



Cattle Producer's Handbook

Quality Assurance Section

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Beef Quality Assurance Resources

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Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) has become a standard practice for most beef producers since the first BQA audit in 1991. Beef Quality Assurance is a national program that provides guidelines and recommendations for beef and dairy production practices that help ensure that consumers are purchasing and consuming a wholesome product. Today, BQA programming is expanding with information to help producers implement best management practices (BMP) that improve both quality grades and yield grades of beef carcasses. It helps educate producers in practices including cattle handling, transportation, branding, de-horning, and vaccination procedures.

BQA starts at the ranch. It begins at the time a calf is born and continues on through the life of that animal. Agriculture is under far more scrutiny than it ever has been, and beef producers at every level of the production chain need to ensure that quality practices are administered.

Producers are encouraged to become BQA certified through the national or state program and recertify every 3 years. The benefits to becoming "certified" is the potential for increased profitability by marketing

animals as "BQA raised and produced," placement of animals in feedlots that require BQA certified cattle, and the commitment to the consumer of a "every cow, every time" safe wholesome product.

Great resources are available for producers to use in learning more about BQA practices and training employees and crews. Each state has a BQA coordinator who producers can contact directly for information or upcoming trainings. The following list is just a starting point of resources. The authors of this paper realize that this list can and will change on a regular basis.

- National Beef Quality Assurance: <http://www.bqa.org/>
- National BQA on-line training and testing: <https://www.animalcaretraining.org>
- National Cattlemen's Beef Association: <http://www.beef.org/>
- Locate the BQA coordinator in your state: <http://www.bqa.org/statebqa.aspx>
- National Youth Beef Quality Assurance on-line training and testing: <https://www.animalcaretraining.org/Youth/>



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