

VBP+ Must Do Requirements Summary

The following Must Do requirements are outlined in the VBP on-farm food safety Manual Version 7.7 and the VBP+ Supplemental Producer Manual Version 1.5.

The following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for food safety, animal care, biosecurity and land management and conservation are outlined in the above manuals with grey shading.

They are reprinted here as a convenient list of all the Must Do's in the VBP+ program.

Note:

- When addressing problems or errors that occur with the *Must Do* requirements (grey shaded areas in manuals), record what was done and how it was corrected.
- All records relating to Must Do's (grey shaded) must be kept for 2 years.

SOP 1 - Animal Health Management

- Store animal health products according to label directions.
- Use all products according to label directions, or in the case of extra-label use, according to a written veterinary prescription.
- Record all individual animal or group treatments on a permanent record, which includes: the date(s), animal(s) identification, product used, dosage, route of administration (e.g. Sub-Q or IM), and withdrawal time.
- A record on animal health treatment includes any vaccinations and deaths/euthanized cattle.
- Securely restrain cattle to avoid potential bent or broken needles.
- Make sure syringes and other equipment deliver the intended amount of product,

If something goes wrong:

- If a broken needle occurs, identify the suspect animal and record the incidence on a permanent record. If the animal is being sold, the next owner must be informed of the broken needle in the specific animal.
- If animals are treated with the wrong product or dosage, identify the animal, record the incidence, contact a veterinarian, and record actions taken.
- Keep a copy of any written veterinary prescriptions used within the last two years.

Animal Care

- Outcomes related to feed/water, veterinary care, shelter, herd health, euthanasia, handling, transportation, and painful procedures are met as per requirements outlined in Canada's Beef Code of Practice 2013. Expectations are noted below:
 - Cattle are monitored for illness and injury on a regular basis.
 - Competent personnel conduct the euthanization of an animal in a timely manner with an effective method.
 - Those undertaking cattle tasks understand the requirements of the Beef Code of Practice 2013.
 - Shelter is available in case of inclement or extreme weather.
 - Pens of indoor housing allows for drainage and comfortable, dry resting areas. Pens are not overcrowded.
 - Castration and dehorning are conducted as early in life as possible, Pain control is used in dehorning after horn-bud attachment, and for bulls castrated older than 9 months of age as per advice from a veterinarian.
 - Branding is conducted by a knowledgeable person with appropriate equipment.
 - Castration of belly nuts is handled by trained persons with pain control.
 - People are mentored on handling cattle and abuse/neglect is not tolerated.
 - Feedlots over 5,000-head capacity must follow a written plan to manage non-ambulatory/downer or injured cattle.
 - Feedlot staff knows what to do if a feedlot animal calves and proper care is provided.
 - Feedlots over 5,000-head capacity will complete a cattle handling assessment as part of an on-farm validation audit at a frequency to be determined.

Biosecurity

- Cattle are not exposed to raw human sewage pump out or sewage storage/lagoons. Access is protected from cattle.

- Persons visiting or returning from international travel in rural areas with livestock take precautions, including complete clothing/footwear change and cleaning or disinfecting materials before entry back to cattle operation.

SOP 2 - Feed and Water: Medicated and Non-Ruminant Feed

- Copies of written and signed veterinary feed prescriptions are available for all extra-label use of feed or water medications. Keep the copies for a minimum of two years.
 - When using wood chips or wood shavings for bedding, written or verbal assurance is recorded
 - Cattle are fed according to nutritional needs and have access to palatable water or snow as appropriate.
 - Those feeding cattle know what to do in case of power outage or feed equipment failure.
 - Feedlot rations are formulated in a step-wise manner to allow for cattle adjustment to ration changes.
- a) Receiving and Storing Medicated Feed
- Feed delivery person is informed of unloading requirements for medicated feed or ingredients, including intended storage area or bin. Written evidence of unloading instructions, for example on invoice, is available.
 - Delivery of medicating ingredients and medicated feed is cross-checked with ration or prescription
 - Medicated ingredients and medicated feed have a separate and clearly labeled storage area or storage bins
 - Augers or other feed handling equipment used for medicated feed are flushed or cleaned after use.
- b) Mixing of Medicated Feed or Water
- Scales used must be tested for accuracy at least once per year, and are suitable to the range of weights of feed to be mixed.
 - Those persons undertaking mixing and distribution of medicated feed understand standard procedures and type of information to record.
 - Medications are mixed according to label directions and documented ration. Actual amounts mixed are recorded.
 - If adding ingredients by hand, a system is in place to accurately determine the weight or volume of the feed mix to ensure accuracy with intended dosage levels.
 - A system is in place, for example flushing and/or sequencing rations, to avoid consumption of medicated feed by unintended cattle.
 - Reprocessed or flushed feed is used or disposed in a manner to prevent contamination of other feedstuffs.
- c) Feeding of Medicated Feed or Water
- Cattle pens are clearly identified.
 - Medicated feed or water is fed according to label directions or written veterinary prescription.
 - Actual amount of medicated feed fed is recorded and includes: ration, medicated ingredient or product, amount fed, date, pen identification.
 - Equipment used for medicated feed or water is cleaned, flushed or a system of sequencing is used

- Staff or family members understand feeding procedures and what to do if an error occurs

If something goes wrong:

- If feed is mixed with the incorrect amount of medication or wrong product, record the incidence, consult a veterinarian and record actions taken.
- If medicated rations or water are fed to the wrong cattle, record the incidence and actions taken.

d) Handling Non-Ruminant Feed

- Feeds containing prohibited material (ruminant by-products) are not fed to beef cattle.
- All non-ruminant feed is stored separately and clearly labeled
- Separate equipment is used for receiving (i.e. auger), mixing and feeding non-ruminant feed

If something goes wrong:

- If non-ruminant feed is inadvertently fed, contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for appropriate action

SOP 3 - Cattle Shipping

- Those making shipping decision or loading know what are not acceptable cattle to load or transport.
- Trucks transporting cattle are ventilated and protection from extreme weather is provided.
- Extra traction is provided in loading and processing areas to avoid cattle slipping.
- Persons handling cattle understand when and how electric prod can be used. Stock dogs are not used in cases where cattle cannot move forward.
- A records check for all drug withdrawal requirements and broken needles is completed before cattle are shipped to slaughter.
- The check for drug withdrawal requirements is identified in your records, with date.
- If cattle are being shipped or sold other than directly to slaughter, and they have not met their drug withdrawal times, then the next owner is informed
- If cattle contain a broken needle, next owner is informed including the identification of the animal.

If something goes wrong:

- If cattle are inadvertently shipped without meeting withdrawal times or suspected broken needle, next owner or slaughter plant is informed and this contact date/information is recorded.
- If prior to shipping it is discovered that withdrawals have not been met, slaughter cattle are held for the required withdrawal time period.

SOP 4 - Pesticide Control and Manure

- Manure is stored and used in a manner that benefits the soil and manages against excessive leaching of nutrients into water bodies and groundwater.
- Herbicides, pesticides, solvents, petrochemicals and treated seed are stored, used and disposed in a manner to avoid contamination of cattle feed or water.
- Beef cattle operations are expected to know how to handle unwanted spills and have material available to clean up or manage as appropriate.
- Herbicides and pesticides used on pasture or hay within the operation are applied according to label directions. Usage is recorded including date, product, location(s) used, and "safe to graze" or "days to harvest" time period.
- Records regarding herbicide and pesticide use on pasture are checked before cattle are allowed access

If something goes wrong:

- If a potential cattle exposure has occurred, an expert (e.g. veterinarian or toxicologist) is contacted for recommended procedures or actions. Actions taken are recorded.

Manure Removal in Pens

- Pens holding cattle destined for slaughter are subject to manure removal at least once annually

SOP 5 - Training and Communication

- One person in the beef cattle operation has been trained in the Verified Beef Production program
- Family members and/or staff in the beef cattle operation understand their respective tasks relating to SOPs and "Must Do" requirements of the Verified Beef Production program.
- If a mistake occurs due to human error, communicate with the individual to ensure proper procedures are followed.
- Persons working on the beef cattle operation are prepared to answer questions on procedures they are responsible for, relating to "Must Do" requirements of the VBP program.
- Livestock managers know whom to contact in case of a disease emergency.
- The cattle operation has designated person to manage or mentor human resources.
- If someone is neglecting cattle in an outside operation, appropriate communication with experts takes place if needed.
- Cattle operation reduces waste, re-uses and recycles products/materials as is feasible.

- Employees are treated with equity/respect, and safe and healthy working conditions exist. Staff/family members are trained or mentored on what is expected.
- It is recommended that the operation shares aggregate information to BIXS or other means so that members of beef value chain may use for sourcing claims.

Annual Check on Important Procedures and Records

- This verification process must be completed once annually and includes:
 - Review of processing and treatment records for completeness.
 - Review of records to provide evidence that a withdrawal time check was completed prior to shipping.
 - Review of record containing any broken needles and evidence that information was provided to the next buyer.
 - Written veterinary prescriptions if products are used in extra-label manner.
 - Review of records for medicated feed or medicated water for completeness.
 - Review of any errors relating to Must Do's (grey shaded), and any information on actions taken to rectify the situation.
 - The person doing the annual verification signs or initials, and dates as evidence that this verification took place.

SOP 6 - Land Management and Conservation

- Grasslands and grazing are managed in a way that maintains or improves soil health and protects watershed and riparian areas.
- Grasslands and other areas provide habitat for wildlife.
- Cattle operation's environmental farm plan provides awareness for stewardship and conservation practices.
- Wintering grounds for cowherds are managed to avoid excessive manure build-up and run-off into water bodies.
- Deadstock is disposed of in a manner that avoids leaching into water bodies.
- Cattle operation manages beneficial practices and any risk to soil, water and air in a responsible manner. Family and staff understand tasks relating to responsible practices.
- Operations seek to conserve energy, improve production efficiencies, adopt research and other innovations that assist stewardship of land and resources.
- Manure and soil nutrients are managed responsibly.
- Invasive plant species are managed as appropriate.
- Practices are considered where proven to enhance carbon sequestration and/or mitigate greenhouse gas.

- Irrigation water is managed responsibly/efficiently.