

# Animal welfare assurance programs: what does success look like?

Cassandra Tucker

Center for Animal Welfare  
Department of Animal Science  
UC Davis

# My perspective

Professional Animal  
Auditor Certification  
Organization



board member,  
dairy trainer

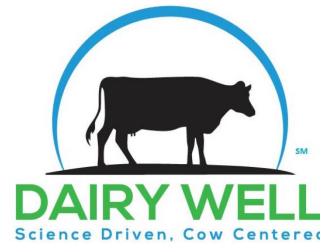
American Humane  
food label



[HumaneHeartland.org](http://HumaneHeartland.org)

scientific  
advisory role

Dean Foods  
large milk processor



audit author,  
advisory role

US national  
dairy program



technical writing  
committee

## Hallmarks of robust farm animal welfare assurance programs

Clear, explicit goals	Meaningful standards	Integrity in the audit process	Transparency and accountability	Support on farm
Common goals include: improve animal welfare  mitigate risk  convey commitment  differentiate product(s)	explicit and comprehensive scope  all key animal welfare criteria covered, aligned with program goals  outcome based, whenever possible  realistic about the records and metrics that provide actionable information  criteria given appropriate weight  approach to failure and non-conformance stated  evaluates culture of each operation, including commitment, internal audits and employee training  revised on a regular basis	complete audit instructions  verification focus: interviews, direct observation of actions & records  appropriate sampling strategy to capture relevant operation segments, seasons, geography and minimize error and bias  requires trained auditors calibration of auditors on a regular basis; demonstrate auditor repeatability	standards and audits publically available with enough detail that it is clear what is addressed  internal database to track performance and corrective actions  audit results, including outcome-based measures, returned to producers, with clear expectations for corrective actions, including what resolution involves  summary of audit results, corrective action status presented to advisory group on a regular basis  results presented at a high level to key stakeholders, especially re: goals of the program on a regular basis	knowledgeable, relational support from 1st and 2nd parties based on program structure, goals and outcomes  review audit results with producers, including outcome-based measures, ideally with benchmarks to provide context  identify short- and long-term priorities for each farm, including timelines and follow through from program  preparation for crisis situations, such as undercover videos  financial support for farms to engage in this process

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# Goals

- improve animal welfare
- mitigate risk
- convey commitment
- differentiate product(s)



# Success: clear, explicit

- bright lines to stay within
- guides decisions along the way
- scope of program matches goal(s)



# Success: clear, explicit

mitigate risk

- emphasize high risk items: compromised cows, rough handling, makings of expose videos
- identify & visit high-risk farms more often
- risky behavior penalized



# Less robust, but common: unstated goals for example, in some food labelling programs

## **Intended, but not explicit**

- convey commitment
- differentiate product(s)

## **Driving force, unstated**

- grow size of program in terms of # animals, farms





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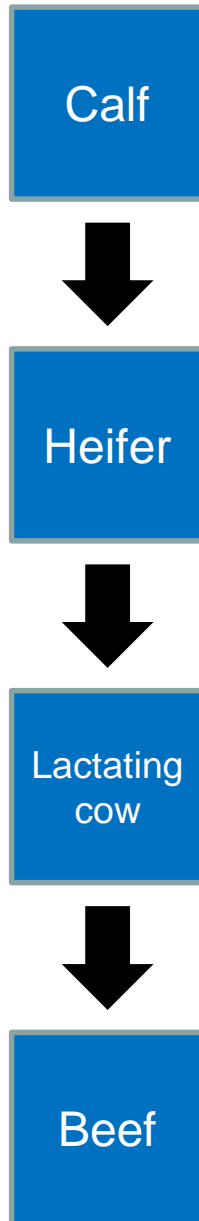
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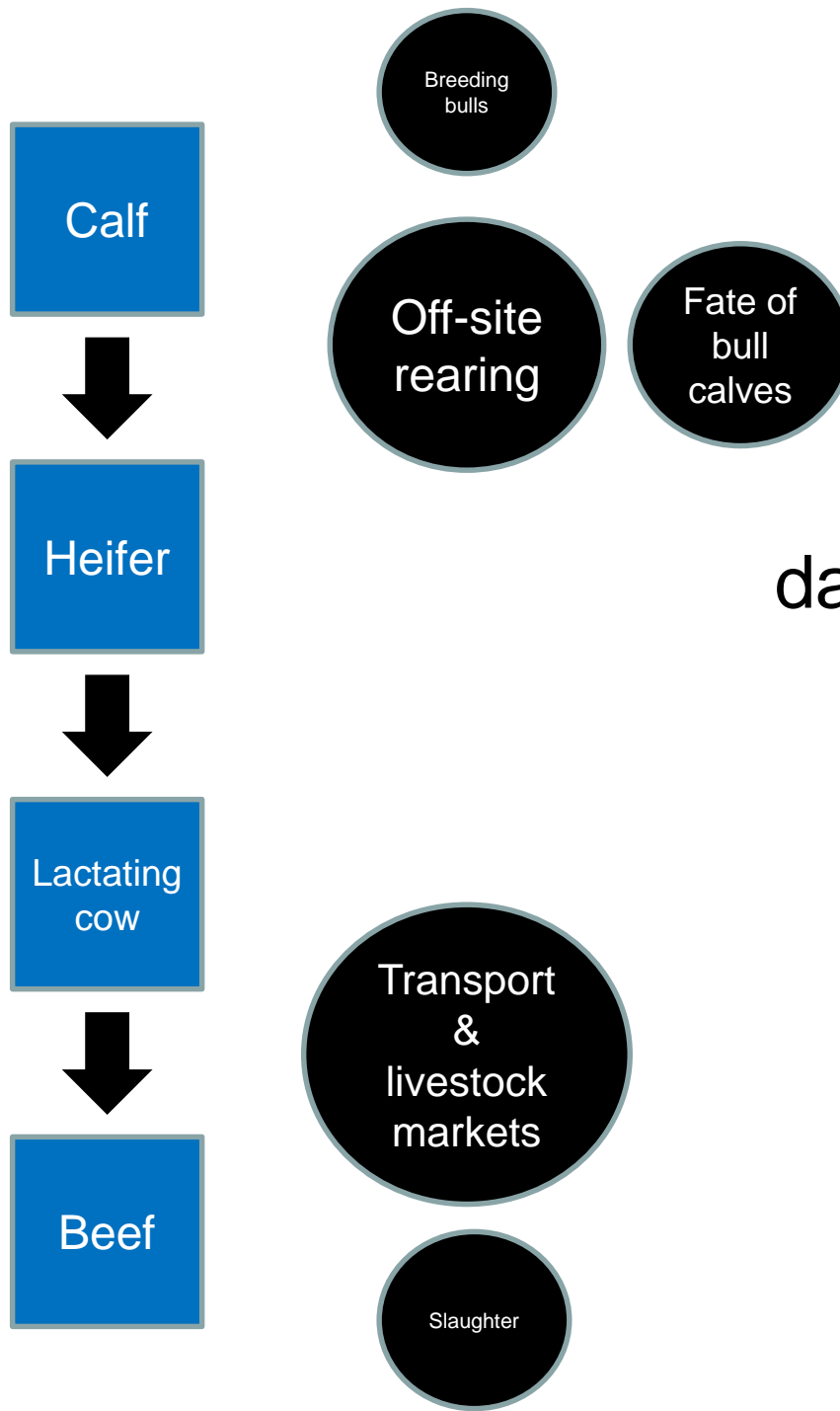
# Meaningful standards

- explicit and comprehensive scope

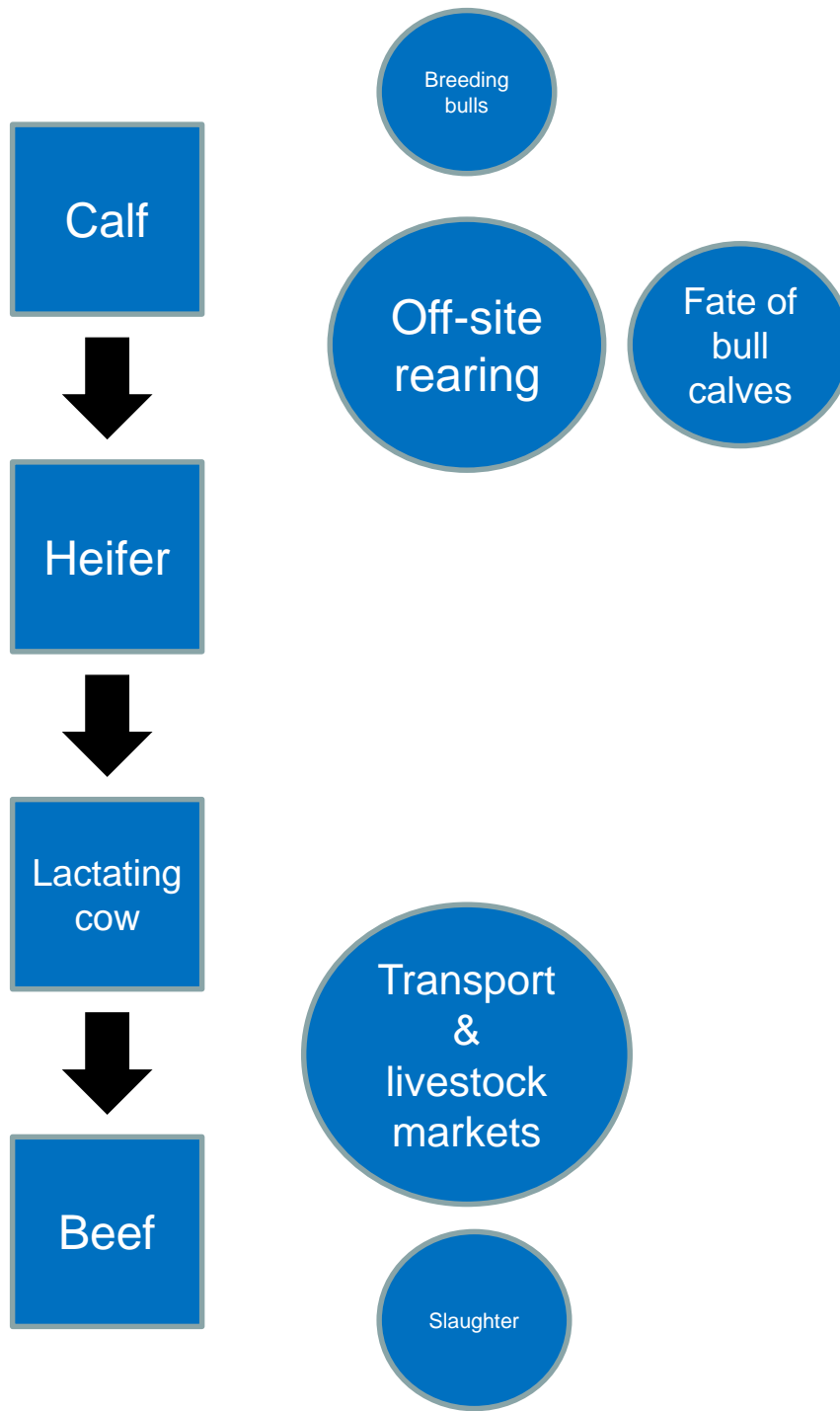


Comprehensive: are all stages  
of production covered?





Areas of risk,  
often not included in  
dairy welfare programs



Success: explicit  
about what is  
and what is not  
included, no  
blind spots



Success: explicit about what is and what is not included, even if not comprehensive

	Rearing	Producing	End of life
Fattening cattle			
Dairy cows			
Veal calves			



Included in cattle protocol



Not included in protocol



# Meaningful standards

- all key animal welfare criteria covered



# Meaningful standards: key criteria



## DairyWell

- scientific evidence
- expert opinion
- public perception





# Meaningful standards: key criteria



## DairyWell

- scientific evidence
- expert opinion
- public perception



## Welfare Quality

- good housing
- good feeding
- good health
- appropriate behavior



# Integrity in the audit process

- is the process repeatable?
- does it minimize bias and interpretation?



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# Complete audit instructions

- “auditable”
- will auditors understand it the same way?



# Example: nutrition on the dairy

## Not easily “auditable”

- Is the nutrition adequate on the farm?
- “adequate”
- “sufficient”
- “acceptable”



# Example: nutrition on the dairy

## **Measurable, “auditable”**

- Count thin cows and calves with a defined scoring system
- Explain sampling to do this
- Documentation about feeding program



Provides concrete information about extent of a problem

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# Verification focus

- direct observation of actions and records
- interview
- consistency among these





# Direct observation of records

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## 1 Disbudding SOP

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### Disbudding Protocol

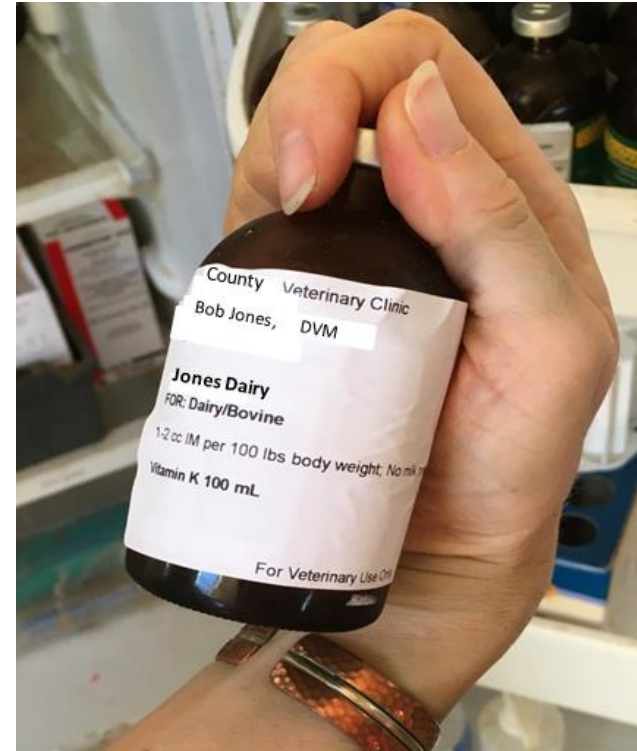
- written protocol
- written records, including dates calves were disbudded

# Direct observation of actions



Is what you find consistent with documents?  
check [method](#), [age](#), materials

# Direct observation of actions



Is what you find consistent with documents?  
check method, age, **materials**

# Interview

- open-ended questions
- “Tell me about how horns are handled here”

Is what you find consistent with documents and actions?  
check [method](#), [age](#), [materials](#)

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# Trained auditors

- a professional standard: education, conduct
- demonstrate repeatability
- regular calibration



# PAACO

- provides auditor training for
  - livestock slaughter
  - poultry
  - swine
  - feedlots
  - dairy
- 2 to 3 day training; involves hands-on component



**Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization, Inc.**



# PAACO dairy auditor training

<b>Personal background</b>	<b>Familiarize with audit tool</b>	<b>Cover logistics and challenges; understand audit process</b>	<b>Begin to practice full audit</b>	<b>In-depth calibration with others</b>
Education, experience	PAACO online training & homework	PAACO in-person training	PAACO shadow audits	Ongoing; each individual is responsible for seeking this out



# PAACO dairy auditor training

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# PAACO dairy auditor training

HOME

TRAINING & HOMEWORK

LEARN HOW TO ASSESS

TEST YOUR REPEATABILITY

THANK YOU

# PAACO Dairy Welfare Auditor Training



# Outcome-Based Measures

Body condition score

Broken tail

Dehydration

Hock injuries

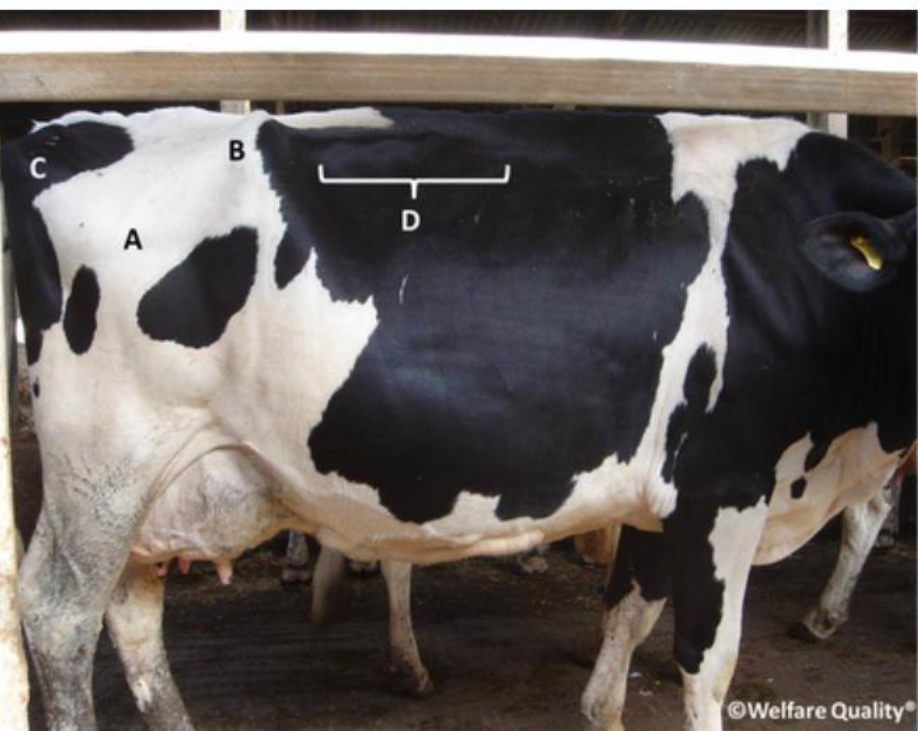
Hygiene

Knee injuries

Lameness

Neck and other injuries

Tail docking



# Body Condition Score Test

Is the body condition shown a problem? Select **yes** if the cow shown is emaciated or gaunt and **no** if the cow has acceptable body condition.



- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

Submit

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2.5 days, 2 farms, exam at end





- 70+ participants in 6 offerings
- corporate leadership, audit companies, vets
- all influence many cows
- 9K+ unique visitors to website



# EU dairy assessor training



Professor Christoph Winckler  
tests repeatability of assessors  
on the cattle protocol  
\*kappa scores\*



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# Transparency & accountability

- audit results presented to key stakeholders on a regular basis





 [Account Sign In](#)

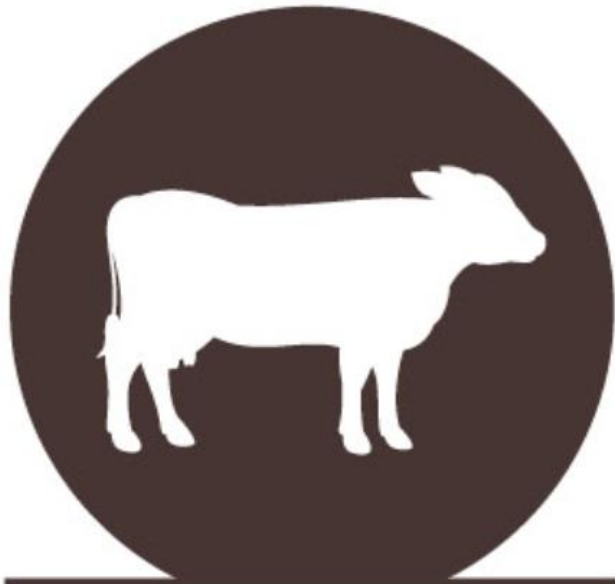
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[What We Value](#)

[Who We Are](#)

# WENDY'S ANIMAL WELFARE AUDITS



**BEEF**  
AVERAGE SCORE

BEEF		
AUDITS		FAILURES
38	2001	8
17	2017	0





# Tyson posts facility audit score online



Updated: 11/09/2018

Dear Valued Customer,

Tyson Foods, Inc., poultry facilities participate in third party auditing programs for animal welfare. We have listed the most recent scores below. Animal welfare is audited to the National Chicken Council or National Turkey Federation detailed audit checklist.

Location	EST	Firm	Audit Date	Audit Score	Outcome
Albertville, AL	P-559	Merieux	7/25/18	100.0%	PASS
Berry Street (Springdale), AR	P-5842	FSNS	7/17/18	95.0%	PASS
Blountsville, AL	P-6	Merieux	7/27/18	100.0%	PASS
Broken Bow, OK	P-7085	FSNS	8/21/18	96.9%	PASS
Carthage, MS	P-758	FSNS	7/10/18	95.3%	PASS



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# Support on farm

- knowledgeable, relational 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> parties







- farms that sell directly to Dean Foods (464 so far)
- outcome, protocol and facility based measures
- **2 full-time auditors**, > 1000 audits
- focus on continuous improvement, but also ability to sell milk

Experienced veterinarians, able to be  
clear & compassionate



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# Meaningful standards: evaluate culture

- statements of commitment
- results from internal audits
- evidence of caregiver training



Culture and support go hand in hand  
\*our best work happens together\*



# Indeed, many elements are related



Goal	Meaningful standard	Integrity in the audit process	Transparent, accountable	Support on farm
Improve animal welfare	Outcome-based measures	Sampling generates trustworthy estimates	Internal database tracks performance and corrective actions  Results are returned to producers & stakeholders	Benchmarks are used to provide context and possibly re-visit schedule

# Take home

success in animal welfare assurance programs involves achieving goals with

- meaningful standards
- integrity in the audit process
- transparency
- support on farm
- *people working together*



<http://www.paacodairywelfareauditortraining.com/>