

Ohio Livestock Care Standards



Ovine, Caprine, Camelid

Sheep, Goats, Alpacas, Llamas



Ohio

Livestock Care Standards

In November 2009, Ohio voters passed State Issue 2 approving the creation of the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board. This vote demonstrated Ohioans' support for keeping the state's number one industry – food and agriculture – vibrant and strong. The board was charged with creating state standards for the care and well-being of livestock in Ohio.

The ballot language required the board to take the following into consideration when developing the standards: Best management practices for the care and well-being of livestock; Biosecurity; Disease prevention; Animal Morbidity and mortality data; Food safety practices, Protection of local, affordable food supplies for consumers; Generally accepted veterinary medical practices, livestock practice standards and ethical standards established by the American Veterinary Medical Association, and; Any other factors that the board considers necessary for the proper care and well-being of livestock in this state.

The comprehensive livestock care standards developed by the Board are meant to be practical for livestock producers of all sizes, scales and production methods and will not only assure better livestock care, but will also support the state's overarching goals of promoting safe and affordable food, and helping to prevent the outbreak of both animal and human diseases.

Unless otherwise noted in this guide, the responsibility for ensuring these livestock care standards are being kept falls on the person who owns or has responsibility for or custody of the animal.

Ovine, Caprine, Camelid Sheep, Goats, Alpacas and Llamas

Ohio's livestock care standards regulate ovine (sheep), caprine (goat) and camelid (llama and alpaca) animals raised for human food products or fiber.

General Welfare Considerations

Feed and Water

In order to help ensure the growth and maintenance of normal body condition¹, these animals must receive a sufficient quantity and quality of feed and water on a regular basis. All newborn lambs, kids and crias must be offered colostrum or a colostrum replacement within 24 hours of birth.

¹ Body condition is a determination that relates an animal's body fat and/or muscle mass to its skeletal dimension and its stage of production.

Housing

As defined in the rules, housing means the physical area or location which is occupied by the livestock. Livestock housing and handling facilities must be designed to **minimize bruising and injury**. In general housing must provide a clean and safe environment that promotes the health, welfare and performance of livestock in all stages of their lives. It is important that housing, handling facilities and equipment continue to be monitored and maintained for this same reason.

The rules require that livestock housed outside have reasonable protection from adverse weather conditions and from predators. Any enclosures, including fencing, must be designed and maintained to minimize bruising and injury and must also provide for the safety of humans and other animals. During prolonged periods of wetness, animals housed outdoors must have access to feed and water.

Indoor housing must seek to minimize exposure to adverse weather, must provide ventilation and alleys must be designed and maintained so as to minimize the potential for injury and bruising. Proper indoor housing ventilation is necessary to reduce concentrations of ammonia and dust. Sufficient space must be provided for livestock that are in labor to be able to separate themselves from other livestock.



The outdoor housing rules were developed based on three principles:

1. Minimize prolonged exposure to adverse weather conditions
2. Promote drainage away from resting areas
3. Ensure access to feed and water

When box stalls, pens or other enclosures are used for llamas and alpacas, they must be cleaned regularly and must be provided access for regular exercise unless medically prohibited. Llamas and alpacas must also be provided with a clean, dry area for lying down and must be provided with the opportunity for socialization with a herding animal. Herding animals include (but are not limited to) llamas, alpacas, sheep or goats.

Generally, stocking densities that do not allow for all livestock to lie down at the same time and easily stand back up are prohibited and all animals must have access to feed and water without excessive competition. Feeding and watering areas and alleys must be cleaned on a regular basis so they are free of continual standing water and excess manure that could compromise the health and safety of the animals.



Adequate lighting must be available for inspection purposes. The light can be provided by electric lighting, or may be as minimal as a flashlight, natural sunlight or a portable light source for indoor or outdoor inspection.

Equipment

Livestock handling equipment must also be designed and maintained in order to minimize bruising and injury. Distress can occur when livestock are injured, sick or in pain, therefore rules require equipment to be used 'humanely'. **Humane care** is defined as handling of livestock that seeks to minimize distress.

Handling, sorting or other equipment used to move livestock must be used humanely. When restraint of livestock is required, it must be minimal in degree and duration, and it must minimize the potential for injury.

When necessary, only hand-held, 50 volt or less, battery-operated electric prods can be used to facilitate the movement of livestock. Prods must be used humanely and cannot be used in sensitive areas (including the eyes, ears, nose, vulva, anus, udder or testicles). An electric prod can only be used on llamas and alpacas as a diagnostic tool to determine whether an animal can rise on its own.

All tack and/or harnesses used on goats, llamas and alpacas must fit properly and be well maintained so as to minimize the potential for injuries. Halters used on llamas or alpacas must be removed when the animal is not being handled for extended periods of time.

Handling

Ohio's livestock care standards prohibit **anyone** who owns or has responsibility for or custody of livestock from maliciously or recklessly throwing, dropping, or dragging the animals. It is also not permissible use the tail or ears to pick an animal up or carry an animal, or to pull its legs into positions or in directions which might cause it to be injured or in pain.

If the animal's position does not permit lifting or another method of movement, however, it is permissible to drag an ambulatory disabled² or non-ambulatory disabled animal the **minimum distance** needed to allow movement by another approved or humane method.

² Ambulatory disabled livestock are livestock that are capable of walking, but have a physical impairment that severely limits or threatens their ability to walk.

General Management Practices

When castrating sheep or goats, or tail-docking sheep, determinations regarding the method and the use of pain management must take into consideration the animal's age and weight, environmental conditions, available facilities and safety. When castrating llamas or alpacas, effective analgesia must be used and the animal's age must be taken into consideration.

When dehorning goats after the horn has erupted (after it is no longer covered by hair), a pain management practice **must** be used.

Sheep and goat breeds that do not naturally shed their hair/wool must be shorn regularly. Anyone raising sheep must minimize the risk of fly strike by shearing or crutching or employing some acceptable other method.

Co-mingled adult male llamas and alpacas **must** have their fighting teeth conditioned. **Fighting teeth** are the up to three teeth (upper incisor, upper canine and lower canine) on each side of the mouth (six teeth maximum). Llamas and alpacas must also receive toe nail care and, during hot weather, heat stressed must be minimized by shearing, by the use of mechanical ventilation or by some acceptable other method.



Extra-label drug use is the use of an approved drug in a manner that is not in accordance with its approved label, but still meets certain standard conditions. Extra-label drug use is only permitted under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian and in the context of a valid veterinary-client-patient relationship.

Health

In addition to appropriate labeled medication, prescription and extra-label medications are often necessary to ensure livestock health. The livestock care rules **require** all prescription and extra-label use medication to be obtained and administered to livestock with the advice and involvement of a licensed veterinarian. The medication label instructions must also be followed:

- how and where to administer the medication
- the proper dosage of the medication
- how to store the medication
- how long the medication must be withdrawn prior to the use of the animal's milk or meat for human consumption

Health

As with equipment usage, all practices and procedures pertaining to the health and medical treatment of livestock **must** be performed so as to minimize distress. For this reason, livestock must also be monitored regularly for evidence of disease, injury and parasites. When evidence of any of these ailments is found, corrective measures **must** be taken. If required by the condition of the animal, a means of separating the sick animals from the healthy livestock must be available.

Distressed or Disabled Livestock

An entire chapter of the Ohio livestock care rules is devoted to proper and humane care for animals that are **distressed** (injured, sick or in pain) or **disabled** (ability to move or walk is severely or completely hindered). Disabled livestock are defined as either **ambulatory** (meaning they have some ability to walk or move) or **non-ambulatory** (meaning walking or movement is not possible).

When an animal becomes disabled, treatment must be humane and relative to the ailment of the animal. If the disabled livestock can still move on its own (ambulatory), then the animal must continue to be monitored for needed treatment, transported for treatment or sale, transported to an inspected slaughter facility, legally slaughtered on the farm, or euthanized.

If the disabled animal cannot move on its own (non-ambulatory), then the animal must be cared for and provided feed and water, provided necessary treatment, transported for treatment, transported to an inspected slaughter facility, legally slaughtered on the farm, or euthanized.



If you have questions about how to have an animal released by authorization from the Department of Agriculture, call the Division of Animal Industry at 614-728-6220.

If, at a non-terminal market or a collection facility, an animal becomes disabled and their condition does not allow for immediate sale, the animal(s) must either be released by authorization from the Department of Agriculture or euthanized.

If, after receiving treatment and additional feed and care, an animal still looks to be emaciated, then it must be sent to market, transported to a slaughter facility, legally slaughtered on the farm, or euthanized.

Proper and complete documentation of treatments, medication and medication withdrawal times is necessary when bringing any disabled animal to market. It is the responsibility of the person who owns or has responsibility for or custody of the animal (except for third-party transporters) to keep these records.

Transportation

When transporting livestock, the person who owns or has responsibility for or custody of the animal(s) is responsible for determining the load density. The transportation method used and the density of the load must minimize injury and must allow fallen animals to rise. Ramps, chutes and other means used for transportation must be constructed to provide adequate footing to minimize slips and falls. Animals must be reasonably protected from adverse weather conditions.

Sheep and goats must be able to stand in their natural position without touching the top of the transport conveyance. Llamas and alpacas must be able to stand so that their backs do not touch the top of the transport conveyance and the load density must allow all animals to lie down at the same time.

If prolonged transit is necessary, transporters **must** stop every 28 hours to unload and provide animals with food, water and rest for at least five consecutive hours. There is an exception to this requirement if the transportation vehicle allows the livestock to lie down and rest and have access to feed and water. The transport driver is solely responsible for the welfare of the animals during transit and must have an emergency action plan.

Transportation

Euthanasia

Except in slaughter facilities already governed by federal or state law, the only acceptable methods of euthanasia for sheep and goats weighing more than 12 pounds are the use of a penetrating captive bolt, a gunshot, the use of an inhaled carbon dioxide agent, or the use of injectable barbiturates. Non-penetrating captive bolts guns and blunt force trauma may be used on young sheep and goats weighing less than 12 pounds.

The only acceptable methods of euthanasia for llamas and alpacas are the use of a penetrating captive bolt, a gunshot, or the use of injectable barbiturates.

The methods are to be considered as sole methods for euthanasia; however, the rules do not preclude a licensed veterinarian from performing acceptable standards of veterinary practices.

If, in the course of employing one of these methods, humane death does not occur, the same method or another acceptable method must be performed immediately. Death is confirmed by the absence of a heartbeat or breathing for five minutes, and the animal's lack of a blink reflex when the eye is touched. As a standalone method, Exsanguination (to bleed an animal to death) can only be used for ritual slaughter. However, it can be used to ensure the death of an unconscious animal or following stunning.

Physical Methods

The physical methods permitted for euthanizing livestock produce a humane death through the rapid loss of consciousness, followed by cardiac and respiratory arrest, ultimately leading to the complete loss of brain function.



These methods must be followed when euthanizing an animal, regardless of whether the animal will be slaughtered on the farm, or its carcass burned, buried, composted or rendered. Ohio's livestock care standards do not alter the current regulations regarding the disposal of animals after they are confirmed dead.

Penetrating captive bolt

Captive bolt guns are powered by gunpowder or compressed air. In order to ensure humane death, the gun must be held firmly against the head and must provide sufficient energy to penetrate the skull of the animal and cause a sudden loss of consciousness.

Non-penetrating captive bolt

Non-penetrating captive bolt guns are powered by gunpowder or compressed air and do not have a projectile. In order to ensure humane death, the gun must be held firmly against the head to deliver a percussive blow which produces unconsciousness. Non-penetrating captive bolt guns can only be used as a primary method of euthanasia for sheep and goats weighing less than 12 pounds.

Gunshot

The rules require that the shooting take place in an area where legal firearm use is permitted and that the shooter be proficient in the use of firearms. The safety of the shooter, the public, and nearby any animal(s) must be taken into consideration when employing this method and the animal must be reasonably controlled whenever feasible.

Gunshot methods must utilize bullets of suitable caliber³ depending on the size of the animal to be euthanized, and that expand on impact. The gun must be held as close as reasonably possible, but not less than 2 inches, from the head and the projectile must enter the brain at such an angle as to cause instant loss of consciousness and humane death.

Blunt force

Blunt force can only be used as a method of euthanasia for young sheep and goats weighing less than 12 pounds. In order to ensure humane death, a single decisive blow that produces immediate depression of the central nervous system and destruction of brain tissue resulting in rapid unconsciousness **must** be used.

Chemical Methods

Carbon-dioxide

The only inhalant agent permitted to be used as a method of euthanasia is compressed carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas in cylinders. Furthermore, carbon dioxide is the only chemical allowed to be used for the euthanasia of animals intended for human or animal consumption. When using this method, gas concentration must be maintained for at least one minute after death.

Barbituates

Ohio's livestock care standards require that all injectable agents used for euthanizing animals, including all barbiturate derivatives, must be used by or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian. It should be noted that barbiturates must not be used to euthanize an animal that will be used for human consumption.

³ Ammunition for most animals must be a minimum caliber .22 hollow point long rifle.

Sites for physical methods

Ohio's livestock care standards permit two sites/entry angles when using a physical method to euthanize hornless or horned sheep or goats and one site/entry angle when using a physical method to euthanize llamas or alpacas.

When performed on hornless sheep or goats from the poll (see Figure 1), the gun or penetrating captive bolt is directed at the top of the head (poll) and aimed in the direction of the animal's muzzle.



Figure 1 – Poll method (hornless sheep and goats)

When performed on hornless sheep or goats from the front (see Figure 2), the gun must be directed at the middle of the forehead just above the level of the eyes and must aim at the spine. This method can only be performed if using the gunshot method.

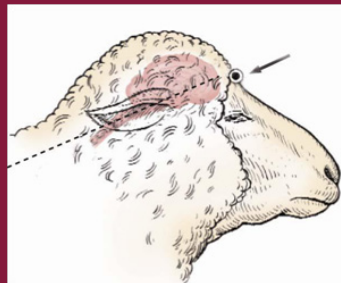


Figure 2 – Frontal method (hornless sheep and goats)

When performed on horned sheep or goats from the poll (see Figure 3), the gunshot or penetrating captive bolt must be directed at a point just behind the poll and aimed at the animal's muzzle.

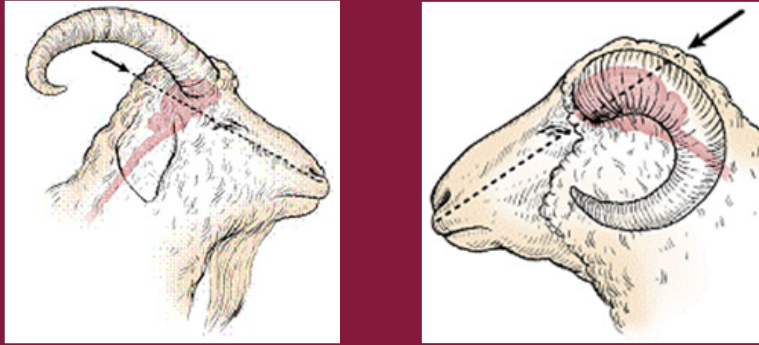


Figure 3 – Poll method (horned sheep and goats)

When performed on horned sheep or goats from the front (see Figure 4), the gun must be directed at the middle of the forehead just above the level of the eyes and must aim at the spine. This method can only be performed if using the gunshot method.



Figure 4 – Frontal method (horned sheep and goats)

When performed on llamas and alpacas (see Figure 5), the gunshot or penetrating captive bolt must be directed at the point of intersection of imaginary diagonal lines from the inside corner of the eye to the base of the opposite ear aiming at the spine.



Figure 5 – Llamas and alpacas

Enforcement

Ohio's livestock care standards will be enforced by the Ohio Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Divisions of Animal Industry and Enforcement. Farms that are not currently subject to regular inspection will not be subject to any new regular inspections as a result of these rules. ODA staff will only inspect a farm if a credible complaint regarding violations of these rules is reported. Anonymous complaints will not be considered credible.

ODA staff will investigate credible complaints to determine if a violation has occurred. Violations affecting more than one animal **may** be considered as one offense. If a violation is found, the person who owns or has immediate custody of the animal(s) will be informed in person, or by telephone, fax, or email. If the notification is made in person or by telephone, written notification will also be sent within three days.

If the violation can be corrected, ODA staff will also include the corrective measures which must be taken to achieve compliance with the rules, including the amount of time allowed to take any necessary corrective measures, in the written notice. If the responsible party fails to remedy the violation within the time specified in the written notice, they may be assessed a subsequent violation for each day the violation remains uncured.

Minor Violations

The rules define two kinds of violations: minor and major. Minor violations of Ohio's livestock care standards are generally due to neglect or unintentional acts of substandard practices. Minor violations are finable up to \$500 for the first minor offense and up to \$1,000 for each subsequent minor offense



If you have questions about how to comply with these rules or about the enforcement process, please call the ODA Division of Animal Industry at (614) 728-6220 or visit the Department's website at www.agri.ohio.gov.

that is committed within 60 months of the previous minor violation.

Major Violations

Major violations of Ohio's livestock care standards are reckless or intentional acts which result in the unjustified infliction of pain. Major violations can be any action which:

- places an animal's life in imminent peril
- causes protracted disfigurement
- causes protracted impairment of health
- causes protracted loss or impairment of the function of a limb or bodily organ

Major violations of Ohio's livestock care standards are finable offenses with penalties ranging between \$1,000 and \$5,000 for the first major violation and \$5,000 to \$10,000 for each subsequent major violation that is committed within 60 months of the previous major violation.

If a major violation has occurred, ODA staff may also work with state and local agencies and nongovernmental organizations to provide care to the animal(s). This includes but is not limited to providing feed and water, providing medical care, taking possession of the animal(s), or euthanizing the animal.

Additional Penalties

In addition to any fine assessed for a violation, ODA may also assess an additional fee to recover the cost to the department to investigate a matter. This fee is based on the average salary and the average cost of benefits of all employees who are directly involved in the investigation, copying costs, and any direct or indirect costs to ODA including all necessary laboratory analysis the caretaking costs. Monies from this fee will be deposited into the livestock care standards fund.

Anyone who has been issued a fine for violations of these rules will have 30 days to request a hearing to appeal the Department's decision. If requested, the hearing will be overseen by an independent hearing officer who is a licensed attorney and not an employee of ODA.

*This summary is for the convenience of those raising and handling livestock and is **not** intended to cover all laws and regulations. The Ohio Administrative Code contains the details of these regulations and is available for review at www.ohiolivestockcarestandards.com*

Questions?

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Published: July 15, 2011