

Preventing Animal Abuse | fact sheet



Cattle Well-Being and Care

Cattlemen and women work within every stage of the beef lifecycle to ensure proper animal care continues from the ranch to the packing plant, and every step in between.

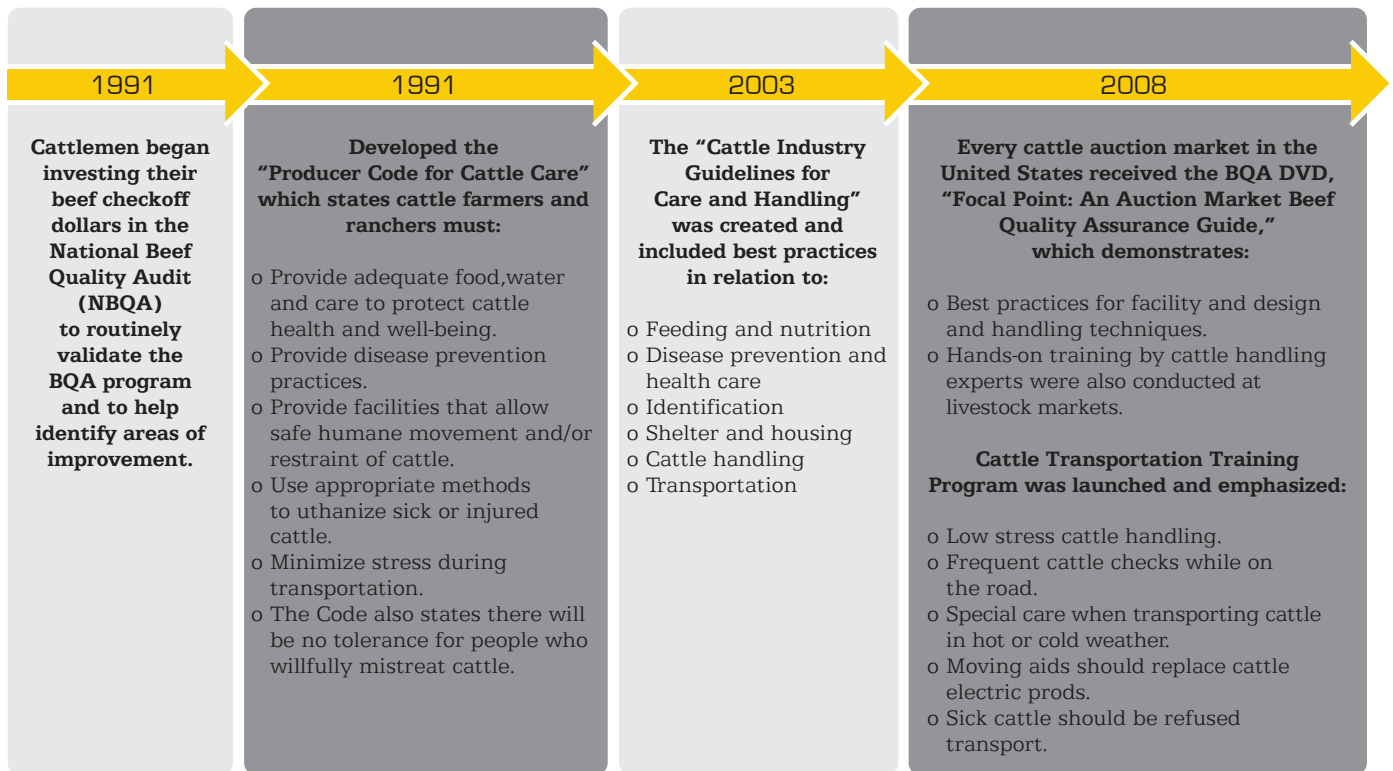
On the Ranch

Beef Quality Assurance Program

Introduced in 1987, the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program provides cattle farmers and ranchers tools and education to ensure proper cattle care and to raise the best quality beef possible. Cattlemen become BQA Certified when they meet criteria for quality beef production through the BQA guidelines continuous training programs.

- BQA incorporates guidelines and principles from the following organizations and programs:
 - Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
 - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).
 - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).
- BQA influences the management practices of more than 90 percent of U.S. cattle.

BQA Timeline



At the Slaughterhouse

- The Humane Slaughter Act of 1958 dictates strict animal handling and slaughter standards for packing plants.
 - o Standards are enforced by federal meat inspectors nationwide. These standards include:
 - All animals must have access to water.
 - Animals kept overnight must have plenty of room to lie down.
 - Animals kept for more than 24 hours must have access to feed.
 - Handling cattle must not cause stress.
 - Cattle must be rendered insensible to pain prior to slaughter (this differs for animals certified Kosher or Halal).
- Science Behind Animal Welfare
 - o Dr. Temple Grandin (Colorado State University) develops best practices and self-audit systems for beef packing plants.
 - The American Meat Institute (AMI), the trade association representing the majority of packing plants, reports that more than 90 percent of its members administer these self-audits.
 - o Food Animal Production Program: National Program 101
 - The research components of this program include:
 - Understanding, improving, and effectively using animal genetic and genomic resources.
 - Enhancing animal adaptation, well-being and efficiency in diverse production systems.
 - Measuring and enhancing product quality.
 - o The National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS)
 - Tracks industry trends, and identifies opportunities for improvement.
 - Detects emerging problems.

1 *Beef Quality Assurance Program*: <http://www.bqa.org/introtobqa.aspx>

2 *Food Safety and Inspection Service-Humane Methods of Livestock Slaughter Act* http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Humane_Methods_of_Livestock_Slaughter_Act/index.asp

3 *USDA Agriculture Research Service: National Program 101 Food Animal Production* http://www.ars.usda.gov/research/programs/programs.htm?np_code=101