

THE FACTS ABOUT FARM ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS



**A Summary of Farm Sanctuary's
Research Report**

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A Summary of Farm Sanctuary's Research Report

Farm Animal Welfare: An Assessment of Product Labeling Claims, Industry Quality Assurance Guidelines and Third-Party Certification Standards



In the past half century, animal agriculture in the U.S. has been taken over by corporations, turning family farms into factory farms. Industrialization has allowed agribusiness to profit by raising a large number of animals more quickly and for less money. Factory farms treat animals as production units, not sentient beings with complex social and behavioral needs. They operate on the principle that it is more cost effective to accept some loss in inventory than to spend money on treating animals humanely.



Factory farms commonly warehouse hundreds or thousands of animals indoors, often in small pens or cages, or outdoors in barren lots. Grazing in open pasture and outdoor access is now the exception rather than the rule. Today, more than 90% of egg-laying hens in the U.S. are confined for their entire lives to cages so small the birds can't spread their wings. More than two-thirds of sows in the U.S. are confined for most of their lives to crates that prevent them from even turning around. Dairy cows may be tied indoors inside cement-floored stalls or confined outdoors to barren dirt lots with limited or no access to shade and shelter. Cattle are fattened up in feedlots, virtual cattle cities where up to 100,000 animals are crowded into pens, breathing in noxious fumes and standing or lying in waste. And slaughterhouses have cut costs by increasing production rates, killing at lightning speed up to 400 cows, 1,100 pigs and 12,000 chickens every hour.





The growth of industrialized farming in the U.S. has been facilitated, in part, by the near total lack of government regulation of the care and treatment of farm animals. The Humane Methods of

Slaughter Act, which requires that animals be rendered insensible to pain prior to slaughter, is the only major law affecting the handling of farm animals. The humane slaughter law does not cover poultry, which comprise over 95% of farm animals who are slaughtered in the U.S. In addition, animals used in food production are excluded from the federal Animal Welfare Act, while about half of the state laws prohibiting animal cruelty and neglect exempt customary farming practices. Unlike the U.S., other industrialized countries have enacted a variety of laws to restrict cruel factory farming practices.

Not until the early 1990s did the food animal production industry attempt to set guidelines for the handling of farm animals. Temple Grandin, professor at Colorado State University, developed best management practices for the American Meat Institute (AMI), the trade association for U.S. slaughterhouses. Grandin devised audit tools that included, measurable criteria, such as the percentage of animals stunned properly and the percent being moved without the use of electrical prods. In 1996, at the request of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Grandin used her criteria to audit the handling of animals at two dozen federally inspected slaughterhouses. Two-thirds failed the audit.

In 1999, McDonald's Corporation, under pressure from animal advocacy groups for years, finally initiated cattle and pig slaughterhouse audits of its suppliers and eventually dropped or suspended those not able to meet the AMI criteria. The following year McDonald's extended its audits to poultry slaughterhouses and to chicken and egg farms. By 2001, Burger King Corporation and Wendy's International, also under pressure from animal advocacy groups, joined McDonald's in setting animal care requirements and conducting audits of their suppliers.

The United Egg Producers (UEP) became the first industry trade association to develop a voluntary certification program for farm animals. Unfortunately, the original standards set for the "Animal Care Certified" program did little to improve



the welfare of chickens raised in factory farms, serving primarily as a marketing tool to promote the sale of battery caged eggs in response to heightened consumer interest in welfare standards. In 2004, the Better Business Bureau filed a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) stating that the “Animal Care Certified” seal is misleading advertising and recommended that use of the seals be discontinued. In fact, only after complaints were filed with the FTC did the UEP announce that they would prohibit feed withdrawal for forced molting of hens – one of the more notoriously cruel practices in poultry rearing – effective January 2006.

In 2001, the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and the National Council of Chain Restaurants (NCCR), the trade associations for grocery stores and chain restaurants, respectively, joined forces to develop a voluntary audit program that would allow its members to review the animal care practices of their suppliers. At the urging of FMI-NCCR, other animal agriculture trade associations created guidelines, or revised existing ones, that could be used in retail food industry audits. These trade associations include the National Chicken Council, Milk and Dairy Beef Quality Assurance Center, National Pork Board, National Turkey Federation, and the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association.



While farm animal industry guidelines and third-party certification programs may have the potential to improve the way farm animals are treated in the U.S., to date, they have been used largely as a way to maintain the status quo. Voluntary industry quality assurance programs are commonly cited by agribusiness during legislative deliberations and used to argue that it is not necessary to pass legislation to prevent cruel farming practices.

Although the setting of welfare standards for farm animals is still in its infancy in the U.S., the area is evolving rapidly. In the past five years, more than one dozen farm animal quality assurance schemes have been developed. These include animal industry quality assurance programs, retail food animal care auditing programs, and third-party organic and humane food certification programs. In addition, developments of government-regulated food labeling and marketing claims relevant to animal welfare are underway.

Product Labeling & Marketing Claims

Food product labeling and marketing claims are governed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and, in some cases, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the federal agency responsible for ensuring truthfulness and accuracy in the labeling of meat and poultry products. The agency also regulates the labeling of pasteurized liquid eggs and cooked eggs, but not shelled raw eggs, which are regulated by the FDA and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the USDA.



USDA utilizes informal working definitions for animal care labeling claims such as “free range” and “grass fed.” These terms currently have no regulatory definition. USDA-FSIS pre-approves product labels based on producer testimonials only. The agency does not check on-farm compliance with meat and poultry claims. USDA-AMS neither pre-approves nor verifies label claims for shell eggs. Thus, compliance with labeling claims is not verified, with the exception of claims associated with third-party certification programs. It is likely consumers grossly over-estimate the animal welfare significance of these claims.

Animal Industry Quality Assurance Programs

Quality assurance programs and guidelines to assess farm animal rearing and handling have been created by both animal agriculture producer trade associations and individual producers. These trade associations include those representing producers of dairy and beef cattle, veal calves, sheep, pigs, meat chickens, and laying hens. Guidelines, but no quality assurance program, also have been developed for beef cattle and sheep. The National Turkey Federation is currently in the process of finalizing guidelines for the handling and slaughter of turkeys. In addition, guidelines have been developed by the American Meat Institute for the handling of cattle, sheep and pigs at slaughter. Of the various programs, only one – the United Egg Producer's Animal Care Certified program – currently features third party, pass/fail audits.

The animal industry has created these quality assurance programs in response to pressure from food retailers, including grocery stores and chain restaurants, and to avoid government regulation and third-party audits. In most cases, the guidelines were developed with little or no

public input, by scientists and industry officials with expertise in animal production, not animal welfare. These guidelines allow numerous inhumane practices and fail to provide animals with freedom from hunger, discomfort, pain, fear and distress and the freedom to express normal behavior (referred to as the “Five Freedoms”). In addition, the areas of transportation, use of genetic selection, and the care of breeding animals are not sufficiently addressed. A review of animal industry guidelines for dairy cattle, pigs, meat chickens and laying hens conducted for this report noted a total of more than 50 major violations of the Five Freedoms.

A summary of current industry quality assurance programs:

Beef Cattle

The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) has approved guidelines for the care and handling of beef cattle. No quality assurance program has been developed to implement and audit the guidelines, and the NCBA has declared publicly that it doesn’t believe auditing of animal care is necessary.

- Access to pasture not required; confinement to feedlots allowed
- Castration without anesthesia allowed
- Hot iron branding allowed
- Use of electric prods allowed



Dairy Cattle

The Milk and Dairy Beef Quality Assurance Center has operated a registration and certification process for dairies since the establishment of its original quality assurance program in 1990, but dairies are not expected to meet all of the guidelines in order to be certified, and no third party auditing of the guidelines is required.

- Tail docking and dehorning allowed
- Use of growth hormones allowed
- Confinement of cows to tie-stalls and calves to crates allowed
- Minimum space allowances for calves not provided
- Calves may be removed from mothers immediately after birth



Veal Calves

The Veal Quality Assurance Certification Program of the American Veal Association is a general quality assurance program, the original purpose of which was to reduce the incidence of chemical residues in calves. Although it is referred to as a certification program, it is voluntary and entirely self-regulated with no third-party review.



- Tethering and continuous confinement to crates allowed
- Bedding not required
- Slatted flooring allowed
- Provision of adequate iron and fiber not required

Sheep

The American Sheep Industry Association has produced guidelines for the care of sheep. Overall, the guidelines are general and subjective. The Sheep Care Guide contains no forms or scoring tools for auditing compliance with the guidelines. The Guide also does not recommend any form of internal or external auditing.

- Early weaning allowed
- Tail docking and castration without anesthesia allowed
- Access to grazing pasture not required
- Minimum space allowances not provided

Pigs

The National Pork Board's Swine Welfare Assurance Program (SWAP) consists of a manual with assessment forms. No third party auditing is offered at present. In the first year of SWAP, assessments were performed at only about 100 of the 73,000 U.S. pig operations.

- Bedding and rooting materials not required
- Tail docking, teeth clipping, ear notching and castration without anesthesia allowed
- Confinement of sows to gestation and farrowing crates allowed
- Access to outdoors not required



Chickens

The National Chicken Council's (NCC) Animal Welfare Guidelines were developed with input from an animal welfare task force, whose members included industry representatives with backgrounds in production. Auditing is voluntary on the part of individual producers. When the retail food industry developed its animal welfare-auditing program, there were more areas of disagreement between the retail industry's recommendations and the NCC guidelines than any other animal agriculture guidelines.

- Feed/water restriction of breeding animals allowed
- Litter for dust bathing not required
- Debeaking, toe clipping and comb dubbing allowed
- Access to outdoors not required

Laying Hens

United Egg Producers has developed Animal Care Certified, the only industry-sponsored, third party animal care certification program. Initial audits must be conducted at each of the company's facilities, but subsequent audits may be reduced to only 50% of facilities. Auditors provide producers with a minimum of 48-hour notice prior to the on-site audit, and only a small percentage of layer houses are inspected for compliance.

- Debeaking allowed
- Confinement to small cages allowed
- Access to the outdoors not required
- Forced molting allowed (to be phased out in January 2006)
- Humane slaughter not addressed



Retail Food Auditing Programs

Animal care audit programs have been developed by both retail food trade associations and individual retailers.

FMI-NCCR

In 2001, the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and the National Council of Chain Restaurants (NCCR), the trade associations for grocery stores and restaurants, respectively, formed an alliance to address the care of

animals used for food. They created the Animal Welfare Audit Program (AWAP) to assess their suppliers' compliance with voluntary animal agriculture industry guidelines.

The FMI-NCCR program has adopted audit criteria for the care and handling of beef cattle, dairy cattle, pigs, egg-laying hens and meat chickens, and for the slaughter of livestock and meat chickens. Guidelines for turkey production and slaughter are being reviewed but have not been finalized as of July 2005.

Current AWAP audit criteria are inadequate to ensure animal welfare. Even so, in many cases where NCCR and FMI members ask their suppliers to participate in AWAP, the suppliers refuse to comply. Producer associations, such as the National Pork Board, are pressuring food retailers to accept industry quality assurance assessments as an alternative to AWAP.

Individual Retailers

Fast food giants McDonald's, Burger King and Wendy's were the first retailers to establish programs to monitor the treatment of animals by the animal agriculture industry. Their efforts in this area influenced the creation of the FMI-NCCR audit program. They continue to perform their own animal care audits as well as participating in AWAP. One grocery chain, Whole Foods Market, has initiated a project to create animal care guidelines to cover the care of all farm animal species whose products are sold by the company.



Third-Party Certification Programs

At present there are three independent, third party food certification programs that include standards for the care and handling of animals. These programs are the Certified Organic, Certified Humane and Free Farmed programs. Although not a formal certification program, the Animal Welfare Institute has also developed farm animal husbandry criteria.

Certified Organic

The National Organic Program (NOP) was created by passage of the Organic Food Production Act of 1990. The regulations implementing the

program were established as a result of one of the largest rulemaking efforts in U.S. history, in which more than 300,000 public comments were received on two proposed organic rules.



Organic producers are certified following an on-site inspection. Inspections, either announced or unannounced, are then conducted annually and as needed to verify compliance with the regulations. There are more than 1,000 certified organic farmers raising livestock and/or poultry in the U.S. Approximately 2% of egg-laying hens, 2% of dairy cows, and less than 1% of beef cattle, pigs and meat birds are being raised under organic conditions. While still small, the organic segment of the food market is growing at a rate of about 20% per year.

NOP regulations are written to apply to all farm animal species. The federal standards do not address handling practices such as electric prod use, management practices such as forced molting and weaning, minimum space allowances, euthanasia or transport. They also allow physical alterations such as debeaking and tail docking.

NOP regulations allow animals to be temporarily confined under certain circumstances. Some certifying agents have permitted poultry and egg producers to use this loophole to keep birds confined indoors most or all of the time, sometimes in barns holding thousands of birds. Also, some organic mega-dairies have been allowed to house cows without access to pasture as required by the regulations.

Certified Humane

The Certified Humane program is administered by Humane Farm Animal Care and endorsed by several animal advocacy organizations. Standards have been created for beef cattle, dairy cattle, young dairy beef, pigs, sheep, goats, turkeys, meat chickens and egg-laying hens. The standards were developed by animal behavior scientists and veterinarians with expertise in farm animal care. These advisors recommend revisions to the standards and assist with audits.



* Meets the Humane Farm Animal Care Program standards, which include nutritious diet without antibiotics, or hormones, animals raised with shelter, resting areas, sufficient space and the ability to engage in natural behaviors.

Certified Humane standards exceed those of industry quality assurance programs in various respects, including the following examples:

- Dairy cattle – Minimum of four hours daily outdoor exercise required
- Pigs – Confinement of sows to gestation crates prohibited and bedding required
- Chickens – Litter for dust bathing required and wire, slatted flooring prohibited
- Laying hens – Confinement to wire cages prohibited and litter for dust bathing required

While Certified Humane standards are stronger than industry guidelines, they permit some industry practices that cause animal suffering and prevent the performance of normal behavior. For example:

- No requirement that pigs, meat chickens or laying hens be provided access to the outdoors
- Physical alterations like debeaking of hens and tail docking of pigs allowed under some circumstances

Free Farmed

Free Farmed is administered as an in-house program of its sponsoring organization, the American Humane Association. American Humane has hired a former executive director of the Colorado Pork Producers Council to manage the program. The auditing standards and process are similar to those of the Certified Humane program. However, unlike Certified Humane, Free Farmed has no formal process for the routine review/revision of standards and its advisory committee includes only one recognized expert in animal welfare. Free Farmed audits are performed by an independent professional auditing company.



AWI Husbandry Criteria

The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) program consists of an agreement that the producer will abide by humane husbandry criteria in exchange for the right to make marketing use of the AWI name. AWI has developed humane husbandry criteria for beef cattle and calves, sheep, pigs, ducks and rabbits and is in the process of completing standards for other species. AWI requires that participating producers be family farms, and does not allow for farmers to produce products by

other methods, while the Certified Humane, Free Farmed, and Certified Organic programs allow farmers to produce both certified and non-certified products. AWI husbandry criteria comes closest to satisfying the Five Freedoms, but the program has no formal process for auditing compliance.

Conclusion

Various humane certification and labeling programs have been developed in response to growing popular concerns about the cruel treatment of farm animals, but their impact at improving animal welfare has been minimal. Food labeling and marketing claims, like “grass fed” and “cage free,” are generally subjective and not verified. The regulations of the National Organic Program are vague, non-specific as to species, and inconsistently applied. Organic egg and dairy producers have been allowed to use loopholes to deprive animals of the opportunity to graze and forage in a natural setting. Animal industry quality assurance guidelines are inadequate; they codify inhumane farming systems, fail to prevent suffering and distress, and do not allow for the expression of normal animal behavior. By comparison, humane certification standards disallow some cruel practices, but significant deficiencies exist in these as well. Specialty markets, like organic and “humane” foods, may help lessen animal suffering, but they affect only a very small percent, about 2%, of the billions of animals exploited for food each year in the U.S, and even animal derived foods produced according to a “humane” program may not meet consumer expectations.



Comparison of Animal Welfare Standards by Program

Beef Cattle

Animal Welfare Standard	Industry Guidelines (NCBA)	National Organic Program (USDA)	Certified Humane Program (HFAC)	Free Farmed Program (AHA)	Animal Welfare Institute -draft-
Antibiotics	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Permitted for treatment of disease only	Permitted for treatment of disease only	Permitted for treatment of disease only
Growth Hormones	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
Access to Pasture	Not required; confinement to feedlots allowed	Required; temporary confinement allowed in some situations; feedlots prohibited	Not required; cattle may be maintained in feedlots	Not required; cattle may be maintained in feedlots	Access to pasture required throughout lifetime when climate permits
Identification	Hot branding and ear notching allowed; jaw brands are not to be used	Not addressed	Hot iron branding & ear cutting prohibited; ear tagging permitted	Hot iron branding & ear cutting prohibited; ear tagging permitted	Hot iron branding & ear cutting prohibited; ear tagging permitted
Castration	Recommended be done before 4 mos.; no recommendation regarding anesthesia	Physical alterations must be performed as needed to promote animal welfare & in a manner that minimizes pain & stress	Recommend be done at earliest age possible; anesthesia required for surgical removal after 2 mos. of age	Recommend be done at earliest age possible; anesthesia required for surgical removal after 2 mos. of age	Recommend be done before 2 mos. of age; use of anesthesia required
Debudding/ Dehorning	Recommended be done before 4 mos.; no recommendation about anesthesia	Physical alterations must be performed as needed to promote animal welfare & in a manner that minimizes pain & stress	Debudding in first 4 mos. using hot iron ok with or without anesthesia	Debudding in first 4 mos. using hot iron ok with or without anesthesia	Debudding preferred; anesthesia required for debudding & dehorning
Spaying of Heifers	Not prohibited	Not addressed	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
Min. Weaning Age	No limit; usually 7-8 mos. of age	Not addressed	Not addressed	Not addressed	6-9 mos. of age
Electric Prod Use	Permitted but voltage must be less than 50 volts	Not addressed	Permitted in emergencies only	Permitted in emergencies only	Prohibited

Comparison of Animal Welfare Standards by Program

Dairy Cattle

Animal Welfare Standard	Industry Guidelines (DQA)	National Organic Program (USDA)	Certified Humane Program (HFAC)	Free Farmed Program (AHA)
Antibiotics	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Permitted for treatment of disease only	Permitted for treatment of disease only
Growth Hormones	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
Ammonia Levels	Recommended be kept below allowable levels	Shelter designed for ventilation & air circulation	Not to exceed 25 ppm	Not to exceed 25 ppm
Housing	Tie-stall housing permitted but animals should be turned out daily for exercise; no minimum duration specified	Opportunity to exercise and access to outdoors must be provided; temporary confinement allowed	Confinement for more than 4 hours prohibited; animals must be turned out for 4 hours of exercise daily	Confinement for more than 4 hours prohibited; animals must be turned out for 4 hours of exercise daily
Bedding	Dry, clean bedding recommended; no quantity specified	Clean, dry bed required; no depth specified	Adequate, clean bedding required 3 inches in depth	Adequate, clean bedding required 3 inches in depth
Calf Hutches/Tethering	No limit on confinement of calves; tethering not prohibited	Not addressed but exercise and freedom of movement required	Hutches permitted but calves must be able to stand, turn around, lie, rest, groom; tethering prohibited	Hutches permitted but calves must be able to stand, turn around, lie, rest, groom; tethering prohibited
Colostrum for Calves	4 quarts from 1 cow within 30-60 minutes of birth recommended	Not addressed	2-4 quarts within first 8 hours; 1.6 gallons over next 48 hours	2-4 quarts within first 8 hrs; 1.6 gallons over next 48 hrs
Min. Weaning Age	No limit	Not addressed	5 weeks	5 weeks
Dietary Fiber for Calves	Some dry grain before 4 weeks recommended	Not addressed	Required for calves over 30 days of age	Required for calves over 14 days of age
Tail Docking	Switch trimming preferred; docking allowed after pregnancy confirmed	Physical alterations must be performed as needed to ensure animal welfare	Prohibited; switch trimming permitted	Prohibited; switch trimming permitted
Dehorning/Debudding	Hot iron cautery method recommended; anesthesia recommended for older calves	Physical alterations must be performed as needed to ensure animal welfare & in a manner that minimizes pain	Cautery method approved; paste & scoop methods prohibited; anesthesia required for older calves	Cautery method approved; scoop method may be used if necessary; anesthesia required for older calves

Comparison of Animal Welfare Standards by Program

Sheep

Animal Welfare Standard	Industry Guidelines (ASIA)	National Organic Program (USDA)	Certified Humane Program (HFAC)	Free Farmed Program (AIA)	Animal Welfare Institute -draft-
Antibiotics	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Permitted for treatment of disease only	Permitted for treatment of disease only	Permitted for treatment of disease only
Growth Hormones	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
Access to Pasture	Not required	Required; temporary confinement allowed in some situations	Required during grass-growing season when conditions allow	Required during grass-growing season when conditions allow	Required continuously from 2 wks of age unless conditions prevent
Access to Shelter	Natural or artificial shade, shelter, windbreaks recommended	Shade and shelter required	Natural or artificial shade, shelter, windbreaks required	Natural or artificial shade, shelter, windbreaks required	Natural or artificial shade, shelter, windbreaks required
Bedding	Not required	Clean, dry bedding required	Clean, dry bedding required	Clean, dry bedding required	Clean, dry bedding required
Perforated, Slatted Floors	Not addressed	Not addressed	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
Indoor Lighting	Not addressed	Access to direct sunlight required	Artificial light at a level comparable to natural light allowed	Artificial light at a level comparable to natural light allowed	Windows or openings that allow natural daylight required
Min. Weaning Age	Early weaning allowed	Not addressed	5 weeks	5 weeks	5 months
Castration	Encouraged; local anesthetic may be needed if performed after 8 weeks of age	Physical alterations must be performed as needed to promote animal welfare	May be performed between 1 & 7 days of age; local anesthetic recommended	May be performed between 1 & 7 days of age; local anesthetic recommended	Prohibited
Tail Docking	Encouraged; local anesthetic may be needed if performed after 8 weeks of age	Physical alterations must be performed as needed to promote animal welfare	May be performed between 1 & 14 days using rubber ring or hot iron; anesthetic not required	May be performed between 1 & 14 days using rubber ring or hot iron; anesthetic not required	Prohibited

Comparison of Animal Welfare Standards by Program

Pigs

Animal Welfare Standard	Industry Guidelines (SWAP)	National Organic Program (USDA)	Certified Humane Program (HFAC)	Free Farmed Program (AHA)	Animal Welfare Institute Program
Antibiotics	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Permitted only for disease treatment	Permitted only for disease treatment	Prohibited for routine use
Ammonia Levels	Should not exceed 50 ppm	Shelter designed for ventilation & air circulation	Not to exceed 25 ppm	Not to exceed 25 ppm	Low enough for animals to breathe freely & safely
Access to Outdoors	Not required	Required; temporary confinement allowed	Not required	Not required	Required for farms entering program as of 1/05
Tethers/ Gestation Crates/ Farrowing Crates	Permitted	Not addressed but prohibited due to exercise and freedom of movement requirement	Prohibited, except turn-around type farrowing pens allowed (must be at least 5x7)	Prohibited, except turn-around type farrowing pens allowed (must be at least 5x7)	All prohibited including turn-around farrowing crates
Min. Farrowing Space Per Sow	No limit	Not addressed	35 sq ft required; 100 sq ft preferred	35 sq ft required; 100 sq ft preferred	48-70 sq ft (depending on system)
Bedding	Not required	Clean, dry bedding required	Required for housing indoors & outdoors	Required for housing indoors & outdoors	Required for housing indoors & outdoors
Slatted, Wire Floors	Permitted	Not addressed	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
Indoor Lighting	Subdued artificial light allowed	Access to direct sunlight required	Artificial light allowed (at level of at least 50 lux)	Artificial light allowed (at level of at least 50 lux)	New buildings must let in sunlight
Feed Restriction for Sows/Boars	Daily feed recommended but controlling the amount encouraged	Not addressed; animals must be provided "a total feed ration"	Permitted but dietary or environmental supplements must be provided	Permitted but dietary or environmental supplements must be provided	Permitted but dietary or environmental supplements must be provided
Min. Weaning Age	No limit	Not addressed	3 weeks	3 weeks	6 weeks
Tail Docking	Permitted	Alterations must be performed as needed to promote welfare	Permitted until info on prevention of tail biting is available	Permitted until info on prevention of tail biting is available	Prohibited

Comparison of Animal Welfare Standards by Program

Chickens

Animal Welfare Standard	Industry Guidelines (NCC)	National Organic Program (USDA)	Certified Humane Program (HFAC)	Free Farmed Program (AHA)
Antibiotics	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Permitted for disease treatment only	Permitted for disease treatment only
Ammonia Levels	Should not exceed 25 ppm; goal 10 ppm	Shelter designed for ventilation and air circulation	Not to exceed 25 ppm; should be less than 10	Not to exceed 25 ppm; should be less than 10
Access to Outdoors	Not required	Required; temporary confinement allowed	Not required	Not required
Max. Stocking Density	6.5 lbs per sq ft (for birds below 4.5 lbs) to 8.5 lbs per sq ft (for birds more than 5.5 pounds)	Not addressed but opportunity to exercise & freedom of movement required	6.0 lbs per sq ft	56 lbs per sq yd
Slatted, Wire Floor	Permitted	Not addressed	Prohibited	Not addressed
Litter for Dust Bath	Not required	Not addressed	Required	Required
Indoor Lighting	Near-continuous lighting allowed; 4 hrs darkness per day recommended (need not be continuous)	Access to direct sunlight required	Min. 8 hrs light (avg. 20 lux), 6 continuous hrs of darkness required per day	Min. 8 hrs light (avg. 20 lux), 6 continuous hrs of darkness required per day
Toe Clipping/Comb Dubbing of Breeding Cockerels	Permitted	Alterations to be performed as needed to ensure welfare	Prohibited	Prohibited
Beak Trimming	Prohibited in meat birds; permitted in breeding birds	Alterations to be performed as needed to ensure welfare	Prohibited in meat birds; not specified for breeders	Prohibited in meat birds; not specified for breeders
Feed Withdrawal Before Slaughter	No more than 24 hours	Not addressed	No more than 16 hours	No more than 16 hours
Max. Transport Time	No limit	Not addressed	12 hrs from start of loading to unloading at plant	12 hrs from start of loading to unloading at plant
Slaughter Plant Holding Time	Should not exceed 6 hrs	Not addressed	Not to exceed 10 hrs	Not to exceed 10 hrs
Acceptable Methods of Stunning for Slaughter	Not specified	Not addressed	Electrical stunning bath, dry stunner, hand-held stunner, gas stunning	Electrical stunning bath, dry stunner, hand-held stunner

Comparison of Animal Welfare Standards by Program

Egg-Laying Hens

Animal Welfare Standard	Industry Guidelines (ACC)	National Organic Program (USDA)	Certified Humane Program (HFAC)	Free Farmed Program (AHA)
Antibiotics	Not prohibited	Prohibited	Permitted for treatment of disease only	Permitted for treatment of disease only
Ammonia Levels	Recommended not to exceed 50 ppm	Shelter designed for ventilation & air circulation	Not to exceed 25 ppm, should be less than 10 ppm	Not to exceed 25 ppm, should be less than 10 ppm
Access to Outdoors	Not required	Required; temporary confinement allowed	Not required	Not required
Min. Space Per Hen	White hens: 56 sq in, increasing to 67 sq in by 4/1/08; Brown hens: 63 sq in, increasing to 76 sq in by 4/1/08	Not specifically addressed but must provide opportunity to exercise & freedom of movement	1.5 sq ft; 1.0-1.2 sq ft for houses with overhead perches	1.5 sq ft; 1.0-1.2 sq ft for houses with overhead perches
Continuous Confinement to Wire Cages	Permitted	Not addressed but prohibited due to exercise requirement	Prohibited	Prohibited
Litter for Dust Bath/ Nest Boxes	Not required	Not specifically addressed but clean, dry bedding required	Litter for dust bathing required; nest boxes no less than 1 per 5 hens required	Litter for dust bathing required; nest boxes no less than 1 per 5 hens required
Indoor Lighting	Continuous subdued lighting permitted (0.5-1 ft candle)	Access to direct sunlight required	Min. 8 hrs light (avg. 10 lux), 6 hrs darkness required per day	Min. 8 hrs light (avg. 10 lux), 6 hrs darkness required per day
Forced Molting	Water & 8 hrs of light recommended; feed withdrawal to induce molt to be prohibited as of 1/06	Not addressed but producers must provide "a total feed ration" and access to direct sunlight required	Feed withdrawal to induce molt prohibited	Feed withdrawal to induce molt prohibited
Beak Trimming	Permitted but initial trimming must be before 11 days, 2nd trimming before 8 wks; analgesia not required	Physical alterations must be performed as needed to promote animal welfare and in a manner that minimizes pain and stress	Permitted before 11 days of age but must be phased out when causes & preventative measures identified; analgesia not required	Permitted before 11 days of age but must be phased out when causes & preventative measures identified; analgesia not required
Killing of Male Chicks	Not addressed	Not addressed	Not addressed	Not addressed

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For a full copy of Farm Sanctuary's research report —
***Farm Animal Welfare: An Assessment of Product
Labeling Claims, Industry Quality Assurance
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About FARM SANCTUARY

Farm Sanctuary is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to changing the way society views and treats farm animals. Since Farm Sanctuary began in 1986, we have worked to expose and stop the cruel practices of the “food animal” industry through undercover investigations, legal and legislative actions, public awareness projects, youth education and outreach programs, and direct rescue and refuge efforts. Farm Sanctuary is the nation's leading voice for farm animals ... thanks to people who care enough to become a Farm Sanctuary member. For more information on what YOU can do to help, please contact us.

P.O. Box 150 · Watkins Glen, NY 14891
Phone: 607-583-2225 · Fax: 607-583-2041
info@farmsanctuary.org
www.farmsanctuary.org