

7. SOP 4 – Pesticide Control and Manure

Cattle can sometimes be inadvertently exposed to chemicals through the use of herbicides on feedgrain crops, forages or directly to hay fields or pastures. For example, this can occur if producers spray electric fencelines to control forage/weed growth. Or during a drought specialty crops are salvaged for feed and may have been sprayed with a desiccant prior to swathing or baling.

Other situations include spraying for fly control in a feedlot where possible contamination to water and feedbunks may occur.

Producers are required to manage herbicides or general farm pesticides in a manner that avoids contamination of feed, water or directly to the cattle.

Pesticide Control

- Herbicides, pesticides, solvents and treated seed are stored to avoid contamination of cattle feed or water.
- Herbicides, pesticides, solvents and treated seed are used and disposed responsibly according to label directions and to reduce risk of contamination of cattle, water, feed, or animal health products.
- Herbicides and pesticides used on pasture or hay within the operation are applied according to label directions. Usage is recorded including date, product, location(s) used, initials or signature of applicator, and “safe to graze” or “days to harvest” time period.
- Records regarding herbicide and pesticide use on pasture are checked before cattle are allowed access to locations that have been sprayed.

If something goes wrong:

- If a potential cattle exposure has occurred, an expert (eg. veterinarian or toxicologist) is contacted for recommended procedures or actions. Actions taken are recorded.

Manure Removal in Pens

Manure and mud build-up on the hides of slaughter cattle is related to a biological hazard for the packing plant, the next customer in the beef chain. While difficult to control during certain times of the year, the following applies when cattle are destined for slaughter:

- Pens holding cattle destined for slaughter are subject to manure removal at least once annually to reduce tag (mud/manure) build-up on cattle hides.
- Be prepared to tell the auditor the date or month of manure removal, or if done more frequently, the normal routine for your operation.
- Runoff from manure storage areas is contained or redirected to prevent contamination of stored feed or water for cattle.
- Manure is disposed according to municipal or provincial regulations.
- If selling to a packing plant that provides tag scoring of hides, records are kept on file for review by beef cattle operation personnel.