








Animal Welfare Standards at a Glance




Comparison of Canada's Codes of Practice, SPCA Certified Standards and the Canadian Organic Standards




	<p style="text-align: center;">Codes of Practice Canada's minimum required standard of care</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">SPCA Certified Standards</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Canadian Organic Standards (2015)</p> 
Standards Development Process	Developed through a consensus process. Involves input from scientists, vets, industry representatives, humane organizations and the public. A Code Development Committee has final approval.	Developed through an evidence-based approach. Applies animal welfare research to meet animals' needs. Involves input from scientists, vets, and producers. BC SPCA has final approval.	Developed through a consensus process. Standards held by Canadian General Standards Board secretariat. Organic industry has final approval.
Inspection	The Codes of Practice are recognized in courts of law as the minimum standard of care required for farm animals. However, adherence to the Codes is not yet verified through mandatory on-farm inspection. During cruelty investigations, officers use the Codes of Practice to determine whether required standards are being met.	Member farms undergo annual and random farm inspections by third party, trained validators. An independent, arm's length review panel determines farm certification status.	Member farms undergo annual and random farm inspections by third party, trained verification officers. An independent, arm's length review committee determines farm certification status.
Feed	No specifics about the feeding of mammalian- or avian-derived proteins for broiler chickens, egg-laying hens, turkeys, pigs, dairy cattle, beef cattle or sheep.	Feed must not contain avian- or mammalian-derived proteins, with the exception of milk and milk-products for nursing young.	Feeding of mammalian or avian slaughter by-products prohibited. Feed must be certified organic.
Antibiotics	Permitted for treatment of illnesses/injuries in pigs, dairy cattle, beef cattle and sheep. No mention of antibiotic use in production of broiler chickens, egg-laying hens or turkeys. For all animal types, no mention of whether antibiotics are prohibited or permitted as a preventative therapy or for performance (growth) enhancement, or whether antibiotics can be added to feed or water.	Prohibited as growth promotant and as preventative therapy. Permitted only for veterinary treatment of animals diagnosed as injured or ill.	Prohibited. Products from animals (except dairy animals) treated with antibiotics cannot be sold or marketed as organic.
Hormones	No mention of hormone use for production of broiler chickens, egg-laying hens, turkeys, dairy cattle or beef cattle (i.e. not prohibited from use). Hormones permitted to stimulate estrus in sheep and for immuno-castration of male pigs.	Prohibited for growth promotion. Permitted only for treatment of diseases/conditions (e.g. relating to reproductive disorders, such as cystic ovaries).	Prohibited in feed. Must not be used to promote or retard growth, or as a preventative therapy.




To receive full versions of the documents listed above, visit the [National Farm Animal Care Council](#), [SPCA Certified](#) and the [Canada Organic Regime](#).

Continued...	Codes of Practice Canada's minimum required standard of care 	SPCA Certified Standards 	Canadian Organic Standards (2015) 
Moulting (Poultry)	Controlled moulting permitted.	Forced and controlled moulting is prohibited.	Forced and controlled moulting is prohibited.
Outdoor Access	Not required for any animal types.	Required for cattle and sheep. Exceptions made for emergency situations and issues relating to animal health, safety and well-being.	Required for most animal types except pigs, breeding males and young. Exceptions made for emergency situations and issues relating to animal health, safety, and well-being.
<i>Free range and free run production offer different animal welfare benefits. Outdoor access provides behavioural opportunities but may leave animals (particularly poultry) vulnerable to predation and disease. Inside poultry barns, solid flooring with litter must be available to permit scratching and foraging behaviour. A minimum of 50% (free run operations) and 30% (free range operations) of the indoor flooring must have litter.</i>			
Confinement Housing	The following continuous confinement housing systems are allowed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tie stall housing for dairy cattle ▪ Stall (crate) housing for gestating pigs, farrowing pigs, and male and female breeding pigs ▪ Battery cages (to be phased out by July 1, 2036) and enriched cages for egg-laying chickens 	Prohibited: Continuous tethering or confinement of any animals (pigs, sheep, cattle), including tie stalls for dairy cattle, stall (crate) housing for pigs, cages (any kind) for poultry.	Continuous tethering prohibited, except for lactating dairy cows, which may be housed in tie stalls in existing barns, but not in new constructions. Gestation/farrowing stalls (crates) for pigs prohibited. Cages (any kind) for poultry, prohibited.
Indoor Space Allowance: Cattle & Sheep	<p><u>Dairy cows:</u> Resting areas must provide 11m²/mature cow in bedded-pack pens.</p> <p><u>Beef cattle:</u> No set space allowance. All cattle in a group must be able to adopt normal resting postures at the same time and be able to move freely around the pen and access feed and water.</p> <p><u>Sheep</u> (recommended): Ewes: 1.4m²/pregnant ewe; 0.93m²/dry ewe Ewes & lambs: 1.5m²/ewe + lamb Feeder lambs: 0.6m²/lamb Rams: 1.0m²/ram</p>	<p><u>Dairy cows:</u> 15m²/cow in calving pens; 11m²/cow in groups Bulls: 18m²/bull</p> <p><u>Beef cattle:</u> 5m²/cows, bred heifers & heavy feeders Bulls: 18.6m²/bull Yearlings: 3m²/head Calves: 2.3m²/head</p> <p><u>Sheep</u> (ewes): 1.1-1.5m²/ewe Ewes & lambs: 1.5-2.2m²/ewe + lamb Feeder lambs: 0.7-1.0m²/lamb Rams: 1.9-3.0m²/ram</p>	<p><u>Dairy cows:</u> Tie-stall size must be appropriate for cow size, or provide 11m²/cow when loose housed</p> <p><u>Adult beef cattle:</u> 6m²/head Growing cattle (to 1 yr): 5m²/head Calves: 2.5m²/head</p> <p><u>Sheep:</u> 1.5m²/head + 0.35m²/lamb</p>

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<p align="center">Indoor Space Allowance:</p> <p align="center">Pigs & Poultry</p>	<p><u>Pigs</u> (recommended, unless otherwise indicated): Boars: 0.7-0.9m wide stall; 5.6-7.4m²/boar in individual pens Sow stalls: 0.6-0.8m wide, depending on sow's weight Gilts & sows in groups: 1.4-2.4m²/pig *Nursery pigs (10-40 kg): 0.16-0.39m²/pig (required) *Grow/finish pigs (40-150 kg): 0.39-0.95m²/pig (required) *Short-term decreases in space permitted</p> <p><u>Adult egg-laying hens:</u> Traditional cages: 21-23 hens/m² Enriched cages: 13 hens/m² Fully-slatted floors: permitted, not specific on space Partially-slatted floors: 11-17 hens/m² All litter: 5 hens/m² <u>Broiler chickens:</u> 31-38 kg/m² (approx. 19 grown birds/m²) <u>Turkeys:</u> 40-65 kg/m² (approx. 5 grown turkeys/m²)</p>	<p><u>Pigs:</u> Boars: 5.6-7.4m²/boar Sows (group pens): 1.5-2.9m²/pig Sows (individual pens): 5.4-5.9m² Sows & piglets: 7.5m²/sow + litter Growing pigs: up to 1.3m²/pig</p> <p><u>Adult egg-laying hens:</u> Fully-slatted floors: Prohibited Partially-slatted floors: 9 hens/m² All litter: 5 hens/m²</p> <p><u>Broiler chickens:</u> 21 kg/m² (approx. 10 grown chickens/m²) <u>Turkeys:</u> 26 kg/m² (approx. 2 grown turkeys/m²)</p>	<p><u>Pigs:</u> Boars: 9m²/boar Sows (group pens): 3m²/pig Sows & piglets: 7.5m²/sow + litter Growing pigs: up to 1.3m²/pig</p> <p><u>Adult egg-laying hens:</u> Fully-slatted floors: Prohibited Partially-slatted floors: 6 hens/m² All litter floors: 6 hens/m²</p> <p><u>Broiler chickens:</u> 21 kg/m² (approx. 10 grown chickens/m²) <u>Turkeys:</u> 26 kg/m² (approx. 2 grown turkeys/m²)</p>
<p align="center">Environmental Enrichment</p>	<p>Nests, perches, litter for layers, but not required in traditional cages. Litter required for broiler chickens and turkeys, but not perches. No specifics for cattle. Sheep must have visual contact with other sheep. Pigs "must be provided with multiple forms of enrichment", and social contact with other pigs is considered enrichment.</p>	<p>Nest boxes, perches, dust-bathing materials, litter required for poultry. Rooting material required for pigs. Grooming brushes for dairy cattle. Social contact and bedding required for all animals.</p>	<p>Nest boxes, perches, litter/bedding required for poultry. Rooting material required for pigs.</p>
<p align="center">Painful Procedures:</p> <p align="center">Prohibited</p>	<p><u>Sheep:</u> mules operation; branding wet sheep; short scrotum castration; castration and tail docking performed as common practice; tail docking past 6 weeks old using rubber rings; tails docked too short</p> <p><u>Beef cattle:</u> tail docking; branding wet cattle</p> <p><u>Dairy cattle:</u> tail docking; face branding</p> <p><u>Pigs:</u> ear notching (past 14 days old)</p>	<p><u>Sheep, cattle & pigs:</u> ear notching, punching, splitting or wattling <u>Sheep:</u> mules operation; branding; short-scrotum castration; spaying; dehorning <u>Beef and dairy cattle:</u> dehorning; horn tipping; tail docking; spaying; branding <u>Pigs:</u> tail docking (past 14 days old); castration of sexually mature boars <u>Poultry:</u> trimming beaks, toes, spurs, snoods, combs, wattles; caponization</p>	<p><u>Beef cattle:</u> spaying of females</p> <p><u>Pigs:</u> castration of cull boars</p>

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<p>Painful Procedures:</p> <p>Permitted with restrictions indicated</p>	<p><u>Dairy cattle:</u> Castration, branding, disbudding or dehorning require use of pain medications for any method at any age.</p> <p><u>Beef cattle:</u> As of Jan. 1/16, castration of bulls over 9 months of age and dehorning require the use of pain medication. As of Jan. 1/18, castration of bulls over 6 months of age requires the use of pain medication. Spaying requires veterinary consultation.</p> <p><u>Sheep:</u> Branding, surgical (blade) castration of rams over 4 weeks old, clamp castration of rams over 6 weeks old and any method of ram castration over 10 weeks old require the use of pain medication. Surgical (blade) tail docking and any method of tail docking done past 6 weeks of age require use of pain medication. Disbudding, dehorning or substantial horn trimming require use of pain medication.</p> <p><u>Pigs:</u> Ear notching must be done before 14 days of age. Castration (> 10 days old) and tail docking (> 7 days old), or for any age pig after July 1/16, require pain medication.</p> <p><u>Broiler chickens & turkeys:</u> Caponization permitted under veterinary supervision and with pain medication.</p> <p><u>Egg-laying chickens:</u> Beak trimming permitted before 10 days of age, or older if an emergency (e.g. cannibalism outbreak). No pain meds required.</p> <p>Permitted, no restrictions or pain meds required:</p> <p><u>Dairy cattle:</u> supernumerary teat removal</p> <p><u>Beef cattle:</u> branding; disbudding; ear wattling or splitting</p> <p><u>Sheep:</u> ear notching; horn trimming; castration by rubber ring; surgical (blade) castration of rams before 4 weeks old; clamp castration of rams before 6 weeks old; tail docking by any method except surgical (blade) before 6 weeks old</p> <p><u>Pigs:</u> teeth clipping if deemed necessary; tusk trimming; castration (before 10 days old) and tail docking (before 7 days old) if done before July 1/16</p> <p><u>Broiler chickens & turkeys:</u> trimming of the beak, toes, spurs, combs and snoods</p>	<p><u>Cattle:</u> castration, disbudding and supernumerary teat removal require pain meds for any age or method used</p> <p><u>Sheep:</u> castration must be non-routine and pain meds required vary by method used; pain meds required for tail docking vary by method used</p> <p><u>Pigs:</u> castration requires pain meds for any age/method used; teeth trimming must be non-routine, done before 7 days old and using pain meds; tail docking must be non-routine, done before 14 days old and using pain meds</p> <p><u>Turkeys:</u> emergency beak trimming can be performed once, with permission, and only the tip of upper beak (the sharp hook) can be trimmed</p> <p><u>Egg-laying chickens:</u> emergency beak trimming, with permission, and only the tip of the upper beak (the sharp hook) can be trimmed</p>	<p><u>Permitted as common practice</u>, but must follow the Codes of Practice for age and pain control requirements (see far left column):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Castration of pigs (before 2 weeks old), cattle and lambs ▪ Tail docking of lambs ▪ Branding ▪ Dehorning ▪ Disbudding <p><u>Permitted only when necessary to control problem behaviour or to treat an injury:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teeth trimming of piglets ▪ Beak trimming of chickens ▪ Tail docking of cattle and pigs <p>Farmers are advised to consider using pain medications regardless of the animal's age or the method used for the above procedures.</p>

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Animal-based assessment	<p>Evaluated by farmer.</p> <p>Recommended methods of assessment include: gait scoring for dairy cattle and sheep, mastitis monitoring for dairy cattle, body condition scoring for cattle, pigs and sheep.</p> <p>Farmer must assess fitness of all animals for transport prior to loading. Unfit animals must not be transported.</p>	<p>Evaluated by farmer and Validator. Methods of assessment include: gait (lameness) scoring for all animal types, body condition scoring for cattle, pigs and sheep, and hock lesion scoring for dairy cattle.</p> <p>Farmer must assess fitness of animals for transport prior to loading. Unfit animals must not be transported.</p>	<p>No formal requirements for evaluation by verification officer.</p> <p>Farmer must assess fitness of animals for transport prior to loading. Unfit animals must not be transported.</p>
Animal Handling	<p>Electric prods prohibited on sheep, piglets, nursery pigs, sick / injured / distressed pigs, pigs in the finishing pen and small calves. Permitted to move cattle and pigs when human or animal safety is at risk and when there is a clear path forward. Must not be used on genitals, face, udder or anus.</p>	<p>Electric prods prohibited.</p> <p>Poultry to be carried in a prescribed manner.</p>	<p>Electric stimulation prohibited.</p>
Transport	<p>Trips > 24 hours long: must feed and water animals within 5 hours before loading. For trips 12-24 hours long, this is optional.</p> <p>Trips 4-12 hours: recommend feeding within 24 hours before loading. No mention of water withdrawal.</p> <p><u>Milking cattle</u> should not be deprived of feed and water for longer than 12 hours.</p> <p><u>Calves</u> not fully on solid feed yet must receive feed and water at least every 18 hours.</p> <p><u>Pigs</u>: withdraw feed 3-4 hours pre-loading</p>	<p><u>Dairy cattle</u>: provide water up to loading; provide feed up to 5 hours before loading. Do not ship under 7 days old.</p> <p><u>Beef cattle</u>: provide feed and water up to loading. Do not ship under 7 days old.</p> <p><u>Sheep</u>: provide feed and water up to loading. Do not ship under 15 days old.</p> <p><u>Pigs</u>: provide water up to loading; permit feed withdrawal a few hours prior to loading to prevent nausea. Do not ship under 14 days old.</p>	<p>No mention of feed and water withdrawal times pre-transport, whether permitted or not.</p> <p>Duration of transportation shall be "as short as possible". If journey is over 5 hours, farmers are encouraged to follow the Transport Code of Practice RE: recommended rest times, feed and water provision (see far left column). If the recommendations are not followed, justification is required.</p>

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Transport	<p><u>Poultry:</u> “Pre-transport feed withdrawal must be managed to minimize the time that birds are off feed.” Water must be available up to catching.</p> <p>Recommended (broilers & turkeys): Aim to prevent birds from being without feed and water for more than 24 hours prior to slaughter.</p> <p><u>Recommended maximum transport times:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cattle: 48 hours; 12 hours for lactating dairy cattle; 18 hours for nursing calves; 12 hours for calves on special diets ▪ Sheep: 48 hours ▪ Piglets (< 21 days old): 12 hours ▪ Market pigs: 36 hours ▪ Poultry: 36 hours 	<p><u>Poultry:</u> provide feed and water up to catching; maximum permitted feed and water withdrawal before slaughter is 12 hours</p> <p><u>Maximum allowed transport times:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cattle: 24 hours ▪ Sheep: must not exceed 24 hours without giving rest, feed and water ▪ Pigs: total time from point of feed withdrawal, in transit and up to slaughter must not exceed 24 hours ▪ Poultry: transport must be planned so that birds do not go without feed and water for more than 12 hours prior to slaughter 	<p>No mention of feed and water withdrawal times pre-transport, whether permitted or not.</p> <p>Duration of transportation shall be “as short as possible”. If journey is over 5 hours, farmers are encouraged to follow the Transport Code of Practice RE: recommended rest times, feed and water provision (see far left column). If the recommendations are not followed, justification is required.</p>



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