



New Mexico Beef Quality Update

by John C. Wenzel, Extension Veterinarian

Beginning January 1st of 2019, there were some significant changes that occurred regarding BQA. Tyson foods sent out a letter informing their supply chain that they would no longer source cattle from non-BQA certified producers.

Excerpts from a letter from Tyson Foods:

“Tyson Foods is committed to the well- being, proper handling and humane harvesting of all the animals we use to produce meat and poultry. This is a long-standing commitment, and we pledge our diligence in leading the industry pursuit of new and improved technology and methods to improve animal well-being. In support of these commitments, we have moved forward with a requirement to source cattle from Beef Quality Assurance certified producers. What happens if you are not certified by January 1, 2019? **Tyson will not be able to do business with you!**”

Other beef companies have followed suit and will also require producers to be BQA certified for their procurement personnel to bid on cattle entering their supply chain. Producers need to be made aware of this change and become certified prior to marketing their calves this fall. Dr. Gifford, Dr. Ward or myself will come and provide the certification training for your producers. If you are a “trained trainer” then you need to provide your producers with this training. Any agents that have not been trained as a trainer, contact your district director and I will come do a “Train the Trainer” session. We certainly need to get the word out so producers are not caught “unaware” this fall. I am including a general information page for you to use. Contact me if you have questions. John C Wenzel jwenzel@nmsu.edu 575-534-7562.

Middle Rio Grande Artificial Insemination Training

<https://nmbeef.nmsu.edu/>

April 10-12, 2019

Southwest Event Center

24 Dalies Road, Los Lunas, NM 87031

NEW MEXICO BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

GENERAL INFORMATION

The New Mexico Beef Quality Assurance Program is patterned after national guidelines developed and adopted by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. The New Mexico program is conducted by the New Mexico Cooperative Extension Service. The Cooperative Extension Service provides the training, conducts the testing and houses the database to provide renewal notification to NM producers.

Individuals who attend a Beef Quality Assurance training workshop conducted by the Extension Service and who pass a written test administered at these workshops can become NM Beef Quality Certified producers. This can and should include anyone involved in beef or dairy cattle production, and may include individuals who do not own or market animals, such as ranch hands or dairy workers. This certification is good for three years. A producer can renew their certification for three year intervals by providing a completed renewal application and completing the requirements of:

1. Six hours of qualifying continuing education over the three year period.
2. A completed and signed Beef Quality Assurance Critical Management Plan/Affidavit of Compliance. This is simply an affidavit indicating that the producer will do certain things to meet beef quality assurance expectations.
3. A signed document from their regular veterinarian showing they have a valid Veterinarian/Client/Patient Relationship (VCPR). If a producer does not have such a relationship with a veterinarian, he/she will need to develop this relationship. What this will entail will depend on the individual veterinarian.

Individuals who prefer to take the Certification Training online may do so by contacting the National BQA program at <https://www.bqa.org> then registering and setting up an account. You will still need to contact your local county agent to complete testing requirements for NM.

A notice of renewal will be mailed to each individual producer in December of the year their certification will expire. There is no cost at this time to become certified or to renew your BQA certification.

The purpose of this program is best described by the program mission statement: **“to maximize consumer confidence in, and acceptance of, beef by focusing the producer’s attention to daily production practices that influence the safety, wholesomeness and quality of beef and beef products through the use of science, research and educational initiatives”**

At the heart of the national BQA program is the consumer. As beef producers, it is our responsibility to provide the safest and most wholesome product we can. Daily production practices can influence the quality of the product we produce, both positively and negatively. The mission of the BQA program is to educate producers of these daily practices and have them incorporate production practices that enhance the quality of the beef they produce. By producer adoption of the BQA guidelines, the safety and wholesomeness of our product will instill consumer confidence in the beef industry and the products we place in the hands of that consumer.

+For more information or to pursue becoming BQA certified, contact your local County Agent or BQA State Coordinator Dr. John Wenzel, jwenzel@nmsu.edu

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