



# **LIVESTOCK WELFARE COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

Established 1978

Livestock Welfare Coordinating Committee  
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## **LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY GUIDELINES FOR ANIMAL WELFARE**

### **DRAWING UP, MAINTAINING AND REVISING LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY GUIDELINES THAT INCLUDE ANIMAL WELFARE MATTERS**

All livestock industry organisations should have a document, whether it is termed a Guideline, Code, Standard or other term, the purpose being to establish a set of expectations that can be used to encourage, require and monitor compliance with industry norms that have the support of the Livestock Industry concerned, and which have been examined, modified and accepted by an independent outside body that is focused on the welfare of livestock. These norms are aspirational in that they comprise expectations of best practice that are consistent with practical and affordable measures that benefit both the animals and their owners. The guidelines should ideally comprise a higher level of standards than those that reflecting current minimum requirements in South African legislation. The norms should on no account be a list of all practices and methods, regardless of their acceptability from a welfare perspective. All recommendations should be defensible and based on either strong scientific, verifiable evidence, or robust deduction and logic, or clear and unbiased experience. Recommendations and requirements in the document should clearly reflect the intentions and determination of the industry involved to promote and protect the welfare of livestock and the recognition of sentience in all Livestock. It is recommended that after the document has been approved by representatives of the industry, farmers and other participating entities be encouraged to follow the guidelines and demonstrate their commitment to the document by formal endorsement. These documents should be maintained and preferably be easily accessible to all interested parties, including the public at large. There should be a system of regular review and, if found necessary, appropriate revision. There should be reference made to relevant legislation and existing normative documentation. Definition of key terms like “welfare” and “responsible person” should be included.

The consequences of both adherence to the guidelines, listing positive outcomes, and failure to do so, listing negative consequences, are recommended for inclusion. These will encourage the acceptance

of the guideline as a standard expectation of what is to be done, or avoided, and implementation of the recommendations.

The guideline should address all three aspects of what can be expected to be in place: resources (facilities, equipment, housing, feeding etc); management (persons, training, monitoring); and animal-based outcomes (measurable in animal health or well-being). All guidelines should be dated and reviewed at regular intervals of not less than 5 years, and revised as circumstances require.

All aspects that relate to the animal welfare of the livestock species involved should be adequately but concisely dealt with; these will vary from industry to industry. The recommendations made should be in the form of principles and not as very specific or limiting particulars. The format of the document will depend on the requirements of each industry and should be easily read by farmers and others. The document should be available free of charge and there should be an Enquiries or Helpline available, in particular to deal with emergencies.

Industries that have not drawn up any document may examine existing versions from other industries as a starting point and request advice. Internationally accepted norms should be observed as a minimum.

The Guideline, Code or Standard may need to refer to the following list of items and add other matters that are pertinent to that particular livestock industry:

- Meeting of the livestock nutritional requirements
- Genetics, culling and selection criteria
- Breeding systems and care of young
- Transport and movement
- Environment and housing
- Facilities and equipment
- Restraint
- Harvesting of products from live animals
- Euthanasia
- Management, care and monitoring of livestock
- Training of staff and operators
- Routine farming procedures
- Considerations required to justify any potentially painful procedure
- Management or minimisation of pain wherever possible
- Health maintenance
- Emergency numbers
- Audits and Checks

**Approved: August 2022**