

Verified Beef Supplier Training Materials; NHTC, NE3, Grassfed

The *Verified Beef Supplier Training Materials* are designed to inform the producer (supplier) of age and source, NHTC, NE3, and Grassfed cattle about the policies and procedures to qualify for USDA compliance. Following the review of this material the producer is required to pass the *Supplier Training Quiz*.

Definitions:

Purchased Pairs and Graft Calves: are **not** eligible for Verified Beef PVP program enrollment unless they were enrolled by the original ranch. Purchased calves must be kept separate and may not be enrolled in the same group as home raised calves.

Age and Source Verification: Qualifies cattle for certain US export markets. Animals must be traceable to the location of origin and meet age restrictions.

Third Party Verification: The verification of age and source of cattle by an entity other than the cow-calf producer, feedlot, stocker, or backgrounder that is qualifying cattle for export. Third Party verification must be completed by USDA approved Process Verification Program (PVP) or Quality Systems Assessment (QSA)

Process Verification Program (PVP): Is a USDA approved process for age and source verification by a third party. The PVP outlines the policies and procedures must be followed for age and source verification.

Quality Systems Assessment (QSA): Is similar to PVP but is specific to a particular operation, such as a feedlot.

Radio Frequency Identification Tag (RFID Tag): Is an ear tag with built in radio chip. Each RFID Tag has a unique 15 digit identification number. No information other than the number is actually stored on the tag. The tag number is used track cattle in the Verified Beef Database.

Premise: Is the identification of each ranching entity enrolled under the Verified Beef PVP by physical address. The premise is for internal use only by Verified Beef It is **not** the same as the USDA Premise ID. A USDA Premise ID is not required for enrollment in Verified Beef

Birthing Group: The birthing group is used for the *Age Verification* of the cattle. The age of the birthing group is the age of the earliest calf born in a given calving season.

Calving Season: The calving season is specific to the time the calves are born. In most cases calving season will be spring or fall.

A supplier with multiple calving seasons must be able to uniquely identify the individual groups.

Non-antibiotics: No antibiotics can be administered whether through feed, water, or by injection, from birth to slaughter. This includes low-level (sub-therapeutic) or therapeutic level doses, sulfonamides, ionophores, coccidiostats, or any other synthetic antimicrobial.

No hormonal growth promotants (HGP): The administration of growth hormones, including natural hormones, synthetic hormones, estrus, suppressants, beta agonists, or other synthetic growth promotants, is prohibited from birth to slaughter. No feed additives, compounds, or implants that would cause faster than normal weight gains and growth are allowed.

No animal by-products: Mammalian and avian by-products are not allowed in feed, except milk or non-medicated milk replacer prior to weaning. Fish by-products and vitamins and mineral supplementation are permissible. However, if fish by-products are used in feed, it must be documented and declared.

Non-hormone Treated Cattle (NHTC): Animals must not have hormonal growth promotants (HGP) administered at any time during the animals' lifetime. Cattle must be traceable to birth ranch/farm (source verified) by a third party company and must have an ear tag with a unique number. This program requires extensive records of conformance.

Never ever 3 (NE3)/Natural: USDA standard for "natural". Raised without growth promotants, antibiotics, or mammalian or avian by-products through the animals' life. Cattle must be traceable to birth ranch/farm (source verified) by a third party company and must have an ear tag with a unique number. This program requires extensive records of conformance.

Forage feed: Cattle diet will consist solely of forage, which for the purpose of the claim, is any edible herbaceous plant material that can be grazed or harvested for feeding, with the exception of grain, through their lifespan (birth to slaughter). Hay, haylage, baleage, non-grain silage, crop residue without grain, and other roughage sources may be included sources of acceptable feed. Prior to weaning, milk and milk replacer may be consumed. Routine mineral and vitamin supplements may be included in the program. Cattle cannot be fed grain or grain by-products and must have continuous access to pasture during the growing season.

Verified Beef Policies and Procedures:

RFID Tags

- All cattle enrolled under the Verified Beef PVP must be tagged with RFID tags purchased from Verified Beef.
 - The RFID Tag must be applied before the animal leaves the ranch of origin.
 - Cattle may be tagged at birth, branding or weaning/pre-conditioning.
 - RFID Tags are assigned to a specific birthing group
 - Unused tags may be transferred from one birthing group to another by the Verified Beef administrator.
 - The producer should report unused or destroyed RFID tags to the Verified Beef Administrator.

Required Records

- Birthing Records

The minimum requirement is for producer is to keep a record of the first calf born. This record must be written down or saved electronically. Qualifying records include but are not limited to:

 - Calendar
 - Birthing Book
 - Spreadsheet
 - Cow Management Software
 - VB Database
- The producer is required to keep records for a minimum of *3 years*.
- A copy of the calving records must be submitted to Verified Beef.
- Grassfed/NHTC/NE3: Additional requirements necessary beyond age/source follow:
 - Supplier will document fall-out procedures used to establish unique identification and control any non-conforming cattle in a specified group. The fall-out procedure may include notching hang tags, attaching a new hang tag, etc. The procedure must be approved by VB before a supplier will be approved.
 - Fall-out cattle from one program may be eligible for compliance in another program. For example: A NE3 calf that is treated with antibiotics is still eligible for NHTC or age and source.
 - Detailed supplier records will be kept on all purchases of any drug, feed, additive, implants, vitamins, and minerals used by the supplier. This includes a list of ingredients or labels, lot numbers, a record of quantity administered or used, date, and cattle affected (group or individual RFID tag). The supplier will maintain records on acquisition, inventory, use, and disposal.
 - Suppliers must obtain and keep on file letters from feed suppliers concerning the feed supplier's use of HGPs. If the feed supplier does use HGPs then the proof of state or federal regulation is required.
 - Grassfed cattle will not be fed grains or grain by-products. If feed is purchased from a feed source, the supplier will need to document what was purchased, where it was stored, how it was used, and disposed of from the ranch.

- Supplier must have a VB approved list of all drugs and feed authorized in the program. If an expedition is requested, documentation of approval must be on file from VB.
- When NHTC/NE3 cattle are sold, shipping documents must accompany each shipment of animals that occurs due to sale or transfer of custody. Shipping documents must have the statement “Cattle Meet EV Program Requirements for the EU” and clearly identify the animals by RFID tag and quantity.

Audits

An audit consists of reviewing the records and production practices of each producer. The audit will verify the producer understands the policy and procedure requirements needed for Verified Beef PVP compliance. Calving records will be inspected; RFID tag compliance will be evaluated; and the separation of individual birth groups inspected. Producers, who commingle with different birthing groups, will be required to provide proof of the individual identification between groups.

Age/source audits will be performed desk-side via a phone conversation or onsite. Every producer must be audited through the desk-side practice. Onsite audits are only required for a *random 10%* of all age/source producers. All NHTC/NE3 suppliers will require an on-site audit.

Services Provided by Verified Beef:

- USDA compliant Age and Source Verification
- Database for tracking Age and Source Verified cattle.
 - The database may also be used to maintain production records by the producers.
The producer is responsible for the input of production records.
- USDA NHTC verification
- USDA NE3 verification
- USDA age and source plus Grassfed verification
- USDA age and source , USDA NHTC plus Grassfed verification
- USDA age and source , USDA NE3 plus Grassfed verification
- Carcass data



Grassfed/NHTC/NE3 Supplier Training Quiz

General process questions:

1. Third party verification of age and source information is required to participate in the NHTC/NE3 USDA export program? Yes / No

2. The “fall-out” procedures consist of which of these?
 - a. Documented procedures
 - b. Visual identification
 - c. Database updates
 - d. Customer management approaches
 - e. Verified Beef approval
 - f. All of the above

3. To get initially approved as a Grassfed/NHTC/NE3 cow/calf supplier; you must submit to an on-site audit by Verified Beef? Yes / No

4. You need a letter of program acknowledgment from your feed supplier on file? Yes / No

5. Verified Beef requires the use of Verified Beef issued RFID tags to be used in its Grassfed/NHTC/NE3 program? Yes / No

6. Grassfed/NHTC/NE3 requirements must be maintain from birth to slaughter of the calf? Yes / No

NHTC questions (answer only if enrolled in NHTC)

7. Which of the following are required for NHTC export verification?
 - a. Registered with an approved QSA/PVP program
 - b. Must be traceable back to original premise
 - c. Must maintain records of all drugs and feeds acquired and used
 - d. Must maintain birth records for 3 years as a cow-calf operator?
 - e. All the above

8. If I have a “fall-out” calf, I can integrate the calf back into the herd after I complete my approved “fall-out” procedures, I maintain my approved NHTC/NE3 feed and treatment regiment, and I mark the calf as treated on all sales documentation? Yes / No



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NE3 questions (answer only if enrolling in NE3)

9. If a calf gets ill and must be treated with antibiotics, it can remain as an NE3 qualified calf? Yes / No
10. If I feed my cattle fish by-products, I am in non-conformance with NE3? Yes / No

Grassfed questions (answer only if enrolling in Grassfed)

11. I can HGP implant my cattle and still be compliant with Grassfed? Yes / No
12. Cattle must be given continuous access to pasture during growing season? Yes / No

Producer Signature: _____

Date: _____