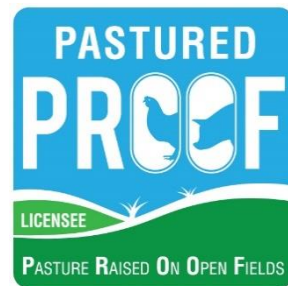


Animal health and welfare, a sustainable pastured farming environment and the production of wholesome, healthy food are the cornerstones of this guideline. Our Core values lay the foundation for the ethical and sustainable production expected of pastured producers. We have further built on these commitments to bring to the consumer all the proof they need.



Manufacturer /
Product
Standard
2017

Version: 1

PROOF Manufacturer / Product Certification Standards

Introduction

This document contains the **PROOF – Pasture Raised On Open Fields**[®] (PROOF) Standards and for certification and licensing with PROOF. These standards are designed to protect:

- The correct presentation and use of the PROOF Trademarks
- The integrity of the PROOF Core Values
- The reputation of PROOF

This standard applies to manufacturers and/or sellers of pig and poultry equipment (product) that they wish to label as PROOF Certified.

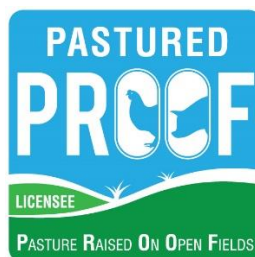
All sections of this standard must be used jointly. Certain sections may not be applicable for a specific business, process or activity. It is the user's responsibility to determine and justify why any sections do not apply.

This standard is complementary and additional to other codes of practice or regulatory requirements at federal, state, territory or other relevant levels.

Reference to PROOF certification and use of the PROOF logo requires audit, certification and licensing and conformance to this Standard.

Legal or other means shall be pursued where incorrect or unauthorised use of the logo or the name PROOF is found to be occurring.

Applicants wishing to utilise the PROOF logo (Set out below) are required to undertake the steps outlined next.



PROOF Certification Process

1. Application Process

- 1.1. Prior to certification with PROOF, the operator must:
 - a) apply for and enter into to a PROOF Licensing Agreement;
 - b) complete a self-assessment and declaration questionnaire;
 - c) satisfy PROOF that the operator will comply with these standards.
- 1.2. The operator must maintain plans and specifications for any product that is to be certified to enable ongoing adherence to the PROOF standards. These plans and/or specifications must be available to PROOF or at audit. Refer to section 6 of this standard.
- 1.3. Onus is on the operator and their employees/contractors to ensure at all times that they are fully aware of all relevant aspects of the PROOF Standard relating to their operation. It is also the responsibility of the operator to be aware of extra regulatory or market requirements that are in addition to the PROOF standard.
- 1.4. An application for PROOF certification, including payment, shall be made to PROOF, and completed documents submitted for review, before an initial assessment and/or audit shall be arranged. All documents shall be signed and/or witnessed as required prior to final approval. Application may be made online.
- 1.5. Certification of manufacturing or related retail facilities may be given following a systems audit by PROOF of the applicants signed documentation. The operator must be able to verify adherence to the relevant PROOF Standards and any special conditions set out by PROOF in the licence agreement.
- 1.6. Following initial approval, a compliance audit will be conducted to verify compliance to this standard and any special conditions applicable.
- 1.7. Upon review and audit, approval may be granted and a Licensing Agreement is offered to the operator. Certification is not finalised until the Licensing Agreement is in place.
- 1.8. PROOF certification of a manufacturer or retail operation applies to the operator who owns, leases or has legally recognised and enforceable management control of such retail outlet or facility. PROOF certification therefore is not transferable but applies to both the operator and the retail or manufacturing facilities.

2. Restrictions to Granting of Certification

- 2.1 No certification shall be given where PROOF is not supplied with sufficient verifiable information as to the history of the operation, where it is deemed that the Standard has not been fully complied with, or where management, manufacturing or retailing aspects of the operation are not deemed to satisfy the requirements for certified PROOF products.
- 2.2 Certification may terminate at such time that a production unit changes ownership or management hands. In such instances, the new operator shall apply for certification if they wish to continue certification. New management shall require assessment by PROOF for continuity and ability to manage in conformance with this Standard. New processes or products shall also require assessment by PROOF for conformance with this Standard prior to certification.

3. Denial of Certification

- 3.1 When PROOF has reviewed an application and has found that the applicant is not able to comply with the relevant Standard, written notification of denial / non-compliance of certification must be made, inclusive of the following points:
- Description of each non-compliance;
 - Facts upon which the non-compliance is based;
 - Date by which the applicant must correct the non-compliances and submit supporting documentation.

Upon receipt of the notification of non-compliance the applicant may:

- Correct non-compliances and submit supporting information within the time frame noted;
- Appeal the decision in writing, which will instigate an appeals committee review.

4. Maintaining Certification

- 4.1 Note that PROOF reserves the right to refuse certification to operators at any time, where such certification is deemed to detract from the aims or principles of PROOF and this Standard. Such issues may include labelling or marketing of products by the operator in question that may potentially mislead the consumer. The operator must be aware of Core Values of PROOF which are:

- All animals* are able to range freely in open fields or paddocks
- Animals will not be kept in cages, stalls or crates
- All animals are kept at stocking densities that will ensure access to forage and grazing and; in the case of layer hens, shall not exceed 1,500 per hectare
- Densely confined production systems and feed lotting are not practiced
- All animals are able to interact with their herd or flock and to carry out natural behaviours
- All animals should thrive in their environment and not just cope with it
- All animals will be protected from predators
- Illness or injury will be addressed promptly so that no animal will be left to suffer
- Animals will be fed to meet their welfare needs as well as production requirements
- Surgical treatments that inflict unnecessary pain will not be performed
- There will be no use of growth promoters
- Pastured free range should be environmentally, economically and socially sustainable

*with the exception of very young poultry that are not yet sufficiently feathered and poultry that must be protected from predation at night.

4.2 To maintain certification, the operator shall, at a minimum, commit and allow all resources and personnel to achieve the following:

- a) An initial audit will be carried out by an auditor assigned or approved of by PROOF;
- b) Provide any assistance reasonably required by a PROOF auditor to perform an audit;
- c) Produce to the PROOF auditor all information, records or documents (in hardcopy or softcopy) requested to facilitate an audit;
- d) Random or special (unscheduled) audits;
- e) The operator acknowledges that it will be responsible for the payment of all fees, costs and expenses associated with certification including additional audits for non-conformances or corrective action requests;
- f) An annual license fee is paid to PROOF;
- g) Upkeep of the relevant records and product specifications as required as well as annual updates of related information, to be made available at the time of auditing and/or annual renewal of license, to PROOF as requested;
- h) Ensure compliance with this Standard, or immediate written notification to PROOF of deviation from the Standard;

- i) Ensure compliance with special conditions or directives as specified in licence agreements or stemming from correspondence with PROOF;
- j) Keep updated and familiar with the Standard, especially pertaining to modifications or updates as they occur;
- k) Ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, including but not limited to Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals.

5. Non-compliance and Corrective Action Requests

5.1 The raising of Corrective Action Requests (CARs) is a core component of the PROOF certification

program, and enables a simple, transparent means of communicating, and closing out, non-complying aspects of the operation between the operator and the PROOF. Non-compliances with this Standard may take the form of one or more of the following:

- a. Operator failure to conform to the Standard;
- b. Operator failure to conform to their licence agreement;
- c. Operator failure to verify effective management control deemed essential by PROOF for ongoing conformance to the Standard;
- d. Failure to comply with relevant industry sector Standards or Statutory Regulations.

5.2 Whilst being audited, or following review by PROOF, operations or operators may receive notice of performance, which might include feedback relating to certification maintenance. CARs can be generally categorised as follows:

5.3 Minor Non-conformity

A problem detected that in the opinion of the auditor or PROOF will not, or is unlikely to result in, a significant non-conformance with the Standard, but which requires corrective action to ensure that the issue does not become a major non-conformity.

5.4 Major Non-conformity

A problem detected that in the opinion of the auditor or PROOF is likely to result in, or has resulted in, a breach of the Standard.

5.5 Critical Non-conformity

Where the system is clearly not operational and/or where the participant is clearly not committed to the maintenance of, or able to maintain, certification and the requirements as specified in this Standard.

- 5.6 Certain non-compliances or non-conformities may be able to be closed out if addressed within 30 days of issue or at the next annual audit, however other non-compliance or non-conformity with the Standard or licence agreement may lead to one or more of the following:

Suspension

- a) If a PROOF certified operator is found to have not complied with requirements laid out to an extent deemed sufficient by PROOF to jeopardise the reputation or integrity of PROOF labelled products, the operator's certification will be suspended.
- b) Suspended clients shall not use the PROOF logo, or make any reference to certification in labelling or marketing, until such time that suspension is lifted by PROOF.
- c) During the period of suspension, no affected product may be sold or disposed of by or on behalf of the operator as PROOF certified.

Decertification

- d) Decertification includes the termination of current licence agreement/s with PROOF and shall occur at such times where the operator cannot demonstrate compliance with requirements.
- e) Decertification excludes the operator from using the PROOF logo and making labelling or marketing reference to any certified products or production.
- f) In circumstances where the operator is unable to verify ability to conform to the Standard, or where a serious and deliberate breach of the Standard has occurred, PROOF shall not allow recertification.
- g) Also taken into consideration shall be the client's past and current conformance to the requirements. In exceptional cases PROOF shall pursue legal means in order to protect the PROOF logo.
- h) In instances of low risk, or where non-compliance is deemed a minor non-conformity only, communication shall be requested from the operator to outline confirmation of management commitment to rectifying the non-conformance.
- i) Lack of response by the operator to requests from PROOF, or lack of commitment to management and resources to ensure ongoing compliance with the Standard, shall lead immediately to suspension, followed by decertification unless corrective actions are taken.

5.7 Other reasons for Suspension or Termination

PROOF may, at its absolute discretion, suspend or terminate an operator's PROOF certification and license if:

- j) The operator goes into liquidation, has a receiver and manager appointed to it or any part of its assets, enters into a scheme of arrangement with creditors or suffers any other form of external administration;
- k) Cease to operate its business for a period of more than six consecutive months;
- l) Breaches any PROOF standard or license agreement requirements and, if the breach is capable of remedy, fails to remedy the breach within 7 days after notice has been given by PROOF.

Disputes and Appeal

- m) The certified operator always has the right of appeal of decisions by either the auditor or PROOF;
- n) Such appeals will usually be at the expense of the operator, except where it is shown that fault lies with PROOF,
- o) An appeal of a non-compliance decision must be filed within 30 days from the receipt of the notification.

6. Documents, Records and Audit Trails

Product Specifications

The requirements for and the extent and nature of product specifications shall be determined by PROOF depending on complexity and nature of the operation.

6.1 Product Specifications must contain plans or information that address the following:

- a) An outline of production activities that pertain to the production of PROOF certified products and the operator's ongoing compliance with the Standard.
- b) For manufacturing operations, the product specifications may be incorporated into existing plans or other manuals, but must clearly define how PROOF certified products are to be manufactured in a manner that ensures maintenance of integrity of the product.
- c) Records of manufacturing activities shall enable the tracing of all products stored at, and leaving the operation.
- d) Any alterations to specifications of PROOF certified products must be immediately submitted to PROOF.

6.2 At a minimum, operators shall maintain and make available at any time to PROOF and auditors for PROOF, the following documents:

- a) Individual product specifications for all certified PROOF products.
- b) Transaction records (a document for the sale and movement of PROOF certified products) or its equivalent (may be an invoice with relevant details) supplied by the PROOF certified operator, shall be completed for sale and movement of PROOF certified product.

- c) PROOF certified operators are required to take appropriate action on complaints related to their products' compliance with this Standard and to keep a record of corrective actions taken.

Labelling, Packaging, Marketing

7. Product Specifications

7.1 All products, marketed as certified PROOF products, shall include the following details on all packaging or branding bound for retail sale

- a. Appropriate reference to certification
- b. Certification number of operator;
- c. Name of certified operator and PROOF logo;

8. Marketing Claims and Labels

- 8.1 Onus is on the operator to ensure that all legal and other label requirements are met in regard to labelling and packaging.
- 8.2 All produce leaving the premises shall be accompanied by labelling systems and/or documentation that shall include the relevant certification number which shall be made available to the next purchaser on request.