

Approved: November 6, 1996
Revised May 18, 2017

**LIVE ANIMAL SPECIFICATION
AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION'S
SPECIFICATION FOR CHARACTERISTICS OF CATTLE ELIGIBLE FOR
APPROVED BEEF PROGRAMS CLAIMING ANGUS INFLUENCE**

1. SCOPE

This specification sets forth the requirements for live cattle which qualify for certification in approved beef programs claiming Angus influence. Cattle may be qualified for these programs by meeting either the Genotype or Phenotype requirements specified below.

2. REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Genotype. Cattle eligible for Angus influence beef programs based on genotype must have positive identification (ear tags, tattoos, brands, etc.) and be traceable back to provable (e.g., registration papers) Angus parentage. Qualifying cattle must be traceable to one registered parent or two registered grandparents. Programs which claim a specified percentage of Angus heritage must use this method.

2.2 Phenotype. Cattle eligible for certification in Angus influence beef programs based on phenotype (appearance) will have a main body that must be solid black¹, with no other color behind the shoulder, above the flanks, or breaking the midline behind the shoulders, excluding the tail. Angus influence cattle may be either horned or polled. Carcasses of certified live animals which display certain non-Angus characteristics (e.g., dairy conformation, Holsteins, Brahman humps) will be excluded as specified in the carcass specifications for approved programs.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS

3.1 Genotype. Compliance with genotypic requirements shall be determined and controlled through a Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program approved quality management program.

3.2 Phenotype. Three options are available to ensure that live animals comply with the specified requirements: (1) Continuous USDA supervision, (2) Ante-mortem lot inspection, and (3) Program monitoring. Under the first two options, USDA personnel certify that the animals

¹ At times, a black hair coat can become sun bleached and appear to be a shade of brown, particularly on the back. If the base of the hair close to the skin is black, then the entire brown-tipped area should be considered solid black. However, if the hair color is brown to the roots, it should be considered as brown in color.

Specification AAA - May 2017

meet the specified requirements prior to slaughter. Procedures for these two options will be developed on an individual plant basis and shall be approved by the local Quality Assessment Division (QAD) supervisor. Under option 3, the procedures described in 3.2.1 are followed.

3.2.1 Program Monitoring Procedures. Trained employees of the slaughter plant conducting the program will identify the carcasses of cattle that meet the specified requirements with an approved stamp or other identifying mark approved by the local QAD supervisor. These employees must display program identification whenever they are performing live animal identification duties. QAD graders will conduct unannounced, random checks of these employees' work as shown in Table I. QAD graders will observe the work for a period of not less than 2 minutes, or more than 5 minutes, each time. The QAD graders will record any defects shown in Table II during each monitoring period. When the plant chooses to mark the carcasses with other identifying marks other than the "A" stamp, the plant will provide to QAD a written plan identifying the designated area. This will be posted in QAD graders' office.

TABLE I. MONITORING FREQUENCY

| Slaughter Rate Number of cattle/shift | Frequency of monitoring periods * |
|--|--|
| Up to 500 | 2 |
| 501 - 1,000 | 4 |
| 1,001 - 1,500 | 6 |
| 1,501 - 2,000 | 8 |
| Over 2,000 | 10 |

** The QAD grader will randomly determine the times of actual observation before the beginning of the slaughter shift based on the plant's expected slaughter rate.*

TABLE II. PROGRAM DEFECTS

| Defect Categories | | Defects |
|-------------------|-------|--|
| Major | Minor | |
| 101 | | Not solid black (evidence of another color) behind the shoulders and above the flanks. |
| 102 | | Untrained plant employee performing live animal identification. |
| | 202 | Trained plant employee performing live animal identification without displaying program identification. |
| | 203 | Carcasses offered to QAD grader for certification that does not have approved stamp or mark as meeting the requirements. |
| | 204 | Designated stamp not placed on approved area of carcass. |

Routine program monitoring is performed using the designated frequencies for defect detection, known as “normal monitoring level”. When a QAD grader observes any major defect, two minor defects within a 5-day period of program operation, or four minor defects within a 15-day period of operation, the applicant moves to an accelerated level of inspection.

Accelerated monitoring begins on the next production day for the shift on which the defects occurred. If no defects are observed during a 10-day period of operation under accelerated inspection, the plant reverts to the normal monitoring level.

If one major defect or two minor defects are observed during the 10-day period of accelerated inspection, the identification program will be placed under 100-percent QAD supervision for a period of 10 consecutive days of program operation.

After 10 days of operation under 100-percent supervision with no defects observed, the program will revert to accelerated inspection and meet those requirements before returning to normal monitoring levels as described in Table I.

Each shift is monitored independently, meaning that a defect recorded on night shift will not affect the level of inspection for day shift. Therefore, a plant could be on normal inspection on dayshift and accelerated inspection on night shift.

The frequency of monitoring always remains the same; the number of defects allowed changes from each level.