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Code of good animal husbandry practices (GAHP)

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Foreword

The formulation of this Code of Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) was initially drafted by the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS) and was reviewed by the BAFPS Technical Working Committee prior to its presentation for public consultation in Iloilo City, Cebu City, Quezon City and Davao City, the major industry producers of poultry and livestock. Comments from the stakeholders were carefully evaluated and inputted accordingly in this Code.

This Code of Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) aims to set out the general principles of good practice and the minimum requirements in the rearing/farming of animals. The Committee deemed it necessary to adopt this Code of Practice to help Philippine exporters meet the requirements of importing countries.

The Technical Working Committee created by BAFPS for this purpose (as per Special Order No. 299 series of 2007 duly signed by Secretary Arthur C. Yap), is composed of experts from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS) and the Livestock Development Council (LDC).

1 Scope

This Code sets out the general principles of good practice and minimum requirements in the commercial or backyard rearing/farming of animals for food use. Industry specific requirements for the different types of animals and different types of production system may be developed provided that it satisfies the minimum requirements set out in this Code.

2 References

The titles of the standard publications and other references of this Code are listed on the inside back cover.

3 Objective

The purpose of this Code is to ensure that the farming practices of the establishment provide greater confidence in consumers' expectations that the final products are safe and fit for human consumption, while ensuring health safety and comfort to both the farm workers and the animals, without any degradation to the environment.

4 Definitions

For the purpose of this Code, the definitions specified in the documents of the Codex Alimentarius shall apply. Other relevant definitions are as follows:

4.1 General definitions

4.1.1

animal

refers to ruminant (e.g. cattle, buffalo, goat, sheep, deer, etc.) and non-ruminant (e.g. poultry, pig, ostrich, horse, etc.) livestock conventionally raised or reared for food and non-food purposes

4.1.2

abnormal behavior

any changes developed as a response to poor or wrong management practice causing stress to the animal

4.1.3

authorized

that which has been permitted by the competent authority

4.1.4

competent authority

an entity/agency who has the knowledge, expertise and authority as designated by law

4.1.5

dam

female animal used for breeding

4.1.6

establishment

given due permission, a firm authorized to operate

4.1.7

farm owner/operator

legal or juridical entity who is responsible for the management and general operation of the farm; the term maybe used interchangeably

4.1.8

farm worker

personnel responsible for the rearing of animals

4.1.9

gait

way of walking or pace of the animals

4.1.10

ration

daily feed/diet of the animals

4.1.11

rearing

the act of raising of animals. The term is used interchangeably with farming throughout the text

4.1.12

sire

male animal used for breeding

4.1.13

vehicle

any means of transporting animals, including but not limited to trucks, tractors, trailers, trains, ferries, ships and aircrafts

4.1.14

weaning

a process of complete withdrawal of milk feeding or from the dam as soon as a young animal reaches a specific age and body condition or physical maturity

5 Minimum requirements

5.1 Farm operators and workers

5.1.1 General skills and responsibilities

- a) The farm operator/worker should possess the necessary knowledge and skill on the basic procedures of farm management including the correct handling of animal, routine management practices and usage of farm tools or equipment.

- b) The farm operator/worker should be responsible for the welfare of the animals by giving adequate provisions so that they are able to perform at their optimum levels.
- c) The farm worker should be fully equipped with suitable protective gears and tools while working in the farm.
- d) Appropriate working uniform and footwear should be provided to farm operators or visitors who need to be at the production area.
- e) The farm operator/worker should always promote a safe and healthy working condition in the farm. Accident and emergency procedures should be available with clear instructions for all workers. First aid kits and fire extinguishers should be easily available at all times, and placed conspicuously in strategic locations.
- f) The farm owner/operator should ensure that all farm operators and farm workers undergo annual routine health check up.

5.1.2 Legal responsibilities

- a) The farm owner should conform to existing animal farming legislation. This covers the management of environmental issues, farm location, animal welfare requirements, disease control, production of wholesome food and occupational hazard associated with animal farming.
- b) The farm operator should report immediately or within 24 hours to relevant authorities any incidence of abnormal behavioral changes, health conditions and mortalities in the farm or any characteristic of a disease outbreak (i.e. avian influenza, foot & mouth disease).
- c) The farm operator should report to relevant authorities any accident in the farm which may result to serious physical injuries.
- d) The farm worker should be insured against accidents in the conduct of his/her farm work.

5.1.3 Cruelty and neglect

5.1.3.1 The farm operator should not cause cruelty to animals, in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act (Republic Act 8485);

- a) Maltreatment of animals under his/her care and attention.
- b) Neglect of animal, such that it experiences pain, suffering or distress.
- c) Failure to provide adequate resources to maintain the live weight of the animal within the normal physiological range for the species type, age and sex.
- d) Removal of any part of the anatomy without adequate anesthesia, whenever applicable.
- e) Putting to sleep (euthanasia), confine, handle or transport any animal in a manner causing deliberate pain, suffering or distress.
- f) Keeping an animal alive, especially that which is pronounced physically or physiologically incapacitated, unless it is under the direct care of a licensed and registered veterinarian.

5.1.3.2 The farm operator should not neglect animals according to the following criteria:

- a) Freedom from hunger thirst and malnutrition. Feed withdrawal of animals should not be more than eight (8) hours before slaughter;
- b) Freedom from physical discomfort and pain;
- c) Freedom from injury and disease;
- d) With due consideration to the differences in the production system (confined & free-range/grazing), animals should be given enough freedom to conform to essential behavior patterns, (i.e. specific growing stage of poultry); and
- e) Freedom from fear and distress.

5.2 Farm location

5.2.1 Site selection

The farm should:

- a) be strategically located within the approved land use plan of the local government and should be compliant with the DENR regulations.
- b) have a continuous supply of adequate electrical power, potable water and good access road.
- c) not be near bodies of water specially those that are frequented by migratory water fowl.
- d) not be prone to flooding. Perimeter canals that drain to a closed lagoon may be constructed to prevent runoff from contaminating bodies of water and/or adjacent farms.
- e) be accessible to major facilities of production (i.e. feed mill, hatchery,). The farm, however, should not be near slaughter house facilities.

5.2.2 Site history

If there is available data/information from relevant government agencies or organizations on the prior land use, then it should be used to establish that the site is not a possible source of physical, chemical and microbiological hazards. However, when this data is not available and uncertainty exists as to the suitability of the land for agricultural use, it is recommended to have the soil analyzed for heavy metal contamination, etc.

5.3 Animal housing and facilities

Farm owners/operators when building animal housing facilities may also refer to the Standard on Housing established by the Agricultural Engineers.

5.3.1 Housing

- a) The premises should be kept clean at all times to prevent disease occurrence, establishment of breeding ground for pests and avoid environmental degradation.

- b) The farm should have an appropriate design, infrastructure, facilities, equipment and tools for an effective and functional operation.
- c) The farm building should be designed and constructed appropriately for the intended purpose, should provide proper ventilation and should be well maintained.
- d) The building intended for keeping animals should be constructed in the orientation that minimizes the adverse effects on animal performance and eliminates possible hazards to its surroundings.
- e) Painting materials used for the building and facilities should not be hazardous to the animals.
- f) The building should be designed and constructed using materials that:
 - should not cause any injury or impart hazard to the welfare of the animal;
 - provide comfort;
 - can be easily cleaned and disinfected;
 - can easily be replaced when damaged;
 - create efficient stock management;
 - enhance bio-security; and
- g) There should be an effective drainage system in place at the building.
- h) Animals should be provided with sufficient floor space/size suitable for their age, body weight and size, to ensure comfort to the animals.
- i) Animals should be provided with appropriate space to feed and drink comfortably.
- j) Floors and pathways used by the animals should be made from non-slippery materials, safe, stable and well-lighted, to prevent injury or abnormal gait to the animals.
- k) Gates or doorways should allow free passage for entrance and exit so as not to cause injury to animals.
- l) Animal buildings should have adequate lighting to ensure that animals can be thoroughly inspected as required.
- m) Electrical installations and wirings should be protected and should not be accessible to the animals.
- n) Design for the walls or partitions and roofs within the animal house should be suitable for the comfort of the animals and for easy cleaning.
- o) House and pens should be designed and constructed to prevent animals from escaping.
- p) Housing design (particularly roof height and sides) should provide proper ventilation (whether natural or artificial) to maintain a comfortable environment.

- q) The farm should provide effective and appropriate facilities to restrain or handle animals without causing undue stress and injury to both animals and farm workers.
- r) The design of alleys and chutes should allow effective management of the animals.
 - Floors of alleys and chutes should be properly built to provide good footing, preventing slippage and injuries.
 - Alleys and chutes should have sides of sufficient height to prevent animals from falling or jumping off.
 - Alleys and chutes should be free from protruding objects or structures (e.g. nails and bolts) that may cause injury to the animals and farm operators and farm workers.
- s) The feeding and drinking equipment and facilities should be properly designed, constructed and conspicuously placed to allow animals to eat and drink freely, allowing them to behave normally.
- t) The feeding and drinking facilities' location and design should help prevent contamination with animal feces and urine.
- u) The feeding and drinking facilities should conform with the standards/requirements for each species.

5.3.2 Facilities

5.3.2.1 Fencing

- a) The fence, including its posts and gates, should be effectively designed to prevent entry of stray animals, and escape or injury of the farm animals.
- b) If electric fence when used should be operated as per manufacturer's instructions.

5.3.2.2 Holding yard

- a) Sufficient pens and floor space should be provided to prevent overcrowding and permit necessary segregation of animals.
- b) Pen floors should be flat, 'broom-finished' and well-drained to provide good footing and prevent slipping or tripping.
- c) The holding yard should be constructed in such a way that it will adequately protect the animals from adverse weather conditions and will provide sufficient ventilation.
- d) The holding yard should have proper facilities for animals to feed and drink.

5.3.2.3 Storage facilities

- a) the farm should have a facility for proper storage of all feed materials.
- b) the feed storage should be kept clean at all times.
- c) the feed storage should have adequate ventilation, adequate protection from moisture to prevent acquisition of molds, and should be vermin-proof.

- d) “First in – first out” rule should be practiced.

5.3.2.4 Breeding facilities

The breeding facility and equipment should be properly designed to provide the animals a comfortable and conducive environment for reproduction.

5.4 Farm management

5.4.1 Breeding, reproduction and weaning

The farm should practice natural mating and/or assisted (artificial) breeding techniques for the animals

- a) Animal breeding should take place when they have shown sexual maturity, attaining the appropriate body weight and health, free from any disease or from probable inherited abnormality.
- b) The farm should practice natural mating and/or assisted (artificial) breeding techniques for the animals.
- c) In natural mating, appropriate ratio of male to female animals should be practiced.
- d) Only duly trained personnel or professional should perform assisted breeding techniques on the animals.
- e) Weaning should be conducted with minimum stress to both the dam and its young.
- f) The young should be weaned only at a recommended body weight and age.
- g) The farm operator should provide the basic facilities for the newly weaned animals.
- h) The farm operator should identify individual breeding animals and record their reproductive performances accordingly.
- i) Breeding programmes and activities should be properly recorded, maintained, monitored and evaluated.

5.4.2 Animal sourcing, identification and traceability

- a) Animals should be appropriately identified and the records of identification for the animals should be kept properly.
- b) For large ruminants, animals should be appropriately identified at the most suitable part of their body and shall be reported and registered with the local government authority.
- c) If the establishment imports animals, records of pertinent documents should be kept.
- d) The farm operator should record all movement of animals in and out of the farm. This includes records of veterinary protocols as prescribed by the concerned authority.

5.4.3 Feeds and nutrition

The farm operator should:

- a) ensure that animals are provided with optimum level of nutrition at all times, as required for their respective functions and well-being.
- b) not use banned chemicals, feed additives, supplements and any form of medication in the diet of the animals, including those disallowed by the authorities or importing countries.
- c) strictly follow instructions of medication, paying special attention to the withdrawal period of each specific drug being administered before the animals are sent to market.
- d) provide animals only with rations or feeding materials suited for specific animal species.
- e) provide animals with commercial feed that has been officially registered with the Animal Feeds Standardization Division (AFSD) of the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI)
- f) in case of farm-mixed feed formulation, farm operators should only use ingredients from certified and traceable suppliers. Record of purchase should be kept.
- g) provide the animals with adequate, safe and clean feed.
- h) provide animals with adequate and continuous access to clean and safe water.
- i) the feed mixing equipment should be kept clean at all times and have regular preventive maintenance schedule.
- j) the farm operator should provide a daily feeding schedule or routine.
- k) Procurement documents of feed should be kept properly to include:
 - supplier or source of feed and its registration number;
 - type of feed and supplements;
 - quantity;
 - declaration of ingredients;
 - document of feed analysis;
 - date of delivery; and
 - date of manufacturing and batch number
- l) The farm operator should record the type and quantity of ration being fed to the animals.

5.4.4 Animal health (Veterinary medicines)

- a) The farm operator should be responsible for maintaining good health of the animals at all times, through proper management practices that include prevention, treatment and disease control and containment measures of the disease affecting the animals.

- b) Animal health care should be supervised by a licensed veterinarian. The agriculturist major in Animal Science/involved in animal husbandry should also have a valid PRC registration (pursuant to the Agriculturist Law).
- c) The status of animal disease should be monitored and recorded regularly.
- d) Veterinary assessment of the establishment should be carried out annually by a licensed veterinarian and/or by a competent authority.
- e) The effectiveness of animal health programme should be monitored and recorded regularly by the farm.
- f) The farm should have a written vaccination and deworming programme.
- g) The vaccination programme should be adopted against the diseases as required by competent authorities.
- h) It is prohibited to use illegal vaccines (use vaccine accredited by BAI; the same with controlled drugs)
- i) Vaccines should be kept, and handled appropriately. Proper disposal of empty vaccine vials should be followed always.
- j) Vaccination, medication and treatment should be administered appropriately under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian.
- k) Drugs or medicines should only be used for prophylactic and treatment reasons.
- l) The use of all illegal and banned medication should be prohibited.
- m) Drugs or medicines should be kept in a safe place to prevent contamination to the environment.
- n) Drugs should be kept separately from other items intended for use on animals.
- o) Controlled drugs should be strictly administered and supervised by a licensed veterinarian.
- p) Drugs or medicines should be dispensed as recommended by the veterinarian
- q) The farm operator should notify the veterinary authority of any outbreak of a disease or abnormal rate of mortality or morbidity of animals within 24 hours of its occurrence.
- r) Up-to-date records of farm operations and management routines should be properly kept and maintained for easy retrieval.
- s) The farm operator should keep updated and complete records of animal health programmes including disease monitoring and control as well as medication. Records should be easily accessible.
- t) Records include:
 - vaccination programme;
 - deworming

- disease condition;
 - diagnosis and treatment;
 - control measures;
 - post-mortem findings;
 - surveillance; and
 - disposal.
- u) The farm should maintain updated records of medicine purchase and administration that should be readily available for inspection.
- v) Procurement records should have:
- date of purchase;
 - name of the product (generic compound);
 - quantity purchased;
 - batch number;
 - expiry date; and
 - name of supplier.
- w) Administration records should consist of the following:
- type of drugs or medication used;
 - batch number;
 - quantity of medicine used;
 - date administered;
 - route of administration;
 - identification of animals/group treated;
 - number of animals treated;
 - date of completion of treatment;
 - withdrawal period; and
 - name of the person who administered the medicine.

5.4.5 Handling and restraining of animals

- a) Animals should always be handled and restrained in such a way to protect them from fear, stress, pain and injury.
- b) Appropriate facilities, equipment and tools should be provided and used in handling or restraining the animals.
- c) Appropriate tools should be used for the purpose of effective animal management and the operators should acquire the skills and techniques to use the tools.
- d) Tools should be used in a manner that minimize stress and does not injure the animals.
- e) Tools should be functional for efficient application on the animals by the operators.
- f) Sick, injured or disabled animals should be separated from healthy animals and should be given the necessary veterinary attention.
- g) Proper techniques should be applied to handle and restrain animals.
- h) Stick, cane or electric probes should not be used to restrain the farm animals. It may be used for the worker's safety when handling larger or aggressive animals.

5.4.6 Transportation

- a) Animals should be transported in a manner that does not cause stress throughout the journey and does not pre-dispose them to injury & disease.
- b) Animals should be transported in appropriate vehicles that provide comfort throughout the period of travel.
- c) Appropriate space allowance and ventilation should be provided during transportation.
- d) The transporter should be fully responsible for the care and welfare of the animal as well as ensure the cleanliness of the vehicle during the entire process of transporting. Disposal of the waste should be done in an environment friendly manner.
- e) The transport of animals from point of origin to final destination should be through the most direct and appropriate route which should be completed without unnecessary delay.
- f) For long distance journey (by land or inter-island), the transporter should be responsible for additional necessary requirements to ensure the welfare of animal. Animals should be transported at the coolest time of the day, particularly in the morning.
- g) In cases wherein the establishment seeks the services of a second (2nd) party to ship the live animals, the shipper should be properly informed of the recommendations stated in a to d.
- h) Movement permits and health certificates need to be acquired and should conform to the veterinary protocol imposed by the competent authority.

- i) Animals being transported should be in good state of health. However, stressed, sick and pregnant animals may be transported but with extra-precautionary measures.
- j) Vehicles used for the transport of animals should be according to the following specifications:
 - allow easy loading and unloading;
 - has communication equipment and first aid kit;
 - ensure safety of the animals and personnel during transport;
 - clean and sanitized;
 - equipped with floors that provide secure footing;
 - have proper drainage which also allow collection of urine; and
 - have a decal/label **“live animal on board”** at the sides and front/back.
- k) Where appropriate, animals should be segregated according to species, size, sex, and age.
- l) Animals destined for slaughter should be rested for 6 to 12 hours upon arrival at the slaughterhouse.
- m) Animals should be transported during the coolest part of the day.

5.4.7 Bio-security measures

- a) Bio-security procedures should be well implemented to prevent introduction of disease into the farm and/or to control its spread within the farm.

Example:

For chicken that are in coops/poultry houses/buildings, the cages should be netted to prevent entry of migratory birds. In the cases of free-range chicken, control measures that include putting them in cages while there are cases of avian influenza outbreak to prevent them from commingling with migratory species.

- b) The farm should have a written protocol of bio-security measures. Proper warning signage should be provided.
- c) The implementation of bio-security measures should be continuously monitored to assess the effectiveness of the programme.
- d) The farm should have the appropriate and functional lay-out and infrastructure to ensure effective implementation of the bio-security measures. This should include facilities:
 - for changing, washing and shower; and
 - for disinfection at entry/exit point of the farm and the building.

- e) Care should be observed that all “brought-in” animals shall have undergone appropriate quarantine measures/treatment.

5.4.8 Farm sanitation program

- a) Farm premises should be kept clean and free of potential conditions conducive to breeding of pests, animal parasites and disease outbreak. This is to avoid negative effects on the landscape, environment and animal welfare.
- b) Organic materials should be regularly removed from all livestock contact surfaces (i.e. floors, pen partitions). Where bedding is used, it should be regularly changed and/or topped up.
- c) The farm should have a proper and functional drainage system.
- d) The farm should have proper handling and disposal system for sick, injured and dead animals.

5.5 Environmental management

- a) The farm operator should take necessary measures to ensure that activities related to livestock farming do not contribute to the degradation of the environment (i.e. land, water, air) and cause destruction to bio-diversity.
- b) Solid and liquid waste should be managed and disposed according to the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.
- c) Dead animals should be buried properly.
- d) Vermin/pest control should be managed accordingly.
- e) The farm operator should maintain and display clear instructions on procedure for disposal of farm solid wastes and farm chemical wastes (e.g. expired pesticide/weedicide and containers, paint, etc.)
- f) The farm operator should be familiar with the proper procedure for disposal and schedule of actions to be taken, especially at times of emergency.
- g) Measures should be in place to keep noise from barns to acceptable levels, particularly if the farm is located close to urban centers.
- h) Measures should be in place to keep out noise that could potentially affect growth and productive performance of animals, specifically around poultry brooder house, milking parlor, maternity and nursing pens.
- i) Air quality is important to the health and well-being of animals and those of humans who manage and tend the farm operation. The measure of air quality relates to the content of certain gases, particulate matter, and airborne microbes in the air around the farm and its facilities.
 - the farm should regularly monitor the air quality and maintain it in acceptable levels.

- j) The farm should take appropriate measures to minimize excessive odor coming from the farm and that which may be associated with waste decomposition.

5.6 Review and evaluation of practices

5.6.1 Practices should be regularly checked for compliance and evaluation for effectiveness and do-ability on a regular basis

5.6.2 In cases where provisions are no longer applicable, they must be amended.

References

PNS/BAFPS 60:2008

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies:

Malaysian Standard – Good Animal Husbandry Practice (GAHP), MS 2027:2006

EUREPGAP – Control Points and Compliance Criteria – Integrated Farm Assurance – Version 2.0 Mar-05

A Manual on Good Husbandry Practices for Swine Farming – Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc., October 2006

A Manual on Good Husbandry Practices for Broiler Production – Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc., October 2006

Republic Act No. 8485 – The Animal Welfare Act of 1998 (February 11, 1998)

Implementing Rules and Regulations Pursuant to Republic Act 8485 - “The Animal Welfare Act of 1998” (May 18, 1998)

Department of Agriculture – Administrative Order No. 12 Series of 2002 – Code of Practice and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Chickens (April 1, 2002)

Department of Agriculture – Administrative Order No. 41 Series of 2000 – Code of Practice and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Pigs (04 September 2000)

Philippine Agricultural Engineering Standard (PAES) 409:2002

Agricultural Engineers’ Handbook, McGraw – Hill Book Company, New York 1961

AO Farm Inspection System (New AOs)

B P S

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