

## **PAACO Standards for Certification of Animal Welfare Audit Instruments & Processes**

**I. Background:** An independent audit of farm animal welfare will be conducted by a third party. The same process may be used by internal auditors to collect data on farm animal care. To assist in the process, PAACO provides the following definitions:

### **II. Definitions and Terms**

#### **A. General Audit**

An audit is a planned and documented activity performed by qualified personnel to determine by investigation, examination, or evaluation of objective evidence, the adequacy and compliance with established procedures, or applicable documents, and the effectiveness of implementation.

#### **B. Audit Components**

An animal welfare audit is conducted by a qualified auditor and includes an audit instrument that is applied in a standardized audit process against a standard.

#### **C. Qualified Auditor**

An auditor is qualified by an independent body (such as PAACO) based on education, training and experience). When PAACO certification of the auditor is not available, a qualified auditor must have appropriate education, experience and training.

#### **D. Audit Instrument**

The audit instrument is a document that is completed by a qualified auditor to collect data on the welfare of farm animals.

#### **E. Audit Process**

The audit process is the method by which the audit instrument is used to collect data. The audit process includes a sampling method to collect data on a large number of animals (or all the animals if the sampled population is small). The audit process is applied to a site(s) under single management or an identifiable single supervisor.

#### **F. The role of PAACO**

The role of PAACO is to assure qualified auditors, audit instruments and audit processes that promote animal welfare based on current animal welfare science and expert panel review. PAACO does not write audit instruments.

*The review panel and PAACO will evaluate audit documents against the following criteria, including clarity and ease of use.*

**III. The Audit Instrument:** Animal welfare audit instruments must meet the following criteria to be certified by PAACO.

The content of the audit instrument must be clear, concise and easy to follow. Information must be included on how to audit each criterion, with emphasis on how each will be measured. These criteria include:

1. Define the scope of the audit. As appropriate, all segments of an audited operation must be included.
2. Good breadth and valid, measurable outcomes of welfare that reflect current animal welfare science.
3. Specific methods to evaluate the presence of both a) willful acts of abuse and b) neglect.
4. Identifying or stating which measurable outcomes (from #2 above) result in failure and non-conformance.
5. A plan to address non-conformances.
6. Direct inspection by the auditor of animals, the environment, and review/verification of records kept for injuries, morbidity, mortality, treatment, and euthanasia.
7. Evidence that (a) nutritional programs are adequate and (b) that there is veterinary oversight of animal health.
8. Caregiver standard operating procedures (SOP's) to ensure day-to-day care; these must include, but are not limited to:
  - Frequency and nature of observations appropriate to the animal
  - Animal health plan including prevention (including biosecurity), detection and treatment of sick animals
  - Timely and effective euthanasia, consistent with the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia
  - Management of the environment
  - Training of personnel in animal care
9. Capacity to provide effective protection from extreme environmental conditions (thermal, wind, solar, rain, snow, etc.) appropriate to the system and geographic location.
10. Readily accessible emergency response plan including written emergency contact information, appropriate to the system, to reduce the likelihood of and address the effects of catastrophic events.
11. A commitment to ongoing reinforcement of and attention to animal welfare. These include documentation of ongoing personnel training for animal welfare, internal assessments, and corrective actions, when appropriate.
12. A clear separation between production and marketing criteria and animal welfare criteria in the audit tool and program.

**IV. The Audit Process:** The animal welfare audit process must meet the following criteria to be certified by PAACO.

The audit process must be clear, concise and easy to follow. This includes:

1. Conducted by a qualified animal welfare auditor (see p.1 Background definitions C).
2. Information on how to audit each criterion, with emphasis on how each will be measured.
3. Sampling methodology and definitions that minimize errors and bias in measurement. As appropriate, all segments of the operation (e.g. breeding, production animals, hospital pens), seasons, and geography.
4. Compliance with biosecurity rules of the company/farm.

Revised and accepted 12/16/14