

Updates in the beef industry (as of January 10, 2020)

- The national Beef Quality Assurance program is a voluntary industry-wide program that is producer driven and based on the most current research-based cattle care practices. Many food service companies are looking to the BQA program to be the U.S. producer certification program to meet the expectations of their consumers when it comes to claims on animal welfare, environmental stewardship and sustainability, and food safety. Thus, major packers are committing to source BQA-certified beef to meet these expectations of consumers, restaurants, and food service companies.
- Current companies with BQA sourcing claims (only some examples):



Company	Wants BQA	Wants BQAT
American Foods Group	No-follow their rules	No-follow their rules
Cargill	Yes (as of 2018)	Yes (as of 2019)
DemKota Ranch Beef	Yes (as of 2019)	Unsure at this time
JBS	Yes (as of 2019)	Yes (as of 2019)
National Beef	Yes (as of 2019)	Yes (as of 2020)
Tyson	Yes (as of 2019)	Yes (as of 2020)
U.S. Premium Beef	Yes (as of 2019)	Yes (as of 2019)

Do I actually need BQA certification?

- Yes, if the packer you sell to requires it. Talk to your buyer to determine specific deadlines for verifying your certification status with their company.
- Yes, if you desire for your feedyard to be listed on the National Feedyard Assessment Database. At a minimum, the owner, manager, or key personnel at the yard must maintain BQA certification. All other employees need to have documented training in their animal care tasks; this could include BQA certification.

Do I actually need BQA Transportation (BQAT) certification?

- Yes, if you are hauling directly to a harvest facility. Talk to your buyer or plant official to determine specific deadlines the plant will begin asking for verification of your certification.
- Highly encouraged for producers or haulers delivering cattle to auction barns or cattle feeding facilities.

South Dakota BQA program updates

- Coordinated by SDSU Extension. Contact Heidi Carroll, Heidi.Carroll@sdstate.edu or 605-688-6623.
- Only 1 certification level; there is no Site or Treatment Plan required to receive certification.
- Recertification must be completed by taking either an in-person or online course. In-person certification fees may apply, while online certification is always free.
- Veterinarians and SDSU Extension Beef and Dairy Specialists are able to become South Dakota BQA Trainers and offer in-person BQA certification trainings. There is a certification fee and certification is valid for 3 years.
- The National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) program is a BQA-equivalent program.



Table: Overview of beef and dairy cattle quality assurance programs and assessments.

Common Questions	Beef Quality Assurance (BQA)	Dairy Animal Care & Quality Assurance (aka: DACQA or Dairy BQA)	BQA Transportation Quality Assurance (BQAT)	BQA Feedyard Assessment	BQA Stocker Assessment	BQA Cow-calf Assessment	Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM)
Who does it apply to?	All producers that raise animals for beef, including dairy beef	All producers that raise animals for milk or beef production	Farmers and ranchers who transport cattle; or professional drivers – especially drivers hauling to packing plants	Feeders or growers that meet the national BQA standards and desire to be listed on the national Feedyard Assessment Database	Producers managing grow yards that desire to perform self-assessments for continuous improvement	Producers managing cow herds that desire to perform self-assessments for continuous improvement	Member farms of dairy cooperatives and processors and individual dairies whom desire to participate in the FARM program
How do I participate or complete certification?	Online or in-person course	Online course only	Online or in-person; Limited courses available in-person	Owner or manager completes BQA Feedyard self-assessment form and release form. Submit forms to State BQA Coordinator verifying implementation of BQA practices.	No specific national certification process at this time, no national database	No specific national certification process at this time, no national database	Dairy farms complete an on-farm evaluation conducted by a certified FARM Animal Care Evaluator verifying implementation of animal care practices; they agree to participate in 3rd Party random sampling protocol and verification
Length of certification?	3 years	3 years	3 years	Not a certification; listed in database for 3 years	Not a certification	Not a certification	Evaluated every 3 years
Is it mandatory?	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Whom is requiring it?	Some packers and feedyards by 2019, varies by packer. Some retailers and restaurants desire to buy beef from BQA certified sources	Qualifies as employee training for the mandatory FARM requirements	Some packers as of 2019 or 2020; varies by packer, discuss with your buyer	Some packers may use this to meet their on-farm self-assessment expectations. Required to be listed on the Feedyard Assessment database.	None at this time. If you are a contract grower, discuss with your buyer or feeder.	None at this time. Discuss with your buyer, feeder, or sale barn.	Most milk processors, discuss with your field representative
Who or what is covered?	Person	Person	Person	Site	Site	Site	Site
Where can I get more information?	Heidi Carroll, SDSU Extension Heidi.Carroll@sdstate.edu bqa.org Contact your buyer for specific packer requirements	animalcaretraining.org/	Heidi Carroll, SDSU Extension Heidi.Carroll@sdstate.edu bqa.org Contact your buyer for specific packer requirements	Heidi Carroll, SDSU Extension Heidi.Carroll@sdstate.edu bqa.org Contact your buyer for specific packer requirements	Heidi Carroll, SDSU Extension Heidi.Carroll@sdstate.edu bqa.org Contact your buyer for specific packer requirements	Heidi Carroll, SDSU Extension Heidi.Carroll@sdstate.edu bqa.org Contact your buyer for specific packer requirements	Heidi Carroll, SDSU Extension Heidi.Carroll@sdstate.edu nationaldairyfarm.com Contact your dairy field representative for specific processor requirements
Who is the lead agency?	National Cattlemen's Beef Association	The Beef Cattle Institute	National Cattlemen's Beef Association	National Cattlemen's Beef Association	National Cattlemen's Beef Association	National Cattlemen's Beef Association	National Milk Producers Federation
What does it cover (not all inclusive list)?	BMPs covering principles of food safety, herd health, VCPR, low-stress handling, euthanasia, records, employee training, and biosecurity	BMPs for dairies covering principles of food safety, herd health, VCPR, low-stress handling, euthanasia, records, employee training, and biosecurity	Principles of stockmanship; biosecurity; fitness for transport; pre-trip planning and loading; guidelines for on the road, arrival and unloading; and risk and emergency management	On-farm evaluation of: Written standard operating procedures for ~17 animal care tasks, cattle welfare commitment, VCPR, biosecurity, records, employee training, daily observations, facility and equipment maintenance, observations of cattle handling for cattle going through chute	On-farm evaluation of: Written standard operating procedures for ~10 animal care tasks, cattle welfare commitment, VCPR, biosecurity, records, employee training, daily observations, and facility and equipment maintenance	On-farm evaluation of: Written standard operating procedures for ~9 animal care tasks, cattle welfare commitment, VCPR, biosecurity, records, employee training, daily observations, facility and equipment maintenance, and observation of cattle handling for cattle going through chute	On-farm evaluation of: Best management practices covering principles of food safety, herd health, cattle welfare commitment, VCPR, low-stress handling, euthanasia, written standard operating procedures for ~14 animal care tasks, records, employee training, and biosecurity