

VBP+ Standards

Updated June 2026



***SIMPLE
PRACTICAL
TRUSTED***

Table of Contents

Approach to Assessment and Evidence Collection	2
Certification Criteria, Critical Control Points and Corrective Actions	5
Knowledge in Action	6
Why This Matters	6
Our Standard.....	6
Table of Contents	2
Critical Control Points.....	7
Animal Care and Welfare	9
Handling.....	9
Castration	9
Dehorning	10
Bullers	10
Metabolic Disorders.....	10
Bloat	11
Lameness.....	11
Branding.....	11
Weaning.....	12
Shelter	12
Calving	12
Animal Health.....	13
Records.....	13
Treatment Errors	13
Toxin Exposure.....	14
Veterinary Services	14
Prescriptions	14
Death and Euthanasia Records	15
Broken Needles	15
Animal Health Products	15
Animal Health Product Delivery Equipment.....	16
Restraint	16
Insect Control.....	16

Monitoring.....	17
Biosecurity and Disease Prevention	18
Biosecurity Protocols	18
Animal Movements	18
Comingling	19
Prevention of Disease Transmission.....	19
Visitors	19
Zoonotic Diseases.....	20
Reportable Diseases	20
Disease Incident Management	20
Emergency Response and Preparedness	21
Facility or Equipment Failure	21
Cattle Emergencies	21
Human Health Emergencies	22
Large Scale Disaster	22
Environmental Stewardship and Conservation.....	23
Water Management	23
Manure and Soil Management.....	23
Biodiversity and Habitat Protection	24
Wildlife Conflicts	24
Resource Efficiency.....	24
Chemical Inputs.....	25
Natural Resource Management	25
Air Quality	25
Foreign Materials	26
Feeding Practices and Nutrition.....	27
Nutritional Requirements	27
Prohibited Feeds.....	27
Cross Contamination.....	28
Bedding and Supplements	28
Water	28
Snow	29
Forage and Grain Management	29
Foreign Materials	29

Medicated Feeds	30
Medicated Feeds	30
Feed Errors	30
Dispensing Equipment	31
Transportation and Fitness for Transport	32
Pre-shipping	32
Transport.....	32
Compromised or Unfit Animals	33
Transfer of Care	33
Vulnerable, Distressed and High-Risk Animals	34
Euthanasia	34
Euthanasia Procedure	34
Deadstock	34
Coaching and Mentoring	35
Learning and Training.....	35
Work Environment	35
Health and Safety	36
Leadership and Community.....	37
Innovation.....	37
Code of Ethics	37
Community Involvement.....	37
Production Efficiency.....	38

Approach to Assessment and Evidence Collection

Through regular assessments, we ensure farms are meeting the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) standards, which focus on animal care, biosecurity, food safety, traceability and environmental sustainability. Assessments help identify both strengths and areas for improvement, supporting producers in maintaining responsible, ethical and transparent farming practices. They also provide assurance to consumers, investors and the wider public that beef production is being done safely and sustainably.

The VBP+ program follows the management systems of ISO:9001 and ISO:17065, meaning assessors follow internationally recognized principles, conducting evaluations ethically, fairly and professionally. They use an evidence-based approach, gathering information through interviews, records and on-farm observations to ensure conclusions are accurate.

Certification Criteria, Critical Control Points and Corrective Actions

To become certified under the VBP+ program, producers must meet several foundational requirements. These include:

- Having an active relationship with a licensed veterinarian
- Ensuring all cattle are properly identified and health records are kept
- Maintaining documentation for activities that impact food safety and quality
- Demonstrating knowledge and commitment to animal welfare
- Understanding and implementing environmental stewardship practices

A key part of the assessment focuses on biosecurity and Critical Control Points (CCPs), which are areas where there is potential risk to food safety, such as biological (e.g. bacteria), chemical (e.g. residues), or physical (e.g. broken needles) hazards. These must be supported by proper records. In parallel, strong biosecurity practices are essential to prevent the introduction and spread of disease-causing agents on-farm, which can directly impact both animal health and food safety. Other standard requirements support the overall system and require awareness and good record-keeping, though they may not be CCPs themselves. Together, CCPs and biosecurity form a layered defense that underpins safe and sustainable food production.

On-farm assessments take place every five years, with interim records assessments and self-assessments to ensure compliance. If an issue is identified during an assessment, a Corrective Action Request (CAR) is issued. This means the producer must address the issue

within a set timeframe. Some issues can be resolved during the assessment itself, but still need to be documented as a CAR to maintain transparency and accountability.

Knowledge in Action

A key part of the VBP+ program is training. Training is made available to all VBP+ producers on animal care, biosecurity, environmental stewardship, social responsibility and on-farm food safety. Training provides information and tools to encourage the adoption of beneficial practices and innovations and can focus attention on problem-solving and operational improvements. With the help of the Beef Cattle Research Council, the VBP+ program focuses on offering science-based, continuous learning to meet the needs of a dynamic industry, with the goal of strengthening Canada's beef industry.

Why This Matters

The VBP+ program ensures that beef producers are not only meeting expectations but are actively working to improve their practices. Through assessments and continuous learning, we aim to support farms that prioritize responsible, ethical and sustainable beef production that benefits animals, people and the planet.

Our Standard

This document provides an outline and details of the VBP+ program requirements. Use the table of contents to navigate through the standards.

Critical Control Points

Critical Control Points (CCPs) are specific stages in the production process where a hazard (biological, chemical, or physical) can be prevented, eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level. The concept originates from the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (**HACCP**) model, a globally recognized, science-based framework for managing food safety risks. In beef production, CCPs represent points where a lapse in practice or record-keeping could directly result in an unsafe product reaching consumers. For this reason, CCPs are treated as the highest-priority elements of the VBP+ assessment and are subject to a greater level of scrutiny than general program requirements.

During an assessment, each CCP is evaluated not only for whether the correct practice is in place, but whether it can be demonstrated and verified through records. This distinction is important: a producer may follow the right procedures, but without documentation, there is no means to validate compliance or trace an issue back to its source if a problem arises. Assessments ask producers to describe how they record and validate clearance for each CCP, and review of supporting documentation occurs at multiple points in the assessment cycle. Failure to meet a CCP requirement will result in a Corrective Action Request (**CAR**) meaning the producer is given a set timeframe to resolve the issue.

Across all CCPs in the VBP+ program, there are common expectations:

Records must be maintained

For each CCP, documentation should be kept up to date and accurate.

Validation is required

Documentation should allow an assessor or producer to confirm, with confidence, that cattle were clear of a given hazard before moving through the supply chain.

Traceability is essential

Records should specifically identify individual animals or groups, the product or hazard in question and the relevant dates.

The seven CCPs assessed in the VBP+ program are summarized in the table below.

Critical Control Point	Type of Hazard	Why it Matters
Broken Needles	Physical	Needle fragments retained in muscle tissue pose a direct physical hazard to consumers and may require carcass condemnation.
Animal Health Product Withdrawals (Individual)	Chemical	Veterinary drugs administered to individual animals must clear the withdrawal period before slaughter to prevent residues in beef.
Animal Health Product Withdrawals (Group)	Chemical	The same residue risk applies to group, herd or pen-level treatments, requiring records that account for all treated animals.
Herbicide Withdrawals	Chemical	Cattle grazing in treated pastures must observe the safe-to-graze interval to prevent herbicide residues in meat.
Pesticide Withdrawals	Chemical	Topical pest control products (e.g., back rubbers, fly control) carry withdrawal periods that must be observed before slaughter.
Medicated Feed Withdrawals	Chemical	Feed containing medication must be withdrawn for the required period prior to slaughter to ensure residue clearance.
Medicated Water Withdrawals	Chemical	Medicated water delivery systems carry the same residue risk as medicated feed and require equivalent withdrawal management.

Animal Care and Welfare



The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for animal care and welfare within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.

Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Animal Care Manual](#)

Handling

What is the expectation?	Methods of handling aim to minimize stress for cattle whenever possible through the use of appropriate equipment, minimal physical contact, trained personnel and appropriate footing and lighting.
Why does it matter?	Handling has a direct impact on animal health and welfare, meat quality and human safety. Though there are various types of handling and equipment, the intent should always be to minimize stress and injury and to ensure the safety of people and animals.

Castration

What is the expectation?	Castration is done by trained personnel using proper equipment and techniques to minimize disease, infection, pain and distress.
Why does it matter?	Though factors such as age and size impact the methods of castration available to an operation, care should always be taken to minimize potential for disease, infection, pain or distress. Procedures should be carried out using sanitary methods, appropriate equipment, trained personnel and pain mitigation when appropriate.

Dehorning

What is the expectation?	Disbudding or dehorning is done by trained personnel using proper equipment and techniques to minimize pain and distress.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	Disbudding or dehorning serves to reduce injury to other cattle and potential bruising of carcasses. Horn attachment to the skull occurs around two to three months of age in calves. Dehorning after the attachment of the horns is more invasive and painful so it is recommended that disbudding take place as young as possible. Care should be taken to minimize any pain or distress from disbudding or dehorning through the use of appropriate equipment, trained personnel and appropriate pain mitigation. The use of polled bulls decreases the need for disbudding or dehorning.
---------------------	--

Bullers

What is the expectation?	Producers are aware of the condition and are ready to intervene and remove the buller if this behaviour is observed.
--------------------------	--

Why does it matter?	During buller-steer syndrome, one animal (the buller) is harassed by other steers in the pen preventing them from resting, eating or drinking, potentially causing them injury. Removing the buller from the group is the only method to resolve the issue. Buller-steer syndrome occurs both naturally and as a result of management decisions.
---------------------	--

Metabolic Disorders

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of the potential for metabolic disorders as a result of sudden or drastic dietary changes and when needed, advice is sought from professionals.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	A number of metabolic disorders can arise as a result of changes to an animal's diet. These disorders can cause suffering in the affected animals and incur significant financial costs in treatment and lost productivity.
---------------------	---

Bloat

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of the potential for bloat naturally and as a result of sudden or drastic dietary changes or overeating and personnel have appropriate training and equipment to provide treatment. When needed, advice is sought from veterinarians.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	Bloat is a metabolic disorder occurring naturally and as a result of sudden or drastic changes to diet or overeating. Bloat can occur in two types: free gas, or frothy and different types require different treatment. Both conditions are extremely painful to the animal and can cause death. Proper treatment and, when needed, veterinary assistance, are important to prevent suffering.
---------------------	---

Lameness

What is the expectation?	The producer can identify, manage, and treat lameness.
--------------------------	--

Why does it matter?	Lameness can be a painful and debilitating condition in cattle. There are many forms of lameness so treatment and management depend on the operation and type of lameness.
---------------------	--

Branding

What is the expectation?	When branding is required, it is done by trained personnel using proper equipment and techniques to minimize pain and distress.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	Branding is a painful procedure that is sometimes the only available form of permanent identification available. If this is the case, care should be taken to minimize any pain or distress through the use of appropriate equipment, trained personnel and, pain mitigation when advised by a veterinarian.
---------------------	--

Weaning

What is the expectation?	Weaning practices aim to reduce stress. At the cow-calf level, low stress methods are considered as part of the weaning process. At the feedlot level feed, water and bedding are adequately provided to new calves and co-mingling is kept to a minimum where possible. Calves are supported by monitoring for disease and distress.
Why does it matter?	Weaning can be a stressful period of change in an animal's life. Minimizing distress, disease risk and suffering through management is key to enhancing calf survival and welfare.

Shelter

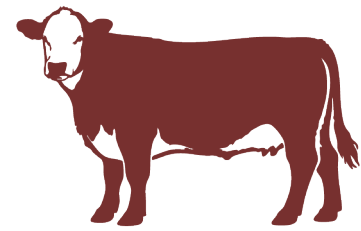
What is the expectation?	The producer provides animals with adequate natural or man-made shelter to protect from the elements. Manure accumulation or removal from the environment is managed.
Why does it matter?	Shelter needs vary based on conditions but adequate shelter, whether man-made or natural, allows for the expression of natural behaviours and protection from the effects of adverse weather. Excess manure in the environment poses a risk for excess nutrient run off and transmission of E. coli on the hides and during slaughter.

Calving

What is the expectation?	Management practices aim to enhance calf and dam survival. Support for animals in distress is prompt and assistance or advice from a veterinarian is sought when needed.
Why does it matter?	Calving can occur throughout the production cycle and considerations for calving differ based on the operation and conditions. Survival and welfare of the dam and calf should be prioritized within the specific conditions for the individual operation.

Animal Health

The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for animal health within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.



Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Animal Health Manual](#)

Records

What is the expectation?	The producer maintains records of animal health, vaccinations and parasite control treatments.
Why does it matter?	Records of animal health and treatments are important for food safety risk mitigation. Animal health records also assist in evaluating the efficacy of the herd health plan and monitoring the effectiveness of biosecurity practices.

Treatment Errors

What is the expectation?	Should a treatment error occur, it is documented so that the animal(s) can be clearly identified and a veterinarian is consulted about changes to withdrawal times.
Why does it matter?	Errors in treatment can pose a risk to food safety. It is essential that they are properly recorded, whether in individual or group treatment records or as stand-alone records, so that they can be reviewed prior to shipping. A veterinarian should always be consulted about changes to withdrawal times.

Toxin Exposure

What is the expectation?	Personnel are alert for situations that could result in accidental exposure. Should an exposure occur, it is documented so that the animal(s) can be clearly identified and a veterinarian or toxicologist is consulted about changes to withdrawal times.
Why does it matter?	Accidental exposure to a toxin like pesticides, chemicals or medications can affect food safety and beef quality. It is essential that exposure is properly recorded, whether in individual or group treatment records or in stand-alone records, so that they can be reviewed prior to shipping. A veterinarian or toxicologist may be needed to determine a safe withdrawal period.

Veterinary Services

What is the expectation?	The producer has an established veterinarian–client–patient relationship (VCPR).
Why does it matter?	A VCPR is essential for access to animal health products requiring a prescription, access to emergency veterinary care and generally for assistance in science–based decision–making in the operation. VCPRs must be renewed annually.

Prescriptions

What is the expectation?	All veterinary animal health products are obtained and used as per veterinary prescription.
Why does it matter?	By law, all antibiotics must be purchased from a licensed veterinarian. The veterinarian writing the prescription is required to have a VCPR with the producer. Any deviation in use from the label instructions (extra-label drug use [ELDU]) requires a prescription from the prescribing veterinarian who is responsible for providing instructions on use and withdrawal. VCPRs and ELDU prescriptions must be renewed annually.

Death and Euthanasia Records

What is the expectation?

All deaths and euthanizations are recorded.

Why does it matter?

Death and euthanasia records are important from an animal health and biosecurity standpoint, allowing for the monitoring of disease and serious injuries. Details like date, cause of death, location, what drugs were used, whether a necropsy occurred and disposal details should be included.

Broken Needles

What is the expectation?

The producer has a plan to address any incidence of suspected or actual broken needles including detailed records, to ensure the animal is not placed into the food chain.

Why does it matter?

Keeping animals with suspected or actual broken needles out of the food chain is essential to upholding standards of food quality and safety.

Animal Health Products

What is the expectation?

Animal health products are stored, used, and disposed of in a conscientious manner – observing label directions, expiration dates and appropriate disposal guidelines.

Why does it matter?

Proper storage, use, and disposal of animal health products is essential for their effective and safe use. Improper storage, use, and disposal poses risks to employees, animals and the food chain.

Animal Health Product Delivery Equipment

What is the expectation?	Equipment used to distribute animal health products is clean, calibrated and can provide accurate dosing so withdrawal times can be accurately predicted.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	Clean and calibrated equipment will provide optimal performance, accurate dosing, optimal efficacy and lowest treatment costs. A clean, safe working environment also enhances the safety of people and animals.
---------------------	--

Restraint

What is the expectation?	Animals are restrained securely when delivering animal health products.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	Secure restraint helps to minimize accidents like bent or broken needles, allows for proper placement of product and ensures that people and animals are kept safe in the process.
---------------------	--

Insect Control

What is the expectation?	Insect control practices are utilized with consideration for risks to food safety, environmental impacts and animal welfare.
--------------------------	--

Why does it matter?	Insect control methods are utilized for animal comfort and to control vectors of disease transmission. If chemical controls are used, the operation utilizes plans and records to mitigate food safety and environmental risk.
---------------------	--

Monitoring

What is the expectation?

Cattle are monitored on a regular basis so that intervention is provided promptly when needed and a veterinarian is consulted as needed.

Why does it matter?

A plan for monitoring will vary greatly based on environmental and operational factors. Observation of animal health and condition is important for the assessment of general herd health, detection of injury and disease, and identification of cattle in need of special care.

Biosecurity and Disease Prevention



The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for biosecurity and disease prevention within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.

Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Biosecurity Manual](#)

Biosecurity Protocols

What is the expectation?	The producer plans, adopts and executes protocols to initiate biosecurity measures specific to their operation.
Why does it matter?	Biosecurity is important for the prevention, containment and reduction of diseases which contribute to more productive animals and lower production costs. Biosecurity protocols help to safeguard the Canadian beef industry.

Animal Movements

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of, and attempts to minimize, the risks associated with animal movements.
Why does it matter?	Moving animals is a common means of spreading disease, whether movement occurs within an operation or to new locations. Keeping records of movements, knowing the health status of animals, keeping equipment and facilities clean and carefully managing high risk and highly susceptible animals are some strategies to manage the risk of disease associated with animal movement.

Comingling

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of, and works to mitigate, the risk of disease from comingling.
Why does it matter?	Comingling involves mixing cattle from more than one operation. This can bring and spread disease to the operation. Quarantining new cattle for two weeks without contact to the existing livestock can allow for vaccination, treatment and observation of new animals before adding them to the main herd.

Prevention of Disease Transmission

What is the expectation?	The producer attempts to prevent the transmission of disease through biosecurity measures.
Why does it matter?	Protecting healthy animals from being infected by sick animals within the operation is key to controlling disease. This can be done in a variety of ways including adjusting the cleaning and sequencing of facilities, tools, tasks and equipment to ensure that disease is not transmitted from sick animals to healthy ones.

Visitors

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of and works to mitigate the risk posed by visitors.
Why does it matter?	Visitors can be essential to an operation (e.g. veterinarians, haulers, sales reps) but can pose a biosecurity risk. Examples of biosecurity practices that can reduce this risk are: good handwashing practices upon arrival, visitors wearing clean clothes and boots, minimizing visitor access to segregation and sick pens and not allowing visitors to touch livestock or feed.

Zoonotic Diseases

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of, and works to mitigate, the risk of zoonotic disease transfer to personnel, visitors and the public.
Why does it matter?	Some animal diseases can be transmitted to humans (zoonotic diseases). This risk can be managed through proper hygiene, handling precautions and ensuring proper handling and disposal of deadstock.

Reportable Diseases

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of reportable diseases, how to recognize them and how or when to report them to appropriate authorities.
Why does it matter?	Reportable diseases are diseases of significance to human or animal health and to the Canadian economy. Reportable diseases represent serious threats and require control and potentially eradication actions. Veterinary assistance should be sought quickly along with reporting to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and to the provincial veterinary office.

Disease Incident Management

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of the risk of infectious disease and has planned actions to address incidents, including appropriate procedures to dispose of deadstock in compliance with appropriate provincial and municipal regulations.
Why does it matter?	Infectious diseases are common and occur on a regular and ongoing basis. A herd health plan addresses the prevention, treatment and monitoring of outbreaks and can be made with the assistance of a veterinarian. Proper disposal of deadstock is also key to controlling infectious disease incidents; regional legislation may apply.

Emergency Response and Preparedness



The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for emergency response and preparedness within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.

Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Emergency Response Manual](#)

Facility or Equipment Failure

What is the expectation?	The producer has addressed the possible interruption of operational status and has created a plan to maintain the ability to supply feed, water, care and shelter to the livestock.
Why does it matter?	Disasters can happen at any time and can quickly strain an operation. Having a plan for how the operation can continue to ensure basic care, feed, water and shelter to livestock in the face of an emergency facility or equipment failure can ensure smoother transitions and lower anxiety by providing clear actions and responsibilities.

Cattle Emergencies

What is the expectation?	The producer has awareness of and a plan to address potential cattle health emergencies with the help of experts when needed. Animal welfare and human safety are prioritized.
Why does it matter?	An emergency response plan to address a disaster in cattle health can become a tool that saves the lives of cattle, people or even the cattle industry. The goal should always be to minimize undue pain and suffering of affected animals while protecting the animals still alive, without compromising human safety.

Human Health Emergencies

What is the expectation?	The producer has awareness of and a plan to address human health emergencies.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	A human health emergency must be dealt with immediately. First aid training and an equipped first aid kit allows for immediate response until help arrives. Emergency contact information should be readily available.
---------------------	--

Large Scale Disaster

What is the expectation?	The producer has awareness of and a plan to address potential disasters while prioritizing human safety, basic needs of cattle and emergency care or euthanasia that may be required.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	Disasters are natural or man-made events causing great damage or loss of life. When creating disaster response plans human safety should be a priority, however plans should also be made for addressing the treatment, care, emergency slaughter or humane euthanasia of livestock.
---------------------	--

Environmental Stewardship and Conservation



The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for environmental stewardship and conservation within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.

Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Environmental Stewardship Manual](#)

Water Management

What is the expectation?	The producer has a water management plan in place to conserve, preserve and improve water sources on the operation.
Why does it matter?	Adequate quality and quantity of water is critical for the health and productivity of cattle. Preserving water and where possible improving water sources ensures the sustainability of not just the individual operation but the wider environment that relies on that source.

Manure and Soil Management

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of and has created a plan to address the safe handling, storage and application of manure.
Why does it matter?	Proper management of manure is needed to prevent environmental effects and pathogen spread. Manure is a valuable soil amendment but can cause environmental effects if improperly managed, particularly near water bodies or water courses. Additionally, if manure is not composted, it can harbour pathogens and potentially spread disease if not managed correctly. Extra care should be taken when dealing with manure from higher risk areas like sick pens. Some regions have legislations in place dictating how manure must be dealt with.

Biodiversity and Habitat Protection

What is the expectation?	Producer has an understanding of the natural habitats and biodiversity within their operation and is taking steps to enhance the level of biodiversity.
Why does it matter?	Plant and animal biodiversity of an operation is beneficial for sustainability of all species, including the raising of cattle and should be preserved and maintained.

Wildlife Conflicts

What is the expectation?	Producers are responsible for monitoring and maintaining wildlife present on the operation and may adopt mitigation or management practices to address predation and other wildlife conflicts.
Why does it matter?	On occasion, cattle production can conflict with wildlife (e.g. predation, damage to crops or feed, spreading disease or competing for scarce resources). In some cases, producers must intervene with management practices that involve the removal or reduction of some species. Producers are encouraged to work with conservation authorities to address wildlife conflicts.

Resource Efficiency

What is the expectation?	The producer aims to improve production efficiency and understands how the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle can contribute to lower environmental impact and higher efficiency.
Why does it matter?	The 3 R's (reduce, reuse, recycle) can contribute to a more efficient operation through the reduction of costs, inputs and environmental impact.

Chemical Inputs

What is the expectation?	The producer stores, uses, and disposes of chemical inputs in a way that does not contaminate soil, water, or livestock and is in accordance with any legislation that applies in their area.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	Chemical inputs like herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers and seed treatments can contaminate soil, water and livestock if not handled, used and disposed of properly. Proper use can include appropriate testing, record keeping and training. Additionally, some areas have specific requirements for the storage and disposal of these inputs.
---------------------	--

Natural Resource Management

What is the expectation?	The producer monitors and manages natural resources for the maintenance or improvement of ecosystems, grazing areas and soil health.
--------------------------	--

Why does it matter?	Resource and land use planning is important to improving habitat and soil conditions which in turn support biodiversity and healthy, productive ecosystems. Management of the land to maintain and enhance natural resources helps to ensure that the operation can sustainably meet the nutritional requirements of the cattle.
---------------------	--

Air Quality

What is the expectation?	The producer is aware of and has plans to address air quality issues, dangers and concerns.
--------------------------	---

Why does it matter?	Air quality can have an impact on production performance, animal health, human health and the environment. Dust, odors and ammonia must be managed to ensure optimal animal care while not posing a threat or significant nuisance to humans. Proper ventilation must be maintained in barns to ensure good air quality. Some regions have legislation in place regarding air quality and manure removal and incorporation.
---------------------	---

Foreign Materials

What is the expectation?

The producer has an understanding of potential risks associated with foreign material, such as wire, embedding into the hide and or carcass of the animal and has plans to minimize the incidence of accidental penetration of hides from unwanted metal sources.

Why does it matter?

Foreign material contamination of cattle carcasses occurs primarily in two ways, intrusion through the hide or by consumption. Discarded metal objects or damaged infrastructure such as fraying wire, can have an impact on food safety as well as the environment when not properly disposed of or repaired. Producers must understand the risks and ensure cattle environments are well maintained.

Feeding Practices and Nutrition

The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for feeding practices and nutrition within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.



Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Animal Nutrition Manual](#)

Nutritional Requirements

What is the expectation?	The producer ensures feed is provided in the proper quantity and quality to meet the nutritional requirements of cattle.
Why does it matter?	While cattle can eat a wide variety of feeds, any feeding program must provide adequate quality and sufficient quantity to meet the goals of the production cycle. Feed provided to cattle must be free from toxins, molds and pests. Assistance from experts like veterinarians and nutritionists can help to ensure a feeding program meets nutritional needs and is practical for the operation.

Prohibited Feeds

What is the expectation?	The producer does not allow non-ruminant and prohibited feeds to be fed to cattle and is aware of the need to contact CFIA if a non-ruminant feed is consumed by cattle.
Why does it matter?	Only feed formulated for cattle should be fed to cattle. Non-ruminant feeds can contain ingredients derived from bovine sources. If fed to cattle, this could allow ingestion of prion-infected material. Should non-ruminant feed be inadvertently fed to cattle, the event is recorded and the veterinarian and CFIA are contacted for appropriate actions.

Cross Contamination

What is the expectation?	For producers that utilize medicated feed and/or manage multiple species, processes, practices and records are in place to prevent cross contamination of feed. These practices can include clearly labeled feed storage, equipment flushing, equipment calibration and preventative control plans.
Why does it matter?	Managing feed delivery and storage properly reduces the risk of chemical residues or risk from inadvertent consumption of prohibited feeds. Preventative control plans outline the processes and roles utilized to reduce risks to animal and public health.

Bedding and Supplements

What is the expectation?	Bedding and supplements are supplied from known, safe and reliable sources. Supplements and feed additives are used appropriately.
Why does it matter?	When used properly, supplements and additives can be used to help balance rations, increase feed efficiency and control disease. Veterinary or nutritionist input can help to ensure effective use. Sourcing bedding and supplements from trusted sources provides confidence that the products are not contaminated with toxins, foreign substances or chemicals.

Water

What is the expectation?	The producer ensures water is provided in the proper quantity and quality to meet the requirements of cattle.
Why does it matter?	Water is essential to survival and a factor in an animal's health and productivity. Providing an adequate quality and quantity of water is necessary to meet the physiological needs of cattle.

Snow

What is the expectation?	If the producer utilizes snow as a water source, a comprehensive plan is in place to monitor cattle and weather and to provide a backup supply of water.
Why does it matter?	Snow can be used as a water source but requires monitoring and planning to ensure the physiological needs of the animals are met. Monitoring the quality and quantity of available snow, the weather and the body condition scores of animals is needed to ensure cattle needs are met. A backup source of water should be available if monitoring indicates it is needed. In the case of underweight animals or animals with higher energy requirements (e.g. lactating, growing, etc.) snow should not be used as the sole water supply.

Forage and Grain Management

What is the expectation?	A management plan is in place to document forage and grain production.
Why does it matter?	Production of high-quality forage is essential for the sustainability of any cattle operation. How this production is achieved can vary greatly across the cattle industry. Keeping a management plan helps to optimize production and to ensure record compliance required for product applications and withdrawal times.

Foreign Materials

What is the expectation?	The producer has an understanding of the risks associated with consumption of foreign materials and hardware and minimizes incidents where possible.
Why does it matter?	Foreign material contamination of the carcasses of cattle occur primarily in two ways, intrusion through the hide or by consumption. Operations utilize risk mitigation measures such as magnets, scalpers and others to ensure foreign materials are not consumed with feed.

Medicated Feeds

The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for medicated feeds within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.



Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Animal Nutrition Manual](#)

Medicated Feeds

What is the expectation?	The producer has created and adheres to, a plan for the safe and prudent use, storage, delivery, mixing, distribution and recording of medicated feeds and medications.
Why does it matter?	The use of medicated feeds is valuable to the treatment of sick animals and prevention of disease. Care must be taken to ensure accurate dosing, dispensing, mixing and delivery to cattle, as well as proper disposal and storage. Prudent use and proper care is needed to ensure the safety of wildlife, pets, cattle, people and the environment.

Feed Errors

What is the expectation?	Should a medicated feed error occur, it is documented so that the animal(s) can be clearly identified and a veterinarian is consulted about changes to withdrawal times.
Why does it matter?	Feed errors with medicated feeds can pose a risk to food safety. It is essential that they are properly recorded, whether in individual or group treatment records or in stand-alone records, so that they can be reviewed prior to shipping. A veterinarian should always be consulted about the change to withdrawal times.

Dispensing Equipment

What is the expectation?

The producer ensures that equipment used to receive, mix, store or deliver medicated feed or water is properly maintained, calibrated, operated and cleaned.

Why does it matter?

Equipment must be maintained, calibrated, operated and cleaned effectively to ensure that dosage per head is accurate and withdrawal times are predictable.

Transportation and Fitness for Transport



The following section outlines the VBP+ program’s expectations for transportation and fitness for transport within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area, why the expectation exists and where additional information from the program can be found.

Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Transportation Manual](#)

Pre-shipping

What is the expectation?	Records are checked prior to shipping and documentation of the record check, showing who completed the check and when, is kept.
Why does it matter?	Ensuring animals that are being sent to market are safe to consume or that any potential hazards are documented for the next owner is essential to food safety. Checking through records before the shipment of cattle helps to ensure that hazards are found and communicated.

Transport

What is the expectation?	A transport plan has been created and enacted to ensure livestock are transported safely without undue suffering or injury.
Why does it matter?	Ensuring animals are loaded, transported and unloaded in a safe and humane way helps to ensure that they experience the least amount of stress or injury possible.

Compromised or Unfit Animals

What is the expectation?

Producers are aware of animals that should and should not be loaded and the regulations regarding transport of compromised and unfit animals.

Why does it matter?

Transportation of animals requiring special treatment is sometimes necessary. Additional considerations and rules apply in these cases to ensure the welfare of all cattle. Compromised animals may only be transported to the closest available location for care, treatment, slaughter or euthanasia. Unfit animals may not be transported unless it is directly to a veterinarian.

Transfer of Care

What is the expectation?

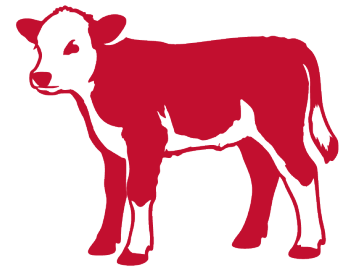
Producers are aware of their responsibilities surrounding Transfer of Care (TOC) and the care of animals being transported.

Why does it matter?

Anyone involved in transporting animals, directly or indirectly, has the responsibility to ensure that their livestock are ready for the transporting process. The TOC document helps to ensure the humane transport of animals within Canada. The document requires information about the producer, the animals and details including when the animals were last fed, watered and rested and when they arrived to their destination.

Vulnerable, Distressed and High-Risk Animals

The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for vulnerable, distressed and high-risk animals within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.



Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Vulnerable, Distressed, and High-Risk Cattle Manual](#)

Euthanasia

What is the expectation?	When necessary, animals are euthanized in a timely and effective manner.
Why does it matter?	In order to minimize pain or suffering, personnel should have a clear understanding of when cattle should be humanely euthanized.

Euthanasia Procedure

What is the expectation?	Proper training and equipment is maintained to ensure that personnel are able to safely and humanely euthanize an animal.
Why does it matter?	When euthanasia is required, it should be provided humanely with minimal distress or suffering. Proper knowledge and equipment are essential for safe and humane euthanasia.

Deadstock

What is the expectation?	Understanding the risks and associated precautions that should be taken when dealing with infectious diseases, zoonotic diseases and reportable diseases in deadstock, as well as post-mortem and necropsy remains.
Why does it matter?	Handling, storage and disposal of deadstock carries potential disease risks to humans and animals. Producers should ensure appropriate precautions are taken depending on the level of risk to animals and personnel.

Coaching and Mentoring

The following section outlines the VBP+ program’s expectations for coaching and mentoring within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.



Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Training & Mentoring Manual](#)

Learning and Training

What is the expectation?	The producer engages in learning and training opportunities that match their requirements and goals.
Why does it matter?	Gathering and understanding new information or learning, can take many forms. Continuous learning helps to find new ideas, principles, and processes that can improve the operation. Training is an ongoing process that can take many forms including formal certifications and licensing or informal mentorship from experienced personnel. Trained personnel have higher levels of competency, understanding and efficiency.

Work Environment

What is the expectation?	The producer works to provide a productive and healthy work environment through effective staff management.
Why does it matter?	Effective management is critical to a productive workplace and worker retention. Some of the factors of a healthy working environment are equity, respect, tolerance, encouragement and engagement.

Health and Safety

What is the expectation?

The producer addresses health and safety issues to ensure that all personnel have the knowledge and equipment needed to safely complete their assigned duties.

Why does it matter?

A healthy and safe place to work is essential to protecting all personnel on the operation. Creating a healthy and safe workplace includes risk assessment, training, risk mitigation and accident preparedness.

Leadership and Community

The following section outlines the VBP+ program's expectations for leadership and community within the program. The information below outlines each of the specific expectations in this subject area and why the expectation exists.



Additional information can be found in the [VBP+ Community Leadership and Social Responsibility Manual](#)

Innovation

What is the expectation?	The producer continues to explore and implement new practices and/or technologies.
Why does it matter?	The implementation of practices that increase efficiency, lower costs and/or benefit the environment, animals or staff helps to ensure operations remain sustainable.

Code of Ethics

What is the expectation?	The producer has clear values, forming a Code of Ethics, that they operate under.
Why does it matter?	Code of ethics ensures consistent values and supports the development and implementation of policies and procedures that prioritize workplace safety and fairness.

Community Involvement

What is the expectation?	Producers are involved in their community.
Why does it matter?	It is important to recognize the impact that producers have on their local communities. Producers routinely contribute to their communities through a variety of means.

Production Efficiency

What is the expectation?

Beef cattle producers look to continuously improve through greater efficiency. Accessing knowledge and utilizing records and data can result in improvement in many areas of production practice including reproductive efficiency, feed efficiency, energy efficiency or labor efficiency.

Why does it matter?

Finding efficiency on beef cattle operations has more than just a positive effect on the bottom line. Increased efficiency can reduce environmental and human resource impact.