



2014 Producer Standards

INTRODUCTION TO THE MEYER NATURAL FOODS Humanely Handled Standards



Meyer Natural Foods (MNF) believes all cattle sourced into our branded beef programs should be handled in a humane manner.

- The MNF Humane Handled (HH) Program is a USDA Approved Process.
- The MNF HH Standards have been reviewed and approved by Dr. Temple Grandin. Dr. Grandin is a doctor of animal science, a professor at Colorado State University, a best-selling author, an autistic activist, a consultant to the livestock industry on animal behavior, and an engineer. She also created the "hug box", a device to calm those with autism. The subject of an award-winning, 2010 biographical film, Temple Grandin, she also was listed in the Time 100 list of the one hundred most influential people in the world in the "Heroes" category.

“Meyer Natural Foods has practical sensible humane standards that will improve the welfare of large numbers of cattle. Many family ranchers will be able to participate in the program.” ~ Dr. Temple Grandin

- The MNF HH Standards have also been reviewed and accepted for use by the foremost Third Party Bovine Auditors in the US: IMI Global, Castle Rock, CO, Validus, Urbandale, IA, and Samson, Columbus, NE.

MNF only does business with suppliers who are willing to sign off on their agreement to care for their animals within our Humane Handling Standards or other accepted credible Humane Handling programs. MNF recognizes that the majority of cattle producers do treat their cattle humanely, however, to substantiate the MNF claim that cattle supplied into specific MNF Brands are Humanely Handled, in addition to their signed agreements to meet our standards, a specified number of Suppliers are evaluated every year to assure our customers that the intent of our program is being shared and fulfilled by our suppliers as well.

Statement of Purpose: To define particulars in, and ensure and validate suppliers agreement in Meyer Natural Foods (MNF) values for Humane Handling of cattle, which take into consideration the welfare of animals while practicing livestock production with the goal of sustained food production for humans from an animal protein source, or embracing and utilizing existing Industry Standards which do the same, and assure respective standards are being met on cattle supplied to us.

Basic Principles: Responsible Producers ensure cattle under their care have:

- Adequate nutrition for cattle to maintain health.
- Health management practices in place with intent to maintain healthy animals.
- No cruel handling.
- Adequate natural or manmade shelter/protection in cases of extreme weather.
- Space to move in a comfortable environment .
- Care given for injury or illness and to keep potential suffering at a minimum.
- A general approach to taking care of cattle with their well being in mind.



Humanely Handled Standards

1. Feeding and Nutrition
2. Health Care
3. Identification
4. Shelter and Housing
5. Cattle Handling
6. Transportation
7. Non-Ambulatory Cattle or Euthanasia
8. Climatic Stress
9. Training and Evaluation
10. Slaughter Facilities

1. Feeding and Nutrition

- 1.1 Cattle must have access to an adequate clean water and feed supply daily. Water must not be stagnant or dirty. Feed must not be spoiled or contaminated; must be free of mold, rocks, foreign objects, or excessive dirt.
- 1.2 In case of emergency situations, a back up water plan must be available.
- 1.3 A mineral and/or salt program should be in place which meets cattle needs.
- 1.4 If temporary circumstances or regional environment are prone to create conditions that can be detrimental to cattle well being, proper care should be taken to protect cattle. (examples: toxic plants or mineral deficiencies)
- 1.5 Cattle should be a Body Condition Score of 3 or higher.

2. Health Care

- 2.1 A veterinarian should be consulted for diagnosis and treatment for cattle which indicate suffering, ongoing illness, or if undiagnosed recurring herd death loss occurs.
- 2.2 Should cattle be exposed to a known health risk, preventative care through a herd health plan should be developed.
- 2.3 During Calving Season, cows should be checked regularly for calving difficulties. Should the overall size of ranch and terrain not allow for daily checks for all cows, Calving Ease genetics should be selected for.
- 2.4 During Calving Season, First Calf Heifers should be checked daily.
- 2.5 If a calving problem occurs that cannot be corrected by producer before cow or calf's life becomes at risk a veterinarian should be contacted.



2.6 Cattle with lameness, eye problems, udder problems, or any visible health problems should be examined and treated or marketed promptly. If an animal is extremely compromised, it should not be marketed at auction but instead directly to a processing plant or euthanized.

2.7.A Castration must be done before the average calf crop age reaches six months. Non-surgical castration is allowed up to an average calf crop age of ten months. It is recommended castration be done at as young of age as possible.

2.7.B De-horning must be done before the average calf crop age reaches six months. Tipping of horns is not considered de-horning and may be done at any age. It is recommended (in descending order) producer select for reproduction of polled cattle, use caustic paste prior to 7 days of age, use hot iron to disbud prior to six weeks of age, with last acceptable preference being de-horning.

2.7 Note -Cattle may be de-horned or castrated past above age parameters with pain management overseen by a veterinarian.

2.8 The use of vaccines and parasite control should be based on a risk assessment and efficacy of available animal health products.

2.9 If heifers in a feedyard or stocker operation deliver a full-term, healthy calf, it must be allowed to nurse to obtain colostrum and subsequent proper nutrition. Tubing with colostrums is accepted as option to nursing. Compromised or pre-mature calves should be evaluated and if appropriate, euthanized.

2.10 Bullers should be promptly removed from pen to prevent injury.

2.11 Dangerous predators should be dealt with promptly and effectively for the welfare of cattle.

3. Identification

3.1 Branding at ranch of origin should be done prior to average age of calf crop reaching six months of age. Branding and Re-branding is an issue of state by state law and should be followed as such.

3.2 Jaw brands or Wattling must not be used.

3.3 Ear notching is acceptable as long as it is not excessive. More than 2 slits or one third or more of ear removed is considered excessive ear notching.

4. Shelter and Housing

4.1 Cattle must be offered adequate space for comfort, socialization, and environmental management.

4.2 Pen maintenance must be practiced with pens being kept clean or seasonally clean as weather permits.

4.3 Should due to extreme weather, excessive mud on cattle occur, a plan should be made to improve their situation. Excessive mud is defined as large mud balls accumulating on tails and sides of cattle.

4.4 Feedyards which experience excessive dust due to seasonal climate extremes should have dust reduction measures in place. Excessive dust would be defined as pens having a constant state of dust hanging in the air even when cattle are resting.



- 4.5 Confinement facilities and pens should be designed to be properly drained.
- 4.6 Barns and handling alleys should be free of sharp edges and protrusions, and free of rubble, toxic material, excessive manure, or hazards of any kind.
- 4.7 Alleys and gates should be designed to avoid impeding cattle movement and operate without noise loud enough to cause noticeable agitation and distress in cattle under normal handling.
- 4.8 Hydraulic or manual chutes should be adjustable to animals proper size, in proper repair, and working order. Cattle should not moo or bellow in direct response to being caught in head gate or squeeze, should there be vocalization, the cause (typically a sharp edge or excessive pressure) must be identified and corrected.
- 4.9 Any mechanical or electrical devices used in working or housing areas must be safe.

5. Cattle Handling

- 5.1 Abuse of cattle is not acceptable under any circumstances.
- 5.2 Working areas and loading facilities should provide good footing for cattle to reduce slipping. Rubber mats, deep sand, grating, or grooves in cement should be utilized in high traffic areas entering or exiting working areas. No cattle should fall during handling due to design of facility.
- 5.3 Cattle handling facilities must be kept well maintained and gates in high traffic areas should swing freely.
- 5.4 Cattle handling techniques using low stress techniques are encouraged to be used. Producers should have an awareness to cattle's flight zone and point of balance.
- 5.5 Electric Prods are encouraged to be onsite while working cattle to use only in extreme situations where their moderate use can dissolve a stressful and dangerous situation for an animal in a more humane way than using a less effective tool for such a situation. Electric Prods must not be applied to sensitive areas of an animal, should never be constantly carried by a person, and be set aside after use to move a stubborn animal.
- 5.6 Properly trained dogs can be effective and humane tools for cattle handling, however, dogs should not be used in confined areas, such as single file chutes and crowd pens.
- 5.7 Producers are encouraged to select and reproduce cattle with quiet temperament within breed character.

6. Transportation

- 6.1 Cattle that are unable to withstand the rigors of transportation must not be shipped.
- 6.2 Vehicles used to transport cattle should have flooring which give cattle good footing and be free of any sharp edges or protruding objects. No gaps should be allowed which cattle could become injured in.
- 6.3 Cattle should not be loaded into dirty trailer compartments.
- 6.4 Producer should adhere to safe load levels so that cattle have room to stand without overcrowding.
- 6.5 Cattle transported distances taking more than 24 hours should be offloaded, rested for at least 2 hours after all animals have been watered before continuing on.



7. Non-Ambulatory Cattle or Euthanasia

7.1 Diagnosis that deems non ambulatory cattle are unlikely to recover due to observations of, but not limited to: their inability to sit up, no response to therapy, compound fractures or spinal injury, severe pain, refusal to eat or drink for 24 hours, etc, should be euthanized humanely.

7.2 Non ambulatory cattle should be offered water and feed at least once a day.

7.3 Non ambulatory cattle required to be moved should be done so with great care on a sled, low boy, two pronged skid steer, or large bucket of a loader. To load, an animal should be rolled into the bucket. Absolutely no dragging should be done.

7.4 Non ambulatory cattle in pen situations should be removed from contact with other cattle.

7.5 Deceased animals must be disposed of in a manner which segregates from live cattle.

8. Climatic Stress

8.1 Pasture cattle should seasonally have access to manmade or natural occurring shelter from extreme heat or cold.

8.2 During periods of high heat and humidity and little wind, producers must have a plan of action ready for feedyard cattle. Access to plentiful water, sprinklers or water trucks cooling ground or cattle, or temporary shade are all options to consider.

8.3 Cattle should not be moved or processed during extreme heat.

8.4 During hot weather, open mouth breathing is a sign of severe heat stress. These animals must be provided with the heat relief options in Section 8.

9. Training/Evaluation

9.1 Producers supplying live cattle to MNF must sign off on a MNF affidavit their willingness to meet standard's.

9.2 Producers who have previously signed a MNF Affidavit affirming their willingness to follow standards and are a recurring supplier should expect to undergo a MNF Evaluation and possibly a Third Party Audit as well according to the MNF Audit Schedule listed on MNF HHS 104.

9.3 Producers receiving standards for the first time should at a minimum read the Standards and make any family members or employees who handle cattle aware of the standards.

9.4 Producers are encouraged to use the MNF HHS as a means of evaluating their humane treatment of their cattle using the same scoring system put into place during an onsite MNF Evaluation.

10. Slaughter Facilities

10.1 MNF Humane Handling Slaughter requirements are fulfilled by Third Party Animal Welfare Audits, such as the American Meat Institute (AMI) Animal Care and Handling Audit Program. All MNF utilized Slaughter Facilities, to meet inspection requirements, must pass and have on file Third Party Animal Welfare Audits. These required and well established activities fulfill any and all MNF slaughter requirements for Humane Handling.