



04 March 2008

Administrative Order
No. **10**
Series of 2008

SUBJECT: GUIDELINES ON THE CERTIFICATION OF GOOD ANIMAL HUSBANDRY PRACTICES (GAHP)

The Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS) created pursuant to Republic Act 8435 or the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997 (AFMA) is mandated to formulate and enforce standards of quality in the processing, preservation, packaging, labeling, importation, exportation, distribution and advertising of agriculture and fisheries products.

Realizing the need on the liberalization of animal meat and meat products and the incessant need to compete in the international market, it is important that its safety and quality are ensured. The best approach to maintain the wholesomeness nature and safe consumption of the agricultural produce is to systematically identify and establish a management practice that minimizes chances of external and internal contamination from the farm-to-table chain. Consequently, the government has to develop and enforce the Code of Practice for Good Animal Husbandry (GAHP) throughout the country in close collaboration with stakeholders. To assure that agricultural farms are adhering to GAHP, there is an imperative need to provide specific guidelines in GAHP Certification.

1. Objectives of Certification. The certification of agricultural farms is aimed to attain the following:
 - 1.1. To increase the market access of animal products both in the local and foreign markets;
 - 1.2. To empower farmers to respond to the demands of consumers that specific criteria in the trade of goods to achieve food safety and quality be met;
 - 1.3. To facilitate farmer adoption of sustainable agricultural practices;
 - 1.4. To uplift GAHP-agricultural farm operators profile as member of the nationally recognized list of animal industry producers who are setting the benchmark for the production of safe and quality meat and meat products;
 - 1.5. To enable consumers exercise the option of buying quality meat and meat products from traceable and certified sources.
 - 1.6. To support and facilitate disease control program.



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2. Scope of Guidelines. This establishes the rules applied by the Department of Agriculture (DA) for granting, maintaining and withdrawing Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) Certificate to individual raisers or farm operators in the livestock sector or to their Produce Marketing Organizations (PMOs) that market and or trade the produce.

3. Administrator / Administration

3.1. Composition. The Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) Certification Committee shall be composed of the Directors of attached agencies of the Department of Agriculture (DA), representatives from the private sector, non-government organization, and academe.

Chairperson: Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI)
Co-chairperson: Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries
Product Standards (BAFPS)
Members: National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS)
Livestock Development Council (LDC)
Philippine Carabao Center (PCC)
National Dairy Authority (NDA)
Representative, Department of Trade and
Industry (DTI) Consumers Desk
Representative, Union of Local Authorities of
the Philippines
Representative, League of Cities and
Municipalities
Representative, Private sector
Representative, NGO/PO
Representative, Academe

3.2. Tasks. The Committee shall be tasked to:

- 3.2.1. Review and approve applications
- 3.2.2. Endorse to the Secretary a list of qualified applicants to be issued a Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) Certificate
- 3.2.2. Review and approve any changes in standards and fees
- 3.2.3. Hear appeals
- 3.2.4. Annually review investigations of complaints about abuses in the production and sale of products that do not adhere to GAHP
- 3.2.5. Determine penalties for abuse of standards or mark
- 3.2.6. Designate qualified National and Regional Inspectors
- 3.2.7. To document best practices through time

3.3. Secretariat. The Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS) shall act as secretariat of the GAHP Certification Committee.



3.4. Inspectors. The National Inspectors based in the Central Offices shall be composed of identified technical personnel duly designated by the Directors of the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS), Livestock Development Council (LDC) and Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) and the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS). Regional Inspectors replicating the composition of the National Inspectors duly recommended by their respective Regional Heads, if any, shall be constituted as the need arises.

4. Application

4.1. Nature of applicants. The Department of Agriculture (DA) Certification Scheme shall be based on three (3) categories, depending on the type of party that is requesting certification.

4.1.1. Individual raiser

4.1.2. Produce Marketing Organization (PMO)

4.1.3. A company or corporation

4.2. The applicant shall submit the completed application form to the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) through the Secretariat.

4.3. Supporting Documents. Accompanying the accomplished form are:

4.3.1. Farm/Organization profile

4.3.2. Company/corporation Certificate of registration

4.3.3. Track record of the farm or company or corporation or PMO

4.3.4. For Produce Marketing Organizations (PMOs). The PMOs must illustrate that it has 100% control of the registered raisers of the group requesting for certification, all individual raisers operate under the same management systems and adhere to the Department of Agriculture (DA) Code of Practice for Good Animal Husbandry (GAHP).

4.3.5. For cooperatives – a registration certification from the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA)

4.4. Fees.

4.4.1. The Certification Committee shall establish the guidelines to fix the application fees to cover administrative expenses.

4.4.2. The Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) and the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS) shall conduct random and periodic tests or analysis and such cost(s) shall be borne by the applicant.

4.4.3. Traveling expenses for evaluation and audit shall be borne by the mother agency of the national/regional inspector.



5. Certification

5.1. Audit/Inspection

- 5.1.1. After the Certification Committee has evaluated the application, the Committee will notify the farm facility within thirty (30) days on the farm audit date prior to the certification or the renewal of the application
- 5.1.2. The inspector may take samples of animal tissues and products such as milk (*if available without destructive sampling*), feeds, water, manure and urine for testing. The quality of air shall also be measured using an equipment for this purpose. A receipt will be given to the producer and the producer shall not charge the GAHP Program for the sample taken. The applicant will receive a copy of the analysis conducted by the government agencies.
- 5.1.3. Inspectors shall conduct an “entry and exit” interview with the applicant or authorized representative upon completion of the inspection process. The inspector shall cover all potential problem areas noted on the inspection form.
- 5.1.4. The inspectors should look into the storage of veterinary biological products to know if these are stored and handled properly. It would be advisable if a stand-by generator is available.

5.2. Issuance of GAHP Certificate

- 5.2.1. The awarding of GAHP Certification is based upon compliance set in the Code of Practice for Good Animal Husbandry (GAHP) pertaining to farm structure, environment and maintenance, farming practices and farm management during farm checks and the diligent observation of the regulations of GAHP certification. The compliance criteria include:
 - 5.2.1.1. Compliance to the Code of Practice for Good Animal Husbandry (GAHP)
 - 5.2.1.2. Implementation of biosecurity measures and transparent and traceable systems to keep track of safe and quality meat and meat products
 - 5.2.1.3. Documentation of farm management to help trace the history of farm produce. The farm must also identify a coordinator to represent the farm in the certification matters. The farm records must be kept for two (2) years. New farm applying for certification must have six (6) months of farm records.
- 5.2.2. Upon the review of the inspection report, the GAHP Certification Committee shall recommend for the approval, denial or placement of an application in pending. If placed in pending or denied, the Chairperson will have fifteen (15) days to notify the applicant.
- 5.2.3. Upon approval of application, the report of the GAHP Certification Committee together with the recommendation to issue GAHP



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Certificate to the applicant shall be endorsed to the Office of the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture for approval.

5.2.4. After the approval from the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, the GAHP Program Certification Committee shall assign an unequivocal permanent registration number and issues a GAHP Certificate.

5.2.5. The GAHP Certification award entitles the applicant to use an official mark “Good Animal Husbandry Practices Compliant” in accordance with the provision set out herein.

6. Renewal of Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) Certificate

6.1. Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) Program participants shall renew GAHP Certificate by submitting a new application two (2) years after it has been issued. Application for renewal shall be done one (1) month prior to the expiration date of the certificate.

6.2. Upon receipt of the renewal request, a new certificate shall be issued and an inspection shall be performed within the following thirty (30) days, preferably during the livestock production season.

7. Advertisement

7.1. The “Good Animal Husbandry Practices” Mark is an official Mark to be put on animal meat and meat products produced by certified farms. It is an offense for any farm or company to use the Mark to advertise the farm products not produced by the farm or when farm is not certified.

7.2. Certified farms are allowed to advertise with the Mark. This privilege will be withdrawn in the event of non-compliance with the regulations and guidelines.

7.3. The Mark may be used on letterheads of the company and in advertisement materials such as brochures and packaging bags for promotion of the farm and must adhere to the given specifications.

7.4. All materials containing the Mark shall be submitted to GAHP Certification Committee for approval in their use and release to the public.

8. Revocation of GAHP Certificate

Certified farms must observe and comply with the GAHP Certification Guidelines. Farms must comply with all major criteria as specified in the Code of Good Animal Husbandry Practices. Non-compliance with the Code of GAHP shall result in the loss of approval. Failure to comply with any part of the guidelines may involve fines, suspension or withdrawal of award, which will be publicly announced. The initial certification shall be good for one (1) year unless earlier cancelled for just cause.



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9. Confidentiality

All employees, contractors, and committee members must adhere to the principles of confidentiality. Information submitted by applicants for approval will not be released to the public, including production practices, feed ingredients, customer list, complaint log, etc. without written permission of the applicant. However, the following information may be released.

- 9.1. the name, address and telephone number of the applicant
- 9.2. to confirm whether or not the applicants operation was approved on a specific date
- 9.3. any information to comply with a court order
- 9.4. any information to comply with a request from the GAHP Certification Committee investigating an alleged complaint

10. Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest is defined as having an economic interest with a producer or processor under review for approval one year prior to, during or one year after work or employment was concluded. Staff, contractors and committee members with a conflict of interest must make the conflict known and not participate in discussion or decisions regarding the producer or processor under review.

11. Additional Regulations

Other regulations may be introduced and notified when they become necessary to ensure production of safe and quality meat and meat products in certified farms.

12. Effectivity

This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of national circulation or in the Official Gazette or its filing with the UP Law Center.

APPROVED:

(original signed)
ARTHUR C. YAP
Secretary