





Animal Welfare Standards at a Glance

	Conventional (Industry Codes of Practice and Legislation)	SPCA Certified 	Certified Organic (COABC) 
Standards Development Process	Aims to ensure adequate biological functioning. Involves input from scientists, vets, and humane organizations. Industry associations have final approval.	Aims to prevent suffering, by applying animal welfare research to meet animals' needs. Involves input from scientists, vets, and producers. BC SPCA has final approval.	Aims to provide a natural environment and humane treatment for animals. Developed by organic producers with input from other sectors. COABC membership has final approval.
Antibiotics	Permitted for veterinary treatment and in feed.	Prohibited from feed. Permitted only for veterinary treatment.	Prohibited from feed. Products from animals treated with antibiotics cannot be certified.
Hormones	Prohibited in all poultry. Permitted in livestock.	Prohibited for growth promotion. Permitted only for treatment of disease (e.g. relating to reproductive disorders such as cystic ovaries).	Prohibited entirely.
Feed	Specified risk materials (SRMs) prohibited by law. Feeding of proteins to same species prohibited.	All feeding of mammalian and avian proteins prohibited.	All feeding of mammalian and avian proteins prohibited. Certified Organic feed required.
Tail-Docking & Beak Trimming	Permitted	Tail docking of dairy cows prohibited. Tail docking of piglets and beak-trimming of hens permitted only when aggression uncontrollable.	Tail docking of dairy cows prohibited. Tail docking of piglets and beak trimming of hens permitted only when aggression uncontrollable.
Other Painful Procedures	No requirements for anaesthetic or analgesic.	Pain mediation requirements in effect for dehorning and castration.	All procedures are to be performed humanely, but no specific requirements.

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Confinement Housing	Continuous confinement housing permitted for pigs, dairy cows, and hens.	Battery cages for hens, tie stalls for cows, and gestation stalls for sows prohibited. Farrowing stalls for sows permitted for 28 days maximum.	Battery cages for hens, tie stalls for cows, and gestation / farrowing stalls for sows prohibited.
Environmental Enrichment	Not required.	Nest boxes, perches, bedding / rooting material required.	Nest boxes, perches, bedding / rooting material required.
Access to Pasture*	Not required.	Required for dairy and beef cattle.	Required for all species.
Space Allowance	Insufficient for performance of natural behaviours in pigs and poultry.	In comparison to conventional: - 50% more space for sows - 50% more space for growing pigs - 50% more space for broilers - 300% more space for laying hens	In comparison to conventional: - No difference for sows - 140% more space for growing pigs - 170% more space for broilers - 380% more space for laying hens
Animal Handling	Electric prods permitted. No other specific requirements.	Electric prods prohibited. Birds to be carried in prescribed manner.	Animals are to be handled humanely, but no specific requirements.
Transport times (maximum)	52 hours for cattle and 36 hours for pigs and poultry.	24 hours for cattle and pigs and 12 hours for poultry.	24 hours for all species.
Bioregionality	Varies.	Current producers market predominantly to consumers in the same province, most in the same region.	Current producers market predominantly to consumers in the same province, most in the same region.

*Free range and free run production offer different animal welfare benefits. Outdoor access provides behavioural opportunities but can leave animals (particularly poultry) vulnerable to predation and disease.