



USDA ISO Technical Specification 34700 Animal Welfare Assessment Program

1 Purpose

This document provides the requirements to be met by organizations applying to the USDA International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Technical Specification (TS) Animal Welfare Assessment Program for review by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program, Quality Assessment Division (QAD). These assessments provide organizations with a means of marketing animal welfare programs and standards as internationally equivalent.

The USDA ISO TS Animal Welfare Assessment Program is a voluntary conformity assessment service provided by the QAD under the Quality Systems Verification Program. This Program facilitates the marketing and distribution of certified agricultural products.

2 Scope

The QAD conducts assessments of an organization's animal welfare programs and standards to determine conformance to 1) the USDA IS TS 34700 Animal Welfare Management - General requirements and guidance for organizations in the food supply chain, and 2) applicable World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Codes (TAHC). This Program is available to U.S. and international organizations interested in marketing the international acceptance of their animal welfare programs and standards.

3 References

The following referenced documents are used for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

QAD 1060 Procedure USDA ISO Technical Specification 34700 Animal Welfare Assessment Program

QAD 1000 Procedure, Quality Systems Verification Programs General Policies and Procedures

QAD 1115 Procedure, Program Review Committee

QAD 1060A ISO TS Animal Welfare Management Checklist

QAD 1060B Animal Welfare and Broiler Chicken Production Systems Checklist

QAD 1060C Animal Welfare and Dairy Cattle Production Systems Checklist

QAD 1060D Animal Welfare and Beef Cattle Production Systems Checklist

QAD 1060E Slaughter of Animals Checklist

QAD 1060F Transport of Animals by Air Checklist

QAD 1060G Transport of Animals by Sea Checklist

QAD 1060H Transport of Animals by Land Checklist

QAD 1060I General Animal Welfare Checklist

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[ISO TS 34700 Animal welfare management – General requirements and guidance for organizations in the food supply chain](#)

[OIE TAHC 7.1 Introduction to the recommendations for animal welfare](#)

[OIE TAHC 7.2 Transport of animals by sea](#)

[OIE TAHC 7.3 Transport of animals by land](#)

[OIE TAHC 7.4 Transport of animals by air](#)

[OIE TAHC 7.5 Slaughter of animals](#)

[OIE TAHC 7.9 Animal welfare and beef cattle production systems](#)

[OIE TAHC 7.10 Animal welfare and broiler chicken production systems](#)

[OIE TAHC 7.11 Animal welfare and dairy cattle production systems](#)

[QAD Auditing Services Web site: \[www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing\]\(http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing\)](#)

4 Definitions

Definitions are provided in the ISO TS 34700, Section 3, Terms and definitions.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 Organizations must meet all applicable policies, procedures, and requirements outlined in this document, *ISO TS 347000 Animal welfare management*, applicable *OIE TAHCs* that are relevant for the organization, and *QAD 1000 Procedure*.

5.2 Organizations must provide access to information, documents, and records as necessary for the assessment and maintenance of the Program.

5.3 The QAD must meet all applicable policies, procedures, and requirements outlined in this document, *QAD 1000 Procedure*, and referenced documents, as applicable.

6 QAD Web Sites

6.1 The *QAD Audit Services* Web site provides information on all QAD audit and assessment activities, including:

- a) The *USDA ISO TS 347000 Animal Welfare Assessment Program* Web site. This web site provides information regarding the USDA ISO TS 34700 Animal Welfare Assessment Program, including relevant documents and standards, guidance, and the *Official Listing*.
- b) The *QAD Newsroom* Web site. This Web site provides notice to stakeholders and interested parties regarding the USDA ISO TS 34700 Animal Welfare Assessment Program including proposed changes, approved changes, and timeframes for implementation of approved changes.
- c) The *Questions and Answers* Web site. This Web site provides answers to frequently asked questions regarding various Programs and subjects, including the USDA ISO TS 34700 Animal Welfare Assessment Program.



7 Audit Frequency

7.1 After applicants receive a satisfactory desk audit of the animal welfare documentation, the applicant receives an onsite audit. An annual renewal audit is conducted within 12 months from the initial onsite audit with subsequent audits conducted annually thereafter.

7.2 The assessment will include all types of sites where key animal welfare management system activities occur such as the organization's office, a processing facility, farms, transportation, etc.

8 Application for Service

8.1 By submitting an application for service per the QAD 1000 Procedure, the organization agrees to meet the requirements outlined in this document, the ISO TS 34700 Animal welfare management – General requirements and guidance for organizations in the food supply chain, applicable OIE TAHC, and QAD 1000 Procedure.

8.2 Organizations must submit an application for service in accordance with the requirements outlined in *QAD 1000 Procedure*.

8.3 In addition, the animal welfare organization must submit the following information relevant to the assessment:

- a) A description of the animal welfare standard and programs and standards that the organization undertakes;
- b) A list of animal welfare standards, methods, and procedures for which the organization seeks an assessment, including limits of capability where applicable;
- c) A hard copy or electronic copy of the organization's relevant associated documents and records. The associated documents must meet the requirements of *ISO TS 347000 Animal welfare management and applicable OIE TAHCs*;
- d) A completed *QAD 1060A Checklist*; and
- e) A list of companies covered under the scope of the animal welfare programs and standards, including locations.

8.4 The organization may also be asked to submit the following information relevant to the assessment:

- a) The standard(s) used;
- b) The source of the standard(s);
- c) The names of the members who developed the standard(s) and their qualifications; and
- d) The process used to develop the standard(s).

9 Scope of ISO TS 34700 Animal Welfare Management

9.1 The ISO TS provides requirements and guidance for the implementation of the animal welfare principles as described in the introduction to the recommendations for animal welfare of the OIE TAHC.



9.2 The TS applies to terrestrial animals bred or kept for the production of food or feed. The following areas are excluded: animals used for research and educational activities, animals in animal shelters and zoos, companion animals, stray and wild animals, aquatic animals, killing for public or animal health purposes under the direction of the competent authority, humane killing traps for nuisance and fur species.

9.3 Application of the TS is intended to be limited to aspects for which process or species-specific Chapters are available in the animal welfare OIE TAHC.

9.4 The TS is designed to guide users in conducting a gap analysis and developing an animal welfare plan that is aligned with the OIE TAHC. It may also be used to facilitate the implementation of any public or private sector animal welfare standards that meet at least the OIE TAHC.

10 Desk Audit

10.1 A desk audit (i.e. document review) is conducted prior to the initial assessment in accordance with the requirements for desk audits as outlined in *QAD 1000 Procedure*. The organization may not request to forego the desk audit.

10.2 The scope of the desk audit is based on the organization's animal welfare programs and standards conformance to the ISO TS 34700 Animal Welfare Management and all applicable OIE TAHCs.

10.3 In addition to meeting all applicable OIE TAHCs, the organization's animal welfare programs and standards must meet the following sections of the ISO TS 34700:

- a) Principles in developing an animal welfare plan
 1. The organization shall develop an animal welfare plan that enables the implementation of OIE animal welfare principles and guidelines.
 2. The organization shall establish and maintain the appropriate documentation and records related to the plan.
- b) Developing an animal welfare plan
 1. Step 1: Identification of gaps
 - i. Identification of relevant documents
 - ii. Methodology for the identification of gaps
 2. Step 2: Drafting of the animal welfare plan
 3. Step 3: Implementation of the animal welfare plan
 4. Step 4: Plan evaluation and review

NOTE: Refer to the TS and applicable OIE TAHCs for a description of all management and animal welfare requirements.



11 Initial Assessment

11.1 Initial assessments are conducted in accordance with the requirements for on-site audits as outlined in *QAD 1000 Procedure*.

11.2 Initial assessments include the entire organization's animal welfare programs and standards, including associated documents and records, a review of files, and audits, if applicable.

11.3 In addition to visiting the main office, visits are made to all other premises of the organization from which one or more key activities are performed and which are covered by the scope of assessment.

11 Listing of Accredited Animal Welfare Programs and Standards

11.1 The QAD provides public information about the current status of the assessment via the *Official Listing of Approved USDA ISO TS 34700 Animal Welfare Programs and Standards*.

11.2 The *Official Listing* is maintained on the *QAD USDA ISO TS 34700 Animal Welfare Program* Web site and contains information including:

- a) Organization's name and address;
- b) Organization's contact information including telephone number and email address when available;
- c) Standards applied;
- d) Scope of assessment;
- e) Certificate number, as applicable;
- f) Issue date and renewal date related to the current assessment period; and
- g) Original assessment date.