

Ahimsa Foundation for Cattle Protection

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CATTLE PROTECTION STANDARDS

(The term "cattle and animal" is used herein to mean cows, calves, oxen, and bulls of either Bos Taurus (European) or Bos Indicas (Indian) breeds.)

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INTRODUCTION

These pages are a list of cow protection standards written for AFFCAP farms, which offer Lifetime Cattle Protection. These standards are now AFFCAP Law. Although written for AFFCAP, we encourage that these standards be adopted by all persons who wish to establish cattle protection facilities offering lifetime protection.

These Standards have been adapted from the ISCOWP (International Society for Cow Protection) and takes into consideration varied breeds and geographical differences.

For the purpose of the standards, animal husbandry practice is classified into three divisions.

Recommended: describes best practice methods in caring for cows.

Restricted: describes acceptable animal care when circumstances justify its use.

These are temporary standards until the Recommended practices are implemented.

Prohibited: practices which bar one from AFFCAP registration.

These are requirements for AFFCAP Certification and do not supersede existing local government regulations. Whichever standard is highest should be followed.

Revisions to the Standards are being made on a yearly basis.

SECTION 1: COW CARE STANDARDS

I PROTECTION

A: Recommended

1. Maintaining all animals for lifetime including engagement in productive service.
2. Animals must only be transferred to another certified AFFCAP Goshalla / Farm.
3. The herd is to be given a daily head count and health check.
4. Keeping a general farm journal with breeding records of cows, parentage and offspring.
5. Records of condition of the cows kept on a daily basis in order to monitor and improve herd conditions.
6. Stone walls, board fence, woven wire, living fences or high tensile are recommended.
Adequate arrangements in place to ensure the safety and security of the cows from theft, abuse and maltreatment. These may include, but not limited to, locking of gates, lighting, security surveillance, restricted access or other arrangements as per local circumstance.
A dying cow must be kept comfortable and given access to water and food.
7. Calf mortality rate should less than 5%.

B: Restricted

1. Daily counting required but health checks may be done weekly.
2. Calf mortality rate between 6% to 10%.
3. Electric fencing for temporary and immediate fencing or for rotational grazing.
4. Barbed wire restricted to areas of low herd population and where other types of fencing is impractical.

C: Prohibited

1. Transferring animals to an unregistered Goshalla / Farm.
2. No regular health checks and daily counting.
3. Failure to provide nutritious feed, shelter, safety and health care.
4. Performing euthanasia.

5. Keeping a sick cow where he/she may be trampled, eaten, frozen, etc.
6. Neglecting a cow while dying.
7. Calf mortality rate higher than 10%.
8. Abandoning AFFCAP Certified animals.
9. Failure to provide fencing to control animals' movement.

II ORGANIZATION OF COW CARE FACILITIES

A: Recommended

1. Active Members owning their own land and cows while producing their own feed.
2. Employing bulls and oxen for farm and draft work.
3. Access to potable water and exercise.
4. Adequate housing to provide a stress-free environment.

B: Restricted

1. Members owning inadequate land and buying in feed as necessary.
2. Some minimal use of the bullocks for draft work accompanied with a plan for training cowherds.
3. Breeding program controlled according to land capacity.
4. Tethering when sufficient pasturing grounds are unavailable.
 - a) All tethering should be supervised by the primary cowherd.
 - b) The safety and comfort of the animal is of prime consideration. EG: Care must be taken to guard against a cow being strangled on a rope.
5. Adequate water and vegetarian salt must be available if tethered for more than two hours.

C: Prohibited

1. Maintaining a Goshalla / Farm without appropriate manpower and training.
2. Breeding without consideration of land capacity.
3. Inadequate watering and exercise facility.
4. Housing unable to adequately shelter herd.

III THE HERD

A: Recommended

1. All cows must be registered at birth as per AFFCAP standards such as farm ID number, animal ID number and year of birth letter.
2. Registration number must be attached to animals via an AFFCAP-furnished tag placed on either the right or left ear.
3. Pedigree animals must be kept separate from other breeds of cattle.
4. All animal deaths must be registered with AFFCAP. Photographs of deceased animals must be supplied at the time of registration.

B: Restricted

1. Bullocks of other breeds may be kept with the Pedigree cattle.

C: Prohibited

1. Mixing of any bulls or cows of other breeds with the Pedigree herd.
2. Keeping unregistered animals on AFFCAP Certified Farms.
3. Keeping either registered or unregistered animals without an AFFCAP-furnished ear tag

IV SHELTER OF ANIMALS

A: Recommended

1. All cows have access to shelter from wind and weather in open sheds facing away from prevailing winds.
2. Drafts should be avoided.
3. All cows have access to shade.
4. Adequate exercise space within the Goshalla complex.
5. All shelters have clean, hard floors with dry bedding and cleaned daily.
6. Feed aisles and mangers must be sheltered. Mangers cannot be placed into areas where cows walk to prevent manure mixing with feed.

B: Restricted

1. Closed buildings that are cleaned daily.
2. Sufficient ventilation as diseases thrive in the warm environment found in closed buildings.
3. Exercise area outside the Goshalla complex.
4. Shelters that have earth floors but are cleaned daily.
5. Feed troughs outside of shelter.

C: Prohibited

1. Failure to provide shelter that protects against the wind, rain and harsh weather.
2. Failure to provide shade.
3. Failure to provide sunlight and ventilation.
4. Failure to provide clean feeding conditions.
5. Failure to provide water and vegetarian salt.
6. Forcing cows to lie in sloppy, filthy pens.
7. Forcing calves to nurse on cows which have been lying in manure.

V FEEDING

A: Recommended

1. All cows should have access to pasturing facilities. Open grazing outside of goshalla, or intensive rotational grazing within goshalla, are recommended.
2. All cows, oxen, and bulls must be fed a balanced diet to maintain production levels, growth and health.
3. Overeating must be prevented. Changing from one type of feed to another should be done gradually so that bloating does not occur.
4. Clean water and vegetarian salt should always be available.
5. All feeding should be done under the supervision of the primary cowherd to ensure the health and safety of the herd.
6. There should be sufficient feeding space so all animals can eat without undue competition.
7. Hay or feed should be available for all animals when pasture is insufficient.

B: Restricted

1. If cows are being fed scraps as part of their diet, then such feeding must be carefully monitored by the primary cowherd.
2. If grazing grounds are inadequate for the size of the herd, then there must be a plan to furnish pasture.

C: Prohibited

1. Feeding by-products of animal slaughter.

2. Feeding a diet consisting entirely of kitchen garbage and scraps.
3. Feeding scraps from human plates.
4. Carelessly including non-digestible articles in feed.
5. Feeding moldy hay.
6. Throwing cow's hay and grains on the ground where they can walk or defecate on it.

VI MILKING

A: Recommended

1. Milking should be done by hand by a trained experienced milkman who regularly milks the same cow(s).
2. Daily Milking records and lactation periods be kept.
3. Cows should be brushed daily, and udder washed before milking.
4. A calf and its mother should be allowed to associate daily.
5. 1.5 Liters or 10% of the calf's weight of colostrum must be given to the calf within the first 24 hours.
6. There must be careful consideration to the eating habits of the calf so that overeating does not occur.
7. Weaning must be gradual, achieved no sooner than 6 months to a maximum of 12 months.
8. During the weaning process a sweetened grain with the proper balanced ration for a young calf plus clean water must be made available.
9. Caution must be taken against putting calves on a rich diet too early which can cause bloat.

B: Restricted

1. Milking should be done by hand but milkman may change.
2. A plan must be presented for bottle feeding, which allows calf to be with mother.
3. Gradual weaning can be prior to 6 months, if the calf's coat changes color or it loses interest in milk (ruling out illness).

C: Prohibited

1. Using hand action which causes pinching or pulling of teat.
2. Milking by machine.
3. Failure to provide all calves access to mother's milk either directly or by milk bottle.
4. Feeding calves milk replacement.

VII TRAINING OXEN

A: Recommended

1. Cattle may be trained by either voice or rope command.
2. Training oxen should begin at 2-4 months to develop a relationship of love and trust. No work is done at this time due to softness of bones, etc.
3. All oxen should be given individual herd names.

B: Restricted

1. Light work is allowed for non lactating cows but must be supervised by primary cowherd.
2. Training at a later age while maintaining the relationship of love and trust.

C: Prohibited

1. Employing whips, beating, rough treatment or violence to cattle.
2. Failure to develop a personal relationship of trust with the animal.

VIII HERD EXPANSION

A: Recommended

1. Maintaining a general farm ledger which includes breeding records.
2. Increasing the amount of owned land to cater for an expanding herd.
3. Sale of by-products to offset costs of maintaining herd.
4. Development of a donor base to offset cost of maintaining herd.
5. Transfer of cows to another AFFCAP certified Goshalla / Farm.

B: Restricted

1. Leasing of bullocks under strict monitoring per AFFCAP standards.
2. Acquiring grazing rights, or leasing land, to support herd.

C: Prohibited

1. Transfer of cattle to an unauthorized Non AFFCAP Goshalla.
2. Abandoning cattle to fend for themselves.
3. Cattle that are meant for slaughter are prohibited to live on AFFCAP Goshalla's / Farms

When either Recommended or Restricted practices are not possible then breeding must stop.

SECTION 2: BREEDING STANDARDS

VIII REQUIREMENTS FOR ACQUIRING COWS

A: Recommended

1. Deshi pedigree breeds are recommended along with a plan to maintain and increase breed quality.
2. Animals may only come from registered AFFCAP herds.
3. Well defined plans in place to provide proper care and lifetime engagement for offspring.
4. Adequate facilities to keep pedigree stock separate from other breeds.

B: Restricted

1. Percentage or Mixed Breed animals may be acquired with a plan to upgrade to Pure-blood.
2. Cattle may be purchased for pedigree breeding from an unregistered goshalla if full breeding records are available.
3. Animals may be of any breed and will be registered as Mixed. Breed class but must be noted on the Application for Animal Registration.

C: Prohibited

1. Not registering births, deaths and transfers with AFFCAP.
2. Procuring or breeding of a cow for the purpose of supplying milk without a plan for the care, training and engagement of offspring.
3. Leasing bullocks without a legally-binding contract and monitoring program for leased animals.
4. Acquiring Pedigree Cattle from Non-AFFCAP registered owners without breeding records.

X CASTRATION

A: Recommended

1. Bull calves are castrated at earlier than 6 months of age.
2. The method of castration is by the burdizzo tool (bloodless castration) and performed by a veterinarian.

B: Restricted

1. Use of burdizzo by an experienced cowherd.
2. Surgical castration only by an experienced veterinarian.

C: Prohibited

1. Banding (the use of rubber bands around the testicles until they drop off).
2. Inexperienced cowherd performing castration.

XI INSEMINATION OF COWS

A: Recommended

1. Cows to be bred by an in-house AFFCAP bull.
2. Bulls properly enclosed to avoid unwanted insemination.
3. Careful records of breeding are kept to avoid inbreeding.
4. When all cows to be serviced are related to the breeding bull, a new bull must be introduced to service herd.

B: Restricted

1. Cows may be bred from an AFFCAP registered community bull.
2. A bull from another farm may be used if breed is pedigree. The bull must be registered with AFFCAP in order to maintain pedigree status.
3. Artificial Insemination may be used in special circumstances when a bull is not available. Semen must be of the same Pedigree from either, an AFFCAP registered bull, or a Government Research Farm bull accompanied by breeding records.

C: Prohibited

1. Breeding bulls not separated from breeding stock.
2. Providing a bull a different care and maintenance standard than recommended herein for the cows.
3. Inbreeding, even with an experienced breeder.
4. Keeping a bull without association of other animals.
5. Keeping a bull adjacent to cows not meant to be bred.
6. Using an in-house bull to breed his offspring.

XII TRAITS FOR SELECTION OF DESHI BREEDS

A: Recommended

1. Long tails that touch the ground.
2. Milking output of Sire's and Dam's mothers should exceed breed average.
3. Cows should have at least two lines of skin at rear of udder.
4. Teats should be thick and long.
5. Skin folds should be large under the neck.

B: Restricted

1. Shorter tails.
2. Milking output of both the Sire's mother and Dam's mother must at least match the breed's average output.
3. Cows not showing milk potential at rear of udder.
4. Short or blind teats of a cow that has an above average milk record.

C: Prohibited

1. Crossbreeding with exotic breeds.
2. No milking records available for dam.