail chain.

**Identifying Networks of AWA Farmers.** Jacqueline cites the ability to identify networks of certified AWA farms as one of the greatest benefits to certification. The networking and resulting partnerships have allowed Central Grazing Company to grow and scale up in a manner that is consistent with the company's goals.

## **Why Certify with AGW?**

Central Grazing Company became Certified AWA by AGW to further its goal of raising sheep ethically while restoring grassland and promoting networks of small farms that support local and regional economies.

## CONSIDER BARDWELL FARM

### Rupert, Vermont



*Animals grazing on Consider Bardwell Farm.*

#### **Operation Profile:**

- ≈ 200 goats (including milk goats and meat goats)

**Certification:** Certified Animal Welfare Approved by A Greener World (goats)

#### **Background**

Angela Miller and Russell Glover's 300-acre farm is named after Consider Stebbins Bardwell, the farmer who established Vermont's first dairy cooperative on the same land in 1864. At the time, small farmers in the region sold their milk to Bardwell, who made it into cheese and sold it in markets as far away as New York City.

Angela and Russell bought the farm intending to revitalize that tradition by raising their goats on Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF) Certified Organic pesticide and fertilizer-free pasture to produce raw milk for their award-winning cheeses. The farm began operations with just nine goats; this year, it milked 125 goats. As a dairy business, Consider Bardwell Farm primarily raises milking goats, but also raises some bucks for meat.

Angela and Russell also work with nearby farmers who pasture dairy cows on Consider Bardwell Farm's land, and they have a production contract with the neighboring farm to purchase cow's milk for use in their cheese.

Angela and Russell use an intense rotational grazing system for their goats, moving them every 12 hours on a 60-day cycle. This prevents the goats from eating the grass down to the point where they are more likely to come into contact with parasites and require medication. According to Angela and Russell, their herd has been largely free of parasites for seven years. After the goats move pastures, dairy cows move in and graze in the same areas, as they are less susceptible to the same parasites.

Consider Bardwell Farm's cheese is sold wholesale across the United States, directly at one farmers market in Vermont and in 13 different Greenmarket Farmers Markets across New York City. Greenmarket management was a driving force in getting Consider Bardwell Farm Certified Animal Welfare Approved (AWA).

## Getting Certified

Angela and Russell first heard about the AWA certification program in 2009 at a presentation hosted by Greenmarket. The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI), which presided over the AWA program at the time, gave a talk about the certification process. After the presentation, Angela flew to Washington, D.C., to meet with AWI in person and learn more about the program. AWA certification seemed to be a natural fit for the farm because of its mission to be environmentally sustainable and keep animals in a system that is as close to nature as possible.

When they began the certification process, Angela and Russell had to make minor changes to their farming practices. However, they found the certification process to be relatively simple, especially with AWI's support and encouragement.





## AWA Certification Outcomes

**Benefits to Animals.** Angela and Russell believe the Certified AWA standards helped raise their awareness of better ways to handle animals. To become certified, Consider Bardwell Farm was required to make some minor changes to infrastructure to benefit the goats. Angela states that she learned that goats are healthiest and the least stressed if they have a specific minimum square footage of space per individual. In addition, Angela and Russell appreciate that the AWA certification makes it difficult to scale up an operation without ensuring that the animals are well cared for. For example, when considering whether to keep a larger herd to increase milk and cheese production, they have to take into account whether they are ready to increase the size of their barn.

**Marketing & Consumer Interest.** Consider Bardwell Farm promotes its farm as Certified Animal Welfare Approved on its website and in promotional materials. According to Angela, AWA certification increased their sales, as they get marketing and public relations support through A Greener World's (AGW) newsletters and publications. In addition, the Greenmarket strongly encourages vendors to seek AWA certification. While customers do not seem as concerned about the AWA certification for Consider Bardwell Farm cheeses, the certification does play a large role for customers that purchase meat from the farm.

**Support Meeting Welfare Standards.** As with other farms that are Certified AWA, Angela found the AWA audits to be rigorous, but added that the auditors are fair and knowledgeable. She and Russell also noted that the AGW program works hard with farmers to ensure they are compliant. Consider Bardwell Farm also worked with AGW to apply for—and receive—one of its previously available Good Husbandry Grants and used that funding to build rolling goat houses.

## Why Certify with AGW?

Angela and Russell became Certified AWA to reflect their commitment to the animals they raise and provide as natural an environment for them as possible.



# ECHO FARM PUDDINGS

## ECHO FARM

### Hinsdale, New Hampshire



**Operation Profile:** 100 cows (Milking Shorthorns & Jerseys)

**Certification:** Certified Humane®, a project of Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC)

## Background

In 1987, Bob and Bonnie Hodge purchased 35 acres in Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Their goal was to start a 4-H club on the property – to show horses, sheep and eventually cows. In 1990, their daughters, Beth and Courtney, convinced them to buy Milking Shorthorn heifers, and a dairy operation slowly formed. After returning from college, Beth and Courtney took over farm management and developed the Echo Farm Puddings business. Today, Echo Farm milks approximately 100 cows – half Milking Shorthorns and half Jerseys. Echo Farm sells its “Echo Farm Puddings” products through distributor United Natural Foods Inc., as well as at Whole Foods Market® (WFM), and various other retailers, primarily in New England and the New York City metro area.

## Getting Certified

In 1999, the Hodges heard about an animal welfare certification program and applied when they realized that their operational practices complied with many of the program's standards. When one of the certification program's leaders, Adele Douglass, departed to found a new program, Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC), the Hodges applied to HFAC for certification. Echo Farm was approved, making it the first dairy farm to become Certified Humane®.

According to the Hodges, they did not have to undertake significant transition costs to become HFAC-certified. They attribute this to being first-generation farmers who did not have to contend with revising longstanding practices that fall outside program standards. Currently, beyond the standard application fee of \$75, Echo Farm pays between \$900 and \$1000 for the inspection fee and certification costs—a “royalty,” as Beth puts it, that Echo Farm pays HFAC per product with the Certified Humane Raised and Handled® label. However, according to Beth, the increased revenue that results from their certification, as well as the market access the certification enables, far outweighs these costs.

Beth reports that the HFAC inspections have been rigorous, particularly in the beginning, when the inspector would spend a full day at the farm. However, now that the program has familiarity with their operation, the inspector typically spends a half-day on site. Nonetheless, Beth says that she and her employees usually spend two full days preparing for the inspection to ensure that all relevant paperwork is readily accessible. Echo Farm has gone through the Corrective Action Plan process a few times for minor inconsistencies with HFAC standards, sometimes from standards being amended, but has been able to correct any deficiencies.

**“The majority of farmers will find that the standards make sense and complying actually improves a farm’s productivity.”**



## HFAC Certification Outcomes

**Product Differentiation & Business Growth.** Beth believes that there is increasing concern from consumers about how farm animals are treated, and sees the Certified Humane Raised and Handled® label—which she uses on the farm’s website as well as on all of their product packaging—as providing validation for their business’ animal welfare claims.

Also, according to Beth, the certification has opened doors to retail stores that the farm could not have otherwise accessed, such as Bread & Circus retail stores, which were eventually acquired by WFM. This increased market access has translated to increased revenues.

**Improved Farm Practices & Business Organization.** HFAC required stricter protocols than their family had been observing for keeping water and food separate from manure, for keeping concrete alleyways clear of mud, and for maintaining sufficient and well-organized records and emergency plans.

**Technical & Marketing Support.** HFAC has opened up marketing opportunities for Echo Farm Puddings by offsetting their costs in attending a trade show and providing them with marketing materials. It has also provided them technical advice on how they could improve animal welfare practices on their farm. Finally, being certified by HFAC has enabled Echo Farm to connect with other certified members who, in turn, have provided Echo Farm with marketing and technical advice of their own.

## Why Certify with HFAC?

According to the Hodges, “With the increased scrutiny by both consumers and retail chains, being certified has helped our business grow, especially in the natural products sector, and it has helped to differentiate our products from others on the shelf. We believe that the majority of farmers will find that the standards make sense and complying actually improves a farm’s productivity.”



## PETE & GERRY'S ORGANIC EGGS WARD FAMILY FARM Monroe, New Hampshire

“Integrity in labeling is important now, and will become even more important in the future, and I believe that when it comes to animal welfare, there is no higher and more trusted standard for consumers than Certified Humane®.”



*Hens grazing on a pasture on the Ward Family Farm.*

### Operation Profile:

- Home farm with ≈ 40,000 hens
- Processes over 3,000,000 eggs per day
- Partners with 130 family farms in the U.S.

**Certification:** Certified Humane®, a project of Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC)

### Background

In the 1980s, the Ward Family Farm was struggling, unable to keep up with industrial-scale egg producers. So when the third generation of Wards inherited the farm, they took it in a new direction. Carol Ward Laflamme (Gerry's wife) and her cousin Peter (“Pete”) Stanton shifted to cage-free, organic production, eventually becoming the first Certified Humane® egg producer in the nation. They credit this shift for significantly benefiting their business.

Fast forward to 2019: Carol and Gerry's son Jesse is the CEO, and the Ward Family Farm—now the home farm of Pete and Gerry's—has six barns housing approximately 40,000 hens, along with one of the company's two processing facilities, which processes just over 100,000 eggs per day. Additionally, Pete and Gerry's partners with 130 small family farms throughout the United States that raise Pete and Gerry's hens. In accordance with Certified Humane® Free Range standards, these hens have access to grass pastures (weather permitting), lay their eggs in traditional nests and have dust areas to perform natural behaviors. Pete and Gerry's products are available in fine food retailers across the nation, as well as in some restaurants and colleges.



## Getting Certified

To credibly distinguish themselves in a marketplace saturated with unverified claims, Jesse and his family sought a program that certified compliance with strict “free range” requirements. In 2003, they chose Certified Humane® because they viewed it as trustworthy, and Jesse believed its robust standards could help Pete and Gerry’s expand in its target retail markets.

In order to become certified and maintain certification, Jesse explains that the farm has had to make some changes, including installing more scratching and dust-bathing areas, increasing the amount of available perching area, and creating elevated perches that timid hens can use to remove themselves from the larger flock. Jesse reports that with every rigorous audit, the company has to make a few small, reasonable changes, such as adding additional shade structures to pasture.

Beyond the standard application fee of \$75, Pete and Gerry’s pays a few hundred dollars annually for its audit fee, as well as the audit fees for its supplier farms. It also pays the certification cost in the form of a royalty on products sold with the Certified Humane® label. Overall, Jesse has found the program fees to be “very reasonable” and invaluable to consumers who are searching for trustworthy companies.



*Feeding the hens on Ward Family Farm.*

## HFAC Certification Outcomes

**Benefit to Animals.** According to Jesse, the overall percentage of mortality over the life of a free range flock is lower than average for similar flock sizes. Moreover, their indoor scratching space and outdoor range areas allow the hens to exercise.



*A brood of hens exploring Ward Family Farm.*

**Cutting Through Market Confusion.** Jesse notes that with consumers growing increasingly aware of unverified claims made by producers, the Certified Humane® label helps differentiate Pete and Gerry's by providing important third-party credibility. Pete and Gerry's uses the Certified Humane® logo on its website and all of its brand materials and packaging.

**Technical Advice.** Because Certified Humane® provides technical advice and subsidizes program costs for small producers, Jesse believes it is accessible to producers of all scales. Certified Humane® has also encouraged Pete and Gerry's producers to share ideas about how to comply with standards and improve hen welfare through improvements like new roost and nest designs.

## **Why Certify with HFAC?**

Jesse has this advice for farmers considering HFAC certification: A welfare-focused approach isn't "just good for our hens and the planet. It has also been good business. Consumers are searching for alternatives to the traditional food system. Integrity in labeling is important now and will become even more important in the future, and I believe that when it comes to animal welfare, there is no higher and more trusted standard for consumers than Certified Humane®."



# TETON WATERS RANCH

Denver, Colorado

*(originally Teton Valley, Idaho)*



**Operation Profile:** Partner with various suppliers in the U.S. and internationally to produce value-added, grass-fed and pasture-raised beef products

**Certification:** Certified Humane®, a project of Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC)

## Background

Teton Waters Ranch started out as an experiment in environmental conservation in Teton Valley, Idaho. An environmentally minded real estate investor purchased the 6,000-acre property hoping to reclaim its native grasslands. In the first year of ownership, native grasses were replanted and the farm was hayed for a small profit. In the second year, the owner engaged in some contract grazing while also grazing a few of his own cows on the land. The cattle grazed rotationally, fertilizing the land as they ate. Because consumer demand for grass-fed and grass-finished beef was just beginning to grow, Teton Waters Ranch found a niche market.

As Teton Waters Ranch scaled up production, it encountered issues with whole carcass utilization and decided to make value-added products with the remainder. At first, it began with ground beef

and hot dogs, but soon realized consumers wanted additional value-added products. The company then pulled together a larger value-added program and quickly outgrew the ranch in Idaho. Teton Waters Ranch began to partner with grass-fed ranchers who shared its practices, and as part of the transition, relocated its offices to Denver, Colorado.

To meet demand, Teton Waters Ranch continues to work with partner ranchers and farmers both domestically and internationally to produce beef that is 100% grass-fed and grass-finished with no hormones or antibiotics. Teton Waters Ranch states that its mission is to deliver beef products that have been raised in a manner that is better for animals, the planet and the consumer.



**“Certification has opened doors to retail stores that the farm could not have otherwise accessed” and “translated to increased revenues.”**

## Getting Certified

When considering the different certifications available, Teton Waters Ranch decided on Certified Humane® because of the rigidity of the program’s standards, its commitment to animals and its familiarity to consumers. After making the decision in 2017, the company transitioned its full line and rolled out its new products featuring the Certified Humane® logo in 2018.

Because Teton Waters Ranch partners with thousands of producers, its move to Certified Humane® essentially meant that the company had to rebuild its entire supply chain over the course of a year. However, many of the partner farmers stayed on and became certified to continue supplying to the company. Teton Waters Ranch assumes the audit costs and provides technical assistance to encourage farm partners—especially those that might be resistant—to get certified. Additionally, a Teton Waters Ranch representative is on-site for every partner audit to act as a liaison between the Certified Humane® auditors and the farmers. The company also provides assistance to its farm partners when an audit discovers issues that require corrective measures.



## HFAC Certification Outcomes

**Environmental Benefits.** Teton Waters Ranch was founded with the purpose of environmental conservation and restoring native grasslands. By requiring that partner farms raise grass-fed and finished cattle, Teton Waters Ranch hopes to spread these benefits beyond its original 6,000 acres.

**Benefits to Animals.** Teton Waters Ranch is committed to ensuring cattle are treated humanely. Certified Humane® enables Teton Waters Ranch to ensure that humane standards, such as attention during weaning and pain relief at castration or dehorning, are applied across a larger set of farms.

**Audit Efficiency.** Teton Waters Ranch markets its products with a number of different claims that pertain to how cattle are raised and handled. While the Certified Humane® third-party certification does not address all of these, the audit process helps to confirm some of the company's internal protocols and market claims. As a result, farm partners can undergo a single audit, which they believe suggests the Certified Humane® audit was thoughtfully designed with producers' needs in mind.

## Why Certify with HFAC?

Teton Waters Ranch became Certified Humane® in a continuing effort to define and improve its program's standards, as well as to fulfill its mission of raising cattle in a manner that regenerates the land, makes full use of the animal, and encourages better practices across a broad range of farm partners.

## COLD SPRING RANCH

### North New Portland, Maine



*Owner Gabe Clark and his herd of Angus cattle on Cold Spring Ranch.*

**Operation Profile:** ≈150 Angus stockers/year and ≈100 pigs/year

**Certification:** GAP Tier 4

### Background

Gabe Clark started Cold Spring Ranch in 2005, when he purchased a 240-acre former dairy farm in Maine to raise Angus stockers. In his first year, Gabe processed 24 calves. Today he and his wife, Molly, process around 150 cattle per year. A significant portion of their sales are to Whole Foods Market® (WFM) and other markets in the Portland/Freeport area. They also sell to restaurants, Bates College, Colby College and directly to the public. Gabe raises his cattle free-range throughout the year and provides a 100% grass diet. Pigs are pastured when weather permits and are supplemented with a non-GMO grain diet.

## Getting Certified

Currently, Cold Spring Ranch beef and pork products are rated as Global Animal Partnership Tier 4, GAP's "pasture-centered" level. In 2007, WFM bought Wild Oats, where Gabe was selling his products. When WFM required that fresh meats be GAP-certified, Gabe sought and maintained GAP certification so that he could continue to sell to WFM.

Gabe said, "I didn't have to change a thing about my operation to participate." He just had to tweak methods of record keeping to formally document what he was already doing.

Gabe pays certification costs for his farm, the three farms from which he purchases calves, and his processor. He covers the other operations' costs because, as he sees it, he is "asking them to do more," in terms of GAP's record-keeping requirements. Currently, he pays his GAP certifiers and processor certifiers over \$10,000 per year.



*A stunning panoramic view of Cold Spring Ranch.*

## GAP Certification Outcomes

**Product Differentiation.** In Gabe's view, America's agricultural economy has evolved in such a way that the beef cattle farmer has two business models to choose from and/or work toward: (1) high-volume (low-cost) production with low profit margins, or (2) low-volume (higher-cost) production with high profit margins. According to Gabe, the price premiums that drive the higher profit margins in the latter model have to be justified by some meaningful product differentiation.

He points to GAP standards as giving him negotiating power. "As GAP adds more requirements," he explains, "it gives me more safety in the markets that request them." Each new animal welfare standard is another hurdle that a competitor might not work to surmount.



**Market Access.** WFM is Cold Spring Ranch's single largest customer. Gabe appreciates the reliable sales outlet, though he notes that his ability to benefit from this market access is limited by the number of cattle he can produce given his land base.

**10%+ Premiums.** Gabe contracts with three Maine cow-calf operations for his GAP-certified cattle. He states that he pays them at least a 10% premium, part of which is to compensate them for their efforts complying with GAP's requirements. Over time, he has been able to transfer those costs to WFM. (Note: Farms that do not sell directly to WFM may still sell animals to farms that do, and benefit from related premiums. With that in mind, Gabe advises farms to contact their closest WFM to ask about which local farms sell directly to the store).

**Supporting Local Economies.** Gabe and his three calf providers "essentially joined forces to have enough acres to make enough animals to meet a market." As a result, he looks at WFM, GAP, and GAP premiums as mechanisms for supporting the local farmers he works with.

**Improved Animal Welfare.** According to Gabe, strict welfare standards—like early castration and late weaning—are "just good management" in that they reduce stress and trauma that can contribute to illness. Cold Spring Ranch was created with the belief that high-quality animal care, including a stress-free environment, natural diet and natural habitat, is crucial to success. GAP helps communicate these values to the customer.

## Why Certify with GAP?

"You want to have your product be worth something? Differentiate it," advises Gabe. For producers who are already close to meeting GAP standards and could potentially develop a relationship with WFM or another farm that sells into WFM, "the barrier is just knowledge of opportunities and the potential benefits."

# MARY'S FREE RANGE CHICKEN

## PITMAN FARMS

Sanger, California



“Being third-party verified brings confidence to the consumer.”

### Operation Profile:

- Processes 500,000+ chickens per week
- Produces and processes non-certified turkeys & ducks

**Certification:** GAP Tiers 3, 4 & 5

### Background

Mary's Free Range Chicken (“Mary’s”) is produced by Pitman Farms, a family-owned business in Sanger, California, that has been raising poultry for three generations. One generation ago, Pitman Farms was a traditional poultry operation. According to David Pitman, the family turned to higher welfare practices based on an interest in the links between animal welfare and food safety, increasing discomfort with the welfare of conventionally raised animals and rising consumer demand for higher welfare alternatives.

About 90% of the 500,000 chickens processed each week under the brand are GAP tier 3 certified. The remaining 10% are certified at Step levels 4 and 5. Chickens are sourced from Pitman Farms and other California-based GAP-certified farms, as well.

## Getting Certified

Mary's received GAP certification in 2008. According to David, Mary's pursued certification because customers had started asking, "What certification are you using?", and David suspected that "the days were numbered" of companies confirming operational information to customers "by affidavit on company letterhead." The trend was arcing toward the need to "verify."

Mary's had already been selling its products to Whole Foods Market® (WFM) prior to GAP's launch, and was required to obtain GAP certification in order to continue doing so. David said that GAP's flat fee approach to audits made program participation palatable.

According to David, in order to become GAP-certified, Mary's had to make some changes to its operation. For example, it had to add hay bales and eucalyptus branches as enrichments to its chicken-houses. Mary's also had to create more infrastructure to supply shade and water outside. Finally, to comply with GAP's record-keeping requirements, Mary's had to start administering more detailed and varied paperwork.

David explains that Mary's also had to "gently" bring suppliers on board with GAP by (1) discussing the pros and cons of participation; (2) paying for retrofits and improvements needed to meet GAP standards (like adding enrichments and doors for outdoor access); (3) paying for initial and annual certification costs (Mary's pays approximately \$1,750 per audit per farm); and (4) offering them a premium. According to David, Mary's helps supplier farms prepare for audits on a continuing basis. Specifically, Mary's farm supervisors visit the farms to help ensure proper audit preparation and also conducts "pre-audits" to "give them a taste of it" before the official audit.

## GAP Certification Outcomes

**Increased Sales.** Mary's started producing pasture-raised chicken in 2005 and had trouble selling the product. In 2008, they sought and received tier 5 certification, and sales doubled. It did so, David thinks, "because there was a simple scorecard system. Looking at a quick 5 or a quick 3, [consumers] can quickly understand the difference."

**Product Differentiation.** Mary's leverages its GAP certification in marketing. It uses the GAP logo on its products. Additionally, its website contains an "Animal Welfare" section dedicated to describing "What Makes Our Chicken Different?" The website includes a chart of select GAP standards for tier levels 3 through 5.

**Premiums.** David reports that Mary's Chicken pays a 10% premium to its GAP-certified supplier farms. This is, in part, to cover the increased effort and costs of record keeping, enrichments, and "free-range" conditions.

**Trickle Down Animal Welfare.** Mary's Chicken has expanded its operations and sources from multiple farms which then must be GAP-certified.



## Why Certify with GAP?

David recalls feeling slightly overwhelmed the first time he read through all of GAP's welfare standards. However, he points to the following as what he believes to be benefits of pursuing GAP certification:

- Consumers are demanding more humane treatment of farm animals and “being third-party verified brings confidence to the consumer.”
- It is required by Whole Foods Market®.
- The audit has a flat fee per farm (Mary's certifier is EarthClaims LLC).
- “What I like about GAP is the fact that it's a scorecard.” In David's experience, the step levels help consumers differentiate among products and even between GAP-certified products.
- David suggests GAP may be increasingly relevant outside the WFM context. Two other retailers have purchased chicken from Mary's on the basis of it being GAP-certified.
- Finally, David speculates that even smaller farms targeting local markets (like those in California processing 500 pasture-raised chickens per week) might benefit from GAP certification to differentiate their products and explain their higher prices to consumers.



*Owner David Pitman and his family on Pitman Farms.*

# RANCHO LLANO SECO

## Chico, California



*The Rancho's pigs next to their hoop barns.*

### Operation Profile:

- ≈ 4,500 pigs per year

**Certification:** GAP Tier 2

### Background

Charles Thieriot (Charlie) is the Director of Operations for Llano Seco Meats and the sixth-generation owner of Rancho Llano Seco, a 17,000-acre Spanish-era land grant ranch established in 1841 and purchased by his ancestors in 1861. Rancho Llano Seco currently produces organic and conventional walnuts and almonds, organic and conventional row crops such as heirloom beans and ancient grains, grass-fed cattle, and responsibly raised pigs. The Rancho's pigs have been GAP-certified since 2013.

When Charlie was a child, his family engaged in intensive pig farming and sold their hogs into the commodity market but had little success competing against larger industrial hog farms. Twenty years later, hearing the requests of their chef friends for higher-quality pork produced in California, Charlie's parents made the decision to raise pigs with a focus on the quality of the pork and quality of life for the pigs. A few years after the project started, Charlie came home to California and began to help with the meat business, eventually taking it over with the help and consultation of his friend, Max Stepanian. Max had previously worked for Niman Ranch and understood the particularities of marketing humanely raised meat.





**“GAP clearly differentiates Rancho Llano Seco in the marketplace, so consumers understand the added value of its products.”**

At the time of Charlie's return, the farm was USDA Organic certified. Rancho Llano Seco's pigs struggled with parasites because of their open access to pasture, but USDA Organic standards prohibit the use of parasiticides. Charlie felt it was inhumane to raise pigs on natural footing without the administration of a parasiticide. With some hesitation, the family decided to let go of the Organic certification so they could continue to raise their pigs without confinement and with continual access to the outdoors.

## Getting Certified

Charlie learned from Max that the further consumers get from the farm, the more important it is to provide assurances with verification that the company is keeping its promises. After letting go of its Organic certification, the Rancho still wanted to participate in a third-party audit program, as well as to maintain a certification for its pork that reflected its commitment to a high level of animal husbandry. Since Rancho Llano Seco was also raising GAP-certified cattle at the time of the transition, it was able to switch over its pork line to GAP-certified quickly and efficiently. (Despite giving its pigs outdoor access, Rancho Llano Seco is certified to GAP Tier 2. Charlie cites GAP's weaning and outdoor vegetative cover standards as the Rancho's key barriers to achieving a higher level).

As a result of the GAP certification, business thrived, ultimately causing the Rancho to grow out of its existing facility. To expand affordably while retaining many of the features intended to make the pigs comfortable, the family refurbished century-old barns on the property while adding some additional features and modern technologies like heat lamps, misters and fans. The goal is to let the animals root and socialize while keeping them warm when it's cold and cool when it's hot. In the process, they also stumbled on some old, forgotten husbandry practices that perform well in a confinement-free system.

Rancho Llano Seco maintains custody of its pigs at all times except when they are slaughtered in a small-scale abattoir approximately 20 minutes from the Rancho. The abattoir is small compared to a national scale, but much larger than what the ranch itself could maintain. This scale allows for more humane CO2 stunning before the animals are slaughtered.



## GAP Certification Outcomes

**Improved Animal Welfare.** Rancho Llano Seco was able to continue being acknowledged for raising pigs more humanely after letting go of its USDA Organic certification. The farm is committed to raising its pigs in a manner that preserves and restores the Rancho's land. GAP certification allows the company to verify these commitments to consumers.

**Market Access.** Rancho Llano Seco markets its pork as certified by the Global Animal Partnership on its website, in promotional materials, on packaging and when dealing with purchasers. As a result, the company has been able to differentiate its products and sell to well-recognized restaurants and establishments while also maintaining an online market presence. Charlie attributes much of the Rancho's success to its GAP certification. Important customers are starting to make GAP certification a prerequisite for doing business with a vendor, and more retailers are also seeking it out.

**Secure Pricing.** Even though there are always internal and external forces trying to drive prices down, Charlie feels GAP certification garners him the premiums he needs to maintain the standards he and his family believe are necessary for humane animal husbandry. GAP clearly differentiates Rancho Llano Seco in the marketplace, so consumers understand the added value of its products.

## Why Certify with GAP?

Rancho Llano Seco certified with Global Animal Partnership to reflect their strong commitment to raising pigs humanely while holistically stewarding their land.

# TRANSITION FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



## Overview

The costs of transitioning your farm/ranch operations to meet animal welfare certification program requirements can be significant. However, there are several potential sources for financial support in this process: (1) subsidies from an operation that buys and markets your animals or animal products under the brand; (2) applicable business expenses tax deductions; (3) private funding from non-profit organizations interested in promoting animal welfare; and (4) federal and state government grants and loans. Examples of these funding sources are set forth below.

**Note:** While expansive, this list is not exhaustive, and focuses on grant programs. Contact your state's department of agriculture and/or extension agency for additional potential funding opportunities.

## Subsidies from Downstream Buyer

Notably, a producer, producer group or marketing group that buys animals or animal products from another producer (you) may be willing to subsidize some or all of the on-farm changes you must make to meet certification program standards, as these businesses will be marketing your products under their brands (and possibly owning the relevant certification). See the [Case Studies](#) for examples of these types of downstream subsidies.

## Deductible Business Expenses

The “ordinary and necessary” costs of operating a farm business are deductible business expenses. “Ordinary” is defined as what most farmers do and “necessary” has been interpreted as what is useful and helpful in farming.<sup>1</sup> Farms record their expenses on [Schedule F Form 1040](#) and deductible business expenses include such things as consulting fees, advertising, dues to cooperatives, marketing fees, and recordkeeping expenses. Accordingly, many of the fees/costs associated with animal welfare certification (audit fees, certification fees, recordkeeping costs, etc.) are deductible as business expenses and farms should be sure to account for them in their yearly tax filings.

# GRANTS FROM NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

GRANT PROGRAM & ORGANIZATION SPONSOR	GRANT CAP	DESCRIPTION
<p><a href="#"><u>Capacity Building Grants</u></a>  <i>Food Animal Concerns Trust</i></p>	<p>\$2,500 for individuals;                      \$5,000 for group projects</p>	<p>Provides grants for farmers who currently hold Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Humane or Global Animal Partnership certification and are trying to expand or build their capacity. Eligible projects include infrastructure or investment, distribution or marketing efforts and joint sales efforts to buyers.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Animal Welfare Certification Grants</u></a>  <i>Food Animal Concerns Trust</i></p>	<p>\$2,500</p>	<p>Provides grants for on-farm projects that help achieve one of three animal welfare certifications – Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Humane and Global Animal Partnership levels 4 and above.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Pasture Improvement Grants</u></a>  <i>Food Animal Concerns Trust</i></p>	<p>\$2,500</p>	<p>Provides grants for projects that help farms transition to pasture-based systems, improve animals’ access to well-managed pasture, or expand animals’ access to well-managed pasture.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>The Frontera Farmer Foundation</u></a>  <i>Frontera Farmer Foundation</i></p>	<p>\$12,000</p>	<p>Provides grants for capital improvements to small and mid-size farmers <b>in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin</b> that sell their products in the Chicago area. Eligible projects must demonstrate how the grant will improve the farm’s viability and the availability of locally grown food.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Agricultural Reinvestment Fund</u></a>  <i>Rural Advancement Foundation International</i></p>	<p>\$9,000 for individuals;                      \$11,000 for group projects</p>	<p>Provide grants for innovative and entrepreneurial farmers and collaborative food and farm businesses <b>located in North Carolina</b> to develop new sources of agricultural income to enhance their sustainability and financial viability.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Farmer’s Tax Guide. Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service. <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p225.pdf>





## GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Federal and state government agencies offer financial assistance (grants and loans, some with cost-matching requirements) to farmers working to improve their farms and animal husbandry practices. A significant portion of government assistance is to support the improvement of conservation systems, including the management of waste and runoff. Below is a list of the available grants that could potentially be used to fund animal welfare certification projects. **Note:** This list is not exhaustive. Contact the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Rural Development or the Environmental Protection Agency for additional federal funding opportunities.

### Federal Funding

GRANT PROGRAM & AGENCY SPONSOR	GRANT CAP	DESCRIPTION
<a href="#">Agricultural Management Assistance Program</a> <i>USDA Rural Development</i>	\$50,000 per fiscal year	Provides grants for farmers incorporating conservation measures into farm operations to improve water management, water quality and erosion control. Eligible projects include planting trees for windbreaks, mitigating risks through diversification and <b>must come from farms in one of 16 eligible states.</b>
<a href="#">Conservation Stewardship Program</a> <i>USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service</i>	\$200,000 over 5 years	Provides grants for farmers improving or obtaining conservation systems, including for lands used for livestock. Through the program, farmers improve soil, water, air and habitat quality on their farms. Eligible projects include planting silvopasture, erecting wildlife friendly fencing and improved grazing management.
<a href="#">Environmental Quality Incentives Program</a> <i>USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service</i>	\$450,000 over 5 years	Provides grants for farmers to implement conservation practices that result in cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat, and improved agricultural operations. Eligible conservation practices include windbreaks, dust control from animal activity, fencing and livestock shelters or water pipelines.
<a href="#">Farm to School Grant Program</a> <i>USDA Food and Nutrition Service</i>	\$50,000 for planning and training grants; \$100,000 for implementation grants	Provides grants to fund school districts, state and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, agricultural producers and non-profit organizations in their efforts to increase presence of local food in schools. Funding could potentially be used to help local farms meet GFPP participant schools' welfare-certified sourcing requirements.
<a href="#">Value-Added Producer Grant</a> <i>USDA Rural Development</i>	\$75,000 for planning grants; \$250,000 for working capital grants	Provides grants for farmers undertaking activities related to the processing and/or marketing of value-added products. The goals of the program include generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities and increasing producer income.

## State Funding

Only one state, Vermont, has specifically enabled funding for animal welfare certification projects. However, many other states have existing grants programs supporting value-added, sustainable and other diversified types of farming. The list below attempts to capture all of the state grant programs for which animal welfare certification projects may be eligible.

GRANT PROGRAM & AGENCY SPONSOR	GRANT CAP	DESCRIPTION
<a href="#"><u>Alternative Manure Management Program</u></a> <b>California</b> Department of Food and Agriculture	\$750,000	Provides financial assistance for the implementation of non-digester manure management practices which will result in reduced GHG emissions. Eligible practices include pasture-based management.
<a href="#"><u>Healthy Soils Program Incentives Program</u></a> <b>California</b> Department of Food and Agriculture	\$50,000	Provides financial assistance for implementation of conservation management that improve soil health, sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Practices eligible for funding include, but are not limited to, cover cropping, compost application and conservation plantings.
<a href="#"><u>Farm Transition Grant</u></a> <b>Connecticut</b> Department of Agriculture	\$49,999	A competitive matching grant program that provides funds to farmers and agricultural cooperatives for the diversification of existing farm operations, transitioning to value-added agricultural production and sales, and developing farmers' markets.
<a href="#"><u>Farm Reinvestment Grant</u></a> <b>Connecticut</b> Department of Agriculture	\$40,000	Provides matching funds to farms to expand, diversify, and improve existing working farms through projects with a lifespan of 10 years or more.
<a href="#"><u>Agricultural Development Grant</u></a> <b>Maine</b> Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry	\$50,000	Provides cost share grants to conduct market promotion, market research and development, value-added processing and new technology demonstration projects.
<a href="#"><u>Maryland Value Added Producer Grant – Capital Asset Option</u></a> <b>Maryland</b> Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation	\$10,000	Provides competitive grants for value added processing capital asset projects. Designed to encourage farms interested in expanding or diversifying their operations through value added processing to purchase equipment of construct facilities.
<a href="#"><u>Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program</u></a> <b>Massachusetts</b> Department of Agricultural Resources	\$25,000	Provide grants for the implementation of agricultural conservation practices that improve water quality, conserve water, or improve air quality. Eligible projects include fencing for rotational grazing.
<a href="#"><u>Farm Viability Enhancement Program</u></a> <b>Massachusetts</b> Department of Agricultural Resources	\$125,000	Provides management advice and grants to implement farm growth and sustainability strategies through such methods as diversification and value-added initiatives. Eligible projects include building/repairing farm structures, purchasing infrastructure, and improving marketing structures.
<a href="#"><u>Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture</u></a> <b>Massachusetts</b> Department of Agricultural Resources	\$10,000	Provides technical and business planning assistance and grants to beginning farmers for farm improvement strategies. Funds typically used for equipment, infrastructure or other capital improvements.

GRANT PROGRAM & AGENCY SPONSOR	GRANT CAP	DESCRIPTION
<p><a href="#"><u>Food and Agriculture Investment Fund</u></a>  <b>Michigan</b>                      Department of Agriculture &amp; Rural Development</p>	<p>No cap; grants may not exceed 25% of total costs</p>	<p>Provides financial assistance to promote the growth of Michigan’s food and agriculture sectors by supporting the development of value-added processing of Michigan food, agriculture and forest products.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Value Added &amp; Regional Food Systems Grants</u></a>  <b>Michigan</b>                      Department of Agriculture &amp; Rural Development</p>	<p>\$125,000</p>	<p>Provides grants to establish, retain, expand, attract or develop value added agricultural production/processing in Michigan, or that expand or develop regional food systems.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>AGRI Livestock Investment Grant</u></a>  <b>Minnesota</b>                      Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>\$25,000</p>	<p>Provides grants for Minnesota livestock farmers and ranchers to help them improve, update and modernize their livestock operation infrastructure and equipment. Eligible projects include fencing, feeding equipment and waste management equipment.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>AGRI Value-Added Grant Program</u></a>  <b>Minnesota</b>                      Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>\$200,000</p>	<p>Provides grants to help Minnesota processors add value to Minnesota agricultural products by helping underwrite equipment purchases and physical improvements.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Dairy Business Planning Grants</u></a>  <b>Minnesota</b>                      Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>\$5,000</p>	<p>Provides grants to encourage business planning and modernization activities and other improvements on Minnesota dairy farms. Cover 50% of the cost to hire a qualified, independent third party to create a business plan for a dairy operation.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Value-Added Grant Program</u></a>  <b>Missouri</b>                      Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>\$200,000</p>	<p>Provides grants for projects that add value to Missouri agricultural products and aid the economy of a rural community. Projects should result in the development, processing and marketing of new or expanded uses of agricultural products.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Value-Added “Farm to Table” Grant Program</u></a>  <b>Missouri</b>                      Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>\$200,000</p>	<p>Provides grants for Missouri businesses to access resources for accessing and processing locally grown agricultural products for use in institutions within the state. Eligible applicants are small businesses purchasing or processing products from small farmers in the state.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Growth Through Agriculture Grants</u></a>  <b>Montana</b>                      Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>\$50,000</p>	<p>Provides grants to strengthen and diversify Montana’s agricultural industry through development of new agricultural products and processes. Eligible projects include purchasing equipment, advertising/promotion and consultant services.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Agricultural Development and Promotion Funds Program</u></a>  <b>New Mexico</b>                      Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>\$10,000 for individuals                      \$30,000 for groups</p>	<p>Provides grants to promote agricultural growth and rural stability, maintain or increase market share for producers, develop markets for new products, and develop value-added products.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Dairy Acceleration Program</u></a>  <b>New York</b>                      Cornell University                      PRO-DAIRY Program</p>	<p>\$6,000</p>	<p>Provides grants to enhance the long term viability of New York dairy farms. Eligible projects include the creation of business and/or environmental plans, design of new or remodeled facilities and farmstead plans.</p>



GRANT PROGRAM & AGENCY SPONSOR	GRANT CAP	DESCRIPTION
<a href="#">New Farmers Grant Fund</a> <i>New York</i> <i>Empire State Development</i>	\$50,000	Provides grants to beginning farmers to help them improve their farm profitability by expanding, diversifying or extending production and/or advancing innovative techniques that increase sustainable agriculture production. Eligible costs include purchase of machinery, equipment, supplies or new construction.
<a href="#">WNC AgOptions</a> <i>North Carolina</i> <i>Cooperative Extension</i>	\$6,000	Provides grants for diversifying or expanding farm operations to build sustainable farming communities in North Carolina. The program serves to offset risks for farmers expanding and trying new ventures.
<a href="#">Agriculture Enhancement and Diversification Program</a> <i>Oklahoma</i> <i>Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry</i>	\$10,000	Provides funds in the form of 0% interest loans and grants for expanding the state's value-added processing sector and encouraging farm diversification. Funds must be used for marketing and utilization, cooperative marketing, farm diversification and basic and applied research.
<a href="#">Local Agriculture and Seafood Act Grants Program</a> <i>Rhode Island</i> <i>Department of Environmental Management</i>	\$20,000	Provides grants to support the growth, development, and marketing of local food in Rhode Island. Project priorities include supporting small or beginning farmers and supporting new products or sales channels with clearly defined markets.
<a href="#">Agricultural Enhancement Program</a> <i>Tennessee</i> <i>Department of Agriculture</i>	Up to \$15,000 depending on the project	Provides grants to agricultural producers to make long-term investments in Tennessee farms and communities. Projects allow producers to maximize profits, adapt to changing markets, increase farm efficiency, and make positive economic impact in their communities.
<a href="#">Agriculture Enterprise Fund</a> <i>Tennessee</i> <i>Department of Agriculture</i>	No cap; grants may not exceed 25% of total costs	Provides grants to starting or expanding agricultural, food and forestry businesses and farmers. Successful projects will demonstrate a strong potential for impact on local farm income, access to markets, increased capacity or agricultural innovation.
<a href="#">Young Farmer Grant</a> <i>Texas</i> <i>Department of Agriculture</i>	\$20,000	Provides grants to young agricultural producers that are engaged or will be in engaged in creating or expanding an agricultural business in Texas.
<a href="#">Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund</a> <i>Virginia</i> <i>Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services</i>	\$500,000	Provides grants to businesses that add value to Virginia grown agriculture and forestall products. Aims to help businesses create new markets and opportunities for products of Virginia's working lands.
<a href="#">Local Food Market Development Grants</a> <i>Vermont</i> <i>Department of Agriculture</i>	\$5,000	Provide grants to increase Vermont producers' access to institutional and wholesale markets, promote consumption of local food, and encourage scaling up through new market development opportunities across Vermont.
<a href="#">Working Lands Business Grants</a> <i>Vermont</i> <i>Working Lands Enterprise Initiative</i>	\$25,000 for standard grants; \$125,000 for industry impact grants	Provides grants to help grow the economies, cultures, and communities of Vermont's working landscape. <b>Eligible projects include animal welfare certification</b> , infrastructure, marketing, and research and development that will have measurable performance outcomes such as increased income or product output.

# USDA LABELING REQUIREMENTS



If you (a farmer or processor) plan to market a welfare-certified animal product and wish to use the certification program label on it, you must first apply to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) for approval to do so. The FSIS is responsible for ensuring that “labels with special statements and claims,” including animal welfare claims, are truthful. To secure approval:

- 1. Obtain certification from the farm animal welfare program.**
- 2. Fill out FSIS Form 7234-1 (Application of Approval for Labels),** including a sample label and other required information and documentation.
- 3. Submit electronically or via fax or mail. You will receive a response within 10 days.**

## **Additional Information:**

For additional label application guidance, and information, including Form 7234-1 and the FSIS Compliance Guide for Label Approval, [click here](#).

# SOURCES



## **Animal Welfare Approved, a program of A Greener World (AGW)**

Website: [www.animalwelfareapproved.us](http://www.animalwelfareapproved.us)

## **Certified Humane<sup>®</sup>, a program of Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC)**

Website: [www.certifiedhumane.org](http://www.certifiedhumane.org)

## **Global Animal Partnership**

Website: [www.globalanimalpartnership.org](http://www.globalanimalpartnership.org)

## **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)**

Website: [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



## **American Farmland Trust**

Website: [www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org)

## **Animal Welfare Institute’s Food Label Report**

Available at [www.awionline.org/content/eat-humanely](http://www.awionline.org/content/eat-humanely)

## **ASPCA**

Website: [www.aspc.org/shopwithyourheart](http://www.aspc.org/shopwithyourheart)

## **ASPCA’s 2018 Consumer Survey**

Available at [www.aspc.org/shopwithyourheart/business-and-farmer-resources/aspc-surveys](http://www.aspc.org/shopwithyourheart/business-and-farmer-resources/aspc-surveys)

## **Center for Rural Affairs**

Website: [www.cfra.org](http://www.cfra.org)

## **Consumer Report’s “Greener Choices” Label Guide**

Available at [www.greenerchoices.org/labels](http://www.greenerchoices.org/labels)

## **Farm Aid**

Website: [www.farmaid.org](http://www.farmaid.org)

## **Jayson Lusk’s 2015 Food Demand Survey**

Available at [www.jaysonlusk.com/blog](http://www.jaysonlusk.com/blog)

## **National Young Farmers Coalition**

Website: [www.youngfarmers.org](http://www.youngfarmers.org)

## **North Carolina Cooperative Extension’s Guide to “Special Claims and the Approval Process for Niche Meat Production”**

Available at <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/special-claims-and-the-approval-process-for-niche-meat-production>

## **Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI)**

Website: [www.rafiusa.org/farmer-resources/](http://www.rafiusa.org/farmer-resources/)