



**Textile
Exchange**

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**MATERIALS MATTER
STANDARD PILOT V1.0**



**MATERIALS MATTER
STANDARD PILOT V1.0**
CRITERIA FOR MOHAIR

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Criteria for Mohair

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Note on the name of the standard and language used: The Materials Matter Standard was known as “the unified standard” during its development. With the release of the Pilot V1.0, Textile Exchange is pleased to release its official name to stakeholders. For practical reasons, it may also be referred to as “the Standard” in this document.

In the Materials Matter Standard, the word “materials” is used to collectively refer to fibers, raw materials, and feedstocks that are part of the scope of the Standard.

Note on use of this standard: This document represents the Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 – Criteria for Mohair. This is a material-specific excerpt of the complete Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 which is the normative standard version, including its preface, the Standard effective and mandatory dates, references, terms and definitions, and appendices, unless otherwise stated.

For any questions related to the accuracy of the information presented in this material-specific edition, please refer to the Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 inclusive of all materials. Any discrepancies or differences created in this edition are not binding and have no effect for auditing or certification purposes.

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A. About us

A1. About Textile Exchange

Textile Exchange is a global non-profit helping to drive beneficial outcomes for climate and nature across the fashion, textile, and apparel industry, right from the start of the supply system.

Our goal is to help the industry achieve a 45% reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions that come from producing fibers and raw materials by 2030 (from a 2019 baseline). To get there, we are keeping our focus holistic and interconnected, accelerating the adoption of practices that improve soil health, water, and biodiversity while respecting human livelihoods and animal welfare.

Over the last 20 years, our internationally recognized standards for the production of different fibers and raw materials have helped build integrity in the industry. As a member of ISEAL, we comply with three credibility Codes of Good Practice which underpin our policies and procedures for organizational functions like standard-setting, assurance, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning. These practices ensure we provide value, rigor, accessibility, and transparency in our standards.

All of our standards are anchored by an independent, third-party assurance model that supports organizations in consistently demonstrating and maintaining conformity while handling and trading their certified products, through an independently verifiable and impartial process.

A2. About the Materials Matter Standard

The Materials Matter Standard (formerly known as “the unified standard”) is a voluntary sustainability standard for the production and initial processing of raw materials used in the fashion, textile, and apparel industry.

The Standard sets out to incentivize a system in which the materials in our clothing and textiles support the climate, respect human rights and animal welfare, and drive beneficial outcomes for soil health, water, and biodiversity. It aligns the industry on a shared trajectory towards this vision by establishing what best practice looks like for different materials in various settings, from farms to recycling facilities.

By focusing specifically on the start of the supply chain, the Materials Matter Standard provides a global certification model that is connected to the unique contexts of producers and processors, as well as their local communities and landscapes. A blend of practice-based criteria and outcome-based indicators helps participating organizations get acknowledged for meeting core requirements and builds their capacity to measure results. At the same time, it gives brands and retailers that choose certified materials a way to speak confidently to customers about them.

In the long term, the Materials Matter Standard provides a foundation for producers and processors to understand how their activities impact the people and ecosystems around them, track their progress based on different practices, and learn where to improve over time to drive beneficial outcomes on the ground. Beyond getting certified, optional leadership criteria invite participating organizations to raise the bar through areas like regeneration, renewable energy, and textile-to-textile recycling.

Over time, the Materials Matter Standard will be improved and adapted using insights from the auditing process and outcome measurements. This will help make sure it brings more meaningful benefits to those producing materials for the industry, as well as those directly impacted by the practices they use.

Please note that the Materials Matter Standard was known as “the unified standard” during its development. With the release of the Pilot V1.0, Textile Exchange is pleased to share its official name with stakeholders.

B. References

The following documents are relevant to the Materials Matter Standard and its implementation. The latest edition of referenced documents (including any amendments) applies for those without a version number. Please note that Textile Exchange will be releasing updated versions of these documents to align with the Materials Matter Standard in 2024/2025.

Content Claim Standard (CCS)

The Content Claim Standard (CCS) is a chain of custody standard that provides organizations with a tool to verify a specific input material, track this material during individual site processing and handling on its journey to a final product, and provide volume reconciliation. It requires that each organization along the supply chain takes sufficient steps to ensure the integrity and identity of the input and output materials are preserved.

Logo Use and Claims Policy

This document provides organizations with clear guidelines for making claims, as well as communicating about the Standard. It also outlines requirements for the use of the Materials Matter trademarks, which include the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label.

Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards

This document contains the requirements for accreditation bodies and certification bodies conducting different forms of evaluation in the Materials Matter standards system, including requirements for issuing and managing non-conformities by the accredited certification bodies.

Materials Matter Standard User Manual

This document accompanies the Standard and should be used by users of the Standard for general interpretation and guidance, including more details as those provided in the “Intent and Clarification” element of the Standard.

C. Introduction

C1. Transitioning Towards the Materials Matter Standard System

In 2021, Textile Exchange began a comprehensive revision of its existing standards framework to develop a more harmonized system across all of our material-specific standards. Our goal was to meaningfully embed our organizational climate and nature goals into the production of all raw materials included in the scope of our certification, as well as to facilitate a simplified communication at the consumer level through more integrated and aligned claims and labelling.

After review and approval of the public project plan from an International Working Group (IWG), the first draft of the Materials Matter Standard (then referred to as “the unified standard”) was made available for public consultation from May to July 2023, with the second draft open for public consultation from October to November 2023. Following invaluable feedback from stakeholders, the Materials Matter Standard Pilot Version V1.0 was released publicly on June 4, 2024.

C1.1 Pilot testing and planning period

The Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 was approved to be released and used for pilot testing on March 11, 2024, following the necessary number of positive votes by the International Working Group. It was released in a limited and controlled way to pilot participants starting in March 2024.

This version is for use in remote and field pilot testing and implementation planning. Over the course of 2024, Textile Exchange will conduct a full internal system update to align with the new Standard and provide information to support implementation planning for all stakeholders in the system.

These activities include taking adequate time to align across our assurance system, providing updates for the accreditation and certification bodies’ systems, and mapping changes that can help organizations to prepare their protocols and operations for the new Standard. Textile Exchange will also update pre-existing documents to reflect the harmonized standards system.

The Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 represents the overall structure that Textile Exchange intends to include in the official version of the Materials Matter Standard. The pilot version may be used to begin planning and understanding areas for system updates by relevant standards users to ensure stakeholders are prepared for implementation once the official Standard becomes effective then mandatory, scheduled for 2026. See section C2 Scope below to understand which types of organizations are relevant for future certification to the Materials Matter Standard.

If, during the review and familiarization process, you find anything that may need to be amended, please send your comments to standards@textileexchange.org and Textile Exchange will take them into consideration when compiling the final and effective version of the Materials Matter Standard V1.0.

C1.2 Final published Standard phases

After incorporating the learnings from pilots, system updates, and other feedback received, the final Materials Matter Standard and related policies are scheduled to be published in mid-2025.

The final published Standard will state an effective date and a mandatory date. The effective date is planned for the first quarter of 2026 and means that auditing and certification may begin on a voluntary basis whereby organizations may request an audit to the Materials Matter Standard from licensed certification bodies. This will remain optional during a transitional period for organizations already certified to current standards superseded by the Materials Matter Standard, including the Global Recycled Standard (GRS), Recycled Claim Standard (RCS), Responsible Wool Standard (RWS), Responsible Mohair Standard (RMS), Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAS), and Responsible Down Standard (RDS).

The mandatory date is planned for the second quarter of 2026, 12 months after the final Standard publication date. This means that all applicable audits (for both organizations that are already certified and new applicants) will be required under the new Materials Matter Standard from that date onwards.

Please refer to TE-MM-STN-102-V1.0 Materials Matter Transition Policy (to be released) for specific details on different scopes and areas of certification concerning transition planning to the new Materials Matter standards system.

Timeline

March 2024:

Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 is approved by IWG.

Finalize core content to release for 2024 implementation planning and pilot testing.

June 2024:

Public release of the Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0

Unified standard released publicly with the Materials Matter name, as well as supporting documentation to guide the Standards users.

April–October 2024:

Pilot test criteria and hold workshops for stakeholders.

Pilot testing remotely and in the field; full standards system updates; promotion and education of new/revised content; progress on approach to recognition partnerships for external standards/tools.

2025:

Final Materials Matter Standard publication

Criteria and related policies are planned to be released on the publication date in mid-2025; a transitional period will follow publication to allow certification bodies and certified organizations to fully prepare for auditing.

2026:

Published standard will have an effective date followed by a mandatory date that begins during 2026

The Standard becomes effective in the first quarter of 2026: organizations may request audits by approved certification bodies; the Standard becomes mandatory mid-2026: auditing and certification required for prior standards scopes superseded by the Materials Matter Standard.

C2. Scope of the Standard

The Materials Matter Standard criteria cover practices and outcomes for the production and initial processing of raw materials, including primary/recycled feedstocks, and apply to farms, producers, and first processing facilities.

The main impact areas of the Materials Matter Standard focus on virgin raw material production (including land use practices in the raising of animals, as well as animal welfare, and treatment of workers), and the first processing stage of extracted raw materials and feedstocks (including processes such as wool scouring, dissolving pulp, chemical/mechanical recycling, down processing, and ginning).

The materials included in the scope of the pilot version of the Materials Matter Standard include:

- **Animal fibers and materials:** Sheep wool, Mohair, Alpaca, Down, and Skins
- **Recycled:** Synthetics, Natural materials, Recycled MMCF

Some of the materials proposed for inclusion within the scope of the Standard will be added through a framework for recognition partnerships with organizations that own sustainability systems in an effort to focus on collaboration first and avoid duplication of standards systems. Partnerships for full recognition mean Textile Exchange would accept related certified raw material inputs into its standards system rather than

through direct Textile Exchange raw material certification. Proposed materials that may be added over time are:

- **Animal fibers and materials:** Cashmere
- **Fiber crops:** Cotton
- **Forest/plant-derived:** MMCF, Biosynthetics

The Standard is globally applicable, with no explicit geographic limitations except those that may occur due to legal restrictions.

C2.1 Applicability of criteria

The Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 contains some criteria that apply to all types of organizations (such as most of the Organizational Management and the Human Rights and Livelihoods principles). It also contains some criteria that apply to specific contexts and/or certification scopes.

Certification audits will be conducted against criteria relevant to the audited organization, and each criterion lists the material(s) to which it applies. The notes in the “Intent and Clarification” element of each criterion may include specific circumstances in which it is or is not applicable, or where partial conformity may be acceptable.

The applicability of specific criteria is also determined based on the desired certificate scope and optional activities of the certified organization, such as conformity with the “Logo Use and Claims” criteria for organizations that wish to use/make claims when selling certified products.

C2.2 Slaughterhouse

Slaughterhouse criteria are included in Principle 4: Animal Welfare. These are mandatory for organizations wishing to sell down or skins with the Materials Matter Standard certification claims, coming from ducks and geese or sheep, goats, and/or alpacas raised on certified farms.

In a case where the producing animal farm also owns the slaughterhouse, and this organization wants to sell certified materials (down or skins), it will have to be in conformance with all the applicable criteria of the Standard and not only with the “slaughterhouse” theme.

C2.3 Chain of custody

Principle 6 of the Materials Matter Standard contains fundamental chain of custody criteria to be met at the raw material production level. This section contains criteria for:

- **Material handling:** The physical segregation of certified materials from non-certified materials, maintaining an adequate identification system.
- **Volume reconciliation:** Maintaining records of volumes collected, produced, stored, and sold as certified.
- **Sale of certified materials:** The conditions to fulfill for making a certified transaction, including the application for a transaction certificate to be issued by the certification body for each shipment.
- **Logo use and claims:** The conditions for using the Materials Matter trademarks, including the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label. Textile Exchange will be releasing an updated version of the Claims & Labeling Policy to align with the Materials Matter Standard in 2024/2025.

Under the following circumstances, organizations are required to implement the full Content Claim Standard¹ instead of Principle 6 of the Materials Matter Standard:

C2.3.1 Raw material producers conducting any of the following activities:

- a. Purchasing material (certified or non-certified), from other organizations which are not part of the same Materials Matter Standard scope certificate;
- b. Any type of processing of the eligible material (excluding typical tasks such as sheep shearing); and/or
- c. Outsourcing, defined as the process of sending eligible (e.g. certified) material to a subcontractor for services to be provided, other than storage.

C2.3.2 Organizations doing the first processing stage after the harvest or collection of the raw material.

For example:

- a. For down: The waterfowl's slaughter site.
- b. For animal fibers: The earliest processing stage of the animal fiber after the farm (typically the scour).
- c. For skins: The slaughterhouse.
- d. For recycled material: The recycling sites processing reclaimed feedstocks, e.g., mechanical and chemical recyclers.
- e. For cotton: The gin.

C2.3.3 Organizations purchasing eligible materials certified under a recognized standard. The “recognition framework” refers to a subset of criteria that are required to evaluate other sustainability systems to define the feasibility for accepting certified material under the other scheme into the Materials Matter system, including through the CCS.

Recognition partnerships with organizations owning/managing sustainability systems that result in eligible inputs for the Materials Matter standards system will be published on the Textile Exchange website as these recognition activities progress.

C2.3.4 Organizations in the rest of the supply chain (including Tiers 3-0, from the main processing of raw materials until the final product, including brands) must get certified to the CCS to sell certified products and make claims about them.

C2.4 Group certification

Principle 7 includes the criteria for Group Certification, which is an alternative approach to gaining certification that can help producers demonstrate conformity with the Standard more efficiently (for example, appointing a group manager who can help group members — individual farms — by providing guidance and by managing the certification process through a Group Management System). Although some criteria may be met at the group level, there are applicable standard criteria that each group member must be in conformance with, in order to be considered a member of the certified group.

¹ Textile Exchange will be releasing an updated version of the Content Claim Standard to align with the Materials Matter Standard in 2024/2025.

C3. How to Understand the Materials Matter Standard

The Materials Matter Standard criteria are divided into principles and themes as in the following table. Each theme applies to one or two sub-tiers of Tier 4 (raw material production and/or first processing).

| Principle | Theme | Tier 4 Applicability | Tier 4 Applicability |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Organizational Management | 1.1. General Requirements | Raw Material Production | First Processing Stage |
| | 1.2. Shared Responsibilities | Raw Material Production | First Processing Stage |
| 2. Human Rights and Livelihoods | 2.1. Policies, Management Systems and Records | Raw Material Production | First Processing Stage |
| | 2.2. Labor Rights | Raw Material Production | First Processing Stage |
| | 2.3. Social Justice | Raw Material Production | First Processing Stage |
| | 2.4. Livelihoods | Raw Material Production | First Processing Stage |
| | 2.5. Management of Waste Collection for Recycled Inputs | Raw Material Production | First Processing Stage |
| 3. Land Use | 3.1. Management Plan | Raw Material Production | |
| | 3.2. Soil Health | Raw Material Production | |
| | 3.3. Soil Nutrients | Raw Material Production | |
| | 3.4. Pest Management | Raw Material Production | |
| | 3.5. Water Management | Raw Material Production | |
| | 3.6. Biodiversity Management | Raw Material Production | |
| 4. Animal Welfare | 4.1. Health and Welfare Plan | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.2. Animal Nutrition | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.3. Living Environment | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.4. Husbandry Procedures | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.5. Animal Shearing | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.6. Herd Management | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.7. Breeding, Birthing, and Caring for Young Animals | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.8. Handling and Transport | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.9. Handling and Transport Managed by the Organization | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.10. Euthanasia and On-Farm Slaughter | Raw Material Production | |
| | 4.11. Slaughterhouse | | First Processing Stage |
| 5. Processing Facility | 5.1. Environmental Management System | | First Processing Stage |
| | 5.2. Chemical Management and Restrictions | | First Processing Stage |
| | 5.3. Waste Management | | First Processing Stage |
| | 5.4. Water Use and Discharge | | First Processing Stage |
| | 5.5. Air Emissions | | First Processing Stage |
| | 5.6. Energy Use | | First Processing Stage |
| 6. Chain of Custody | 6.1. Material Handling | Raw Material Production | |
| | 6.2. Volume Reconciliation | Raw Material Production | |
| | 6.3. Sale of Certified Materials | Raw Material Production | |
| | 6.4. Logo Use and Claims | Raw Material Production | First Processing Stage |
| 7. Group Certification | 7.1. Group Configuration | Raw Material Production | |
| | 7.2. Group Management System | Raw Material Production | |
| | 7.3. Group Member Requirements | Raw Material Production | |
| | 7.4. Inspection of Members | Raw Material Production | |
| | 7.5. Adding and Removing Members | Raw Material Production | |

The Standard layout is as follows:

- Principle:**
Fundamental practice
- Theme:**
Element of a principle
- Level of conformity:**
Expected conformance per criterion
- Criterion:**
Requirements to meet
- Intent and clarification:**
Key guidance for how to interpret or audit a specific criterion
- Materials:**
Materials that the criterion applies to

Principle 1 – Organizational Management

The organization demonstrates systems are in place that meet applicable assigning clear internal responsibilities; defining the scope for certification tools; and training all its workers according to their specific responsibilities.


1.1. General Requirements


1.1.1 ● Major


A management representative has been designated as having overall responsibility for achieving the organization's conformity to all applicable certification requirements.


INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:


- 1) The intention of this criterion is to avoid any potential confusion by the certification body to implement any necessary actions within the organization.
- 2) A person with sufficient authority and understanding of the Standard shall be appointed to the role of management representative.
- 3) The management representative shall be able to effectively communicate with the organization's operations, know where to locate relevant documentation, and know where to go during the audit.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA


SKINS


DOWN


RECYCLED


MMCF


COTTON

1. **Principle:** This states the fundamental elements for performing better practices, subject to certification.
2. **Theme:** An element of a Principle, to judge whether or not a Principle has been fulfilled.
3. **Criterion and criterion number:** Wording for the standard requirement or recommendation that the certification applicant or certified organization (collectively referred to as “the organization”) needs to fulfill and demonstrate conformity to the certification body. Each criterion has a unique criterion number, which consists of three digits separated by periods; the first digit represents the Principle number to which the criterion belongs, the second digit represents the Theme to which the criterion belongs, and the third digit is a consecutive number assigned to the set of Criteria within each Theme.
4. **Intent and Clarification:** The objective of this element is to provide key guidance, when needed, for how to interpret or evaluate the criterion, depending on the specific contextual circumstances. The text may offer clarification regarding the intention of the criterion, provide interpretation guidance (e.g. applicability), and/or suggest means of verification for how to show/verify conformity.
5. **Level of conformity:** The level of expected conformance to each criterion depends on the criterion’s type (i.e. conformance requirement or leadership criterion). Conformance requirements (a, b, and c below) are audited for certification decisions and result in non-conformities being issued if conformance is not demonstrated. Leadership criteria (d below) are aspirational and therefore optional to implement; when met the organization is demonstrating leadership in the related area.

The level of conformity can be:



Critical

a. **Critical:**

A critical criterion must be met to achieve and/or maintain certification. If the certification body finds the applicant organization is not in full conformance with a critical criterion during the initial audit, the applicant will not receive a scope certificate until the critical non-conformity has been closed. If the certification body finds an already certified organization is not in full conformance with a critical criterion, the certification body will issue a non-conformity and the scope certificate will be immediately suspended, or the facility removed from the scope certificate. A new evaluation is needed if the organization does not close the critical non-conformity within 180 days.



Major

b. **Major:**

A major criterion must be met to achieve certification and/or maintain certification. Scope certificates may not be issued or reissued if there is an open major non-conformity. Major non-conformities must be closed within 30 days. If a major non-conformity is not closed within 30 days after the audit, the certificate will be suspended.



Minor

c. **Minor:**

A minor criterion may result in a non-conformity being issued and the organization can still achieve certification and/or maintain certification. Minor non-conformities need to be closed within 60 days, though the organization remains certified through that time. If a minor non-conformity is not closed within 60 days after the audit, the minor non-conformity is upgraded to a major non-conformity with a timeline of 30 days from the original deadline.

Certification bodies may issue major non-conformities for minor criteria if, either alone or in combination with other non-conformities, the certification body judges they result in, or are likely to result in, a fundamental failure to achieve the objectives of the Standard. Such fundamental failure may be indicated by non-conformities that continue over a long period of time, are repeated or systemic, affect a wide area, or are not corrected or adequately responded to by the organization once they have been identified.



Recomm

d. **Recommendation:**

The certification body issues a recommendation when a leadership criterion is not met. Recommendations do not affect the certification decision. Leadership criteria are an indication of areas that may be integrated as conformance requirements in future versions of the Standard.

6. **Material:** This element describes the material for which each criterion is applicable. Most criteria apply to more than one material. The materials included in this version of the Standard are the following:



SHEEP
WOOL

a. **Sheep wool:** For sheep farmers who want to sell certified wool.



MOHAIR

b. **Mohair:** For farmers raising angora goats, who want to sell certified mohair.



ALPACA

c. **Alpaca:** For farmers raising alpacas, who want to sell certified alpaca fleece.



SKINS

d. **Skins:** For farmers raising sheep, goats, and alpacas, who want to sell certified skins to be used in the textile industry.



DOWN

e. **Down:** For farmers raising ducks and/or geese, who want to sell certified feathers and down.



RECYCLED

f. **Recycled:** For organizations handling reclaimed feedstocks for use in recycled materials (either natural or synthetic) wishing to sell their products as certified. This material designation includes recycled MMCF.



MMCF

g. **MMCF:** It may include reclaimed cellulose feedstock, and/or forest-derived feedstock at which time recognition for this material is included. The Standard does not contain requirements at the forest management level; however, Textile Exchange intends in the future to recognize forest-derived raw materials coming from other standard-setting organizations through a recognition partnership model. Eligible materials would enter the Standard certified supply chain to produce manmade cellulosic fibers from virgin feedstocks. For this reason, the Standard contains requirements for the first stages of processing MMCF from virgin feedstocks, in addition to recycled MMCF.



COTTON

h. **Cotton:** The Standard does not contain requirements at the farm production level for cotton; however, Textile Exchange is exploring future options to recognize cotton (as a raw material) coming from other programs/standards through a recognition partnership model. This cotton will then be eligible to enter the Standard certified supply chain at the point of first processing. For this reason, the Standard includes requirements for the first stages of processing cotton at the facility level.



BIO-
MATERIALS

i. **Biomaterials:** The Standard does not contain requirements at the raw material management level for biomaterials; however, Textile Exchange is exploring future options to recognize biomaterials coming from other standard-setting organizations through a recognition partnership model. Eligible materials would enter the Standard certified supply chain at the point of first processing. For this reason, the Standard includes requirements for the first stages of processing biomaterials at the facility level.



CASHMERE

j. **Cashmere:** The Standard does not contain requirements at the farm level for cashmere goats; however, Textile Exchange is exploring future options to recognize cashmere coming from other programs/standards through a recognition partnership model. Eligible materials may enter the Standard certified supply chain at the point of first processing. For this reason, the Standard includes requirements for the first stages of processing cashmere at the facility level.

C4. Responsibility for Conformance

The responsibility for demonstrating conformance with the Materials Matter Standard lies with the entities that are the registered applicant or certificate holder, herein referred to as “the organization.” The organization is responsible for all decisions, policies, and management activities related to the farm or site. This includes demonstrating that other persons or entities permitted or contracted by the organization to operate in (or for the benefit of) the farm or site demonstrate conformance with the applicable Materials Matter Standard criteria. Accordingly, the organization is ultimately responsible for taking corrective actions if such persons/entities are found to have not met the Standard criteria.

C5. Basis for Certification

Textile Exchange does not expect 100% conformance in satisfying the Materials Matter Standard criteria. Specific situations and/or unforeseen changes in cultural, ecological, economic, and social environments may cause occasional shortcomings that result in non-conformities. Certification bodies are instructed to guide their certification decisions by the following:

- The extent to which current actions satisfy each criterion; and
- The overall importance and/or consequences of failing to satisfy each criterion.

Failures in performance detected by certification bodies during periodic audits may result in minor or major non-conformities, depending on the type of criterion and on the severity of the non-conformity. The Accreditation and Certification Procedures detail the requirements related to Textile Exchange licensed certification bodies, including auditor qualifications, auditing procedures, and the certification decision-making process. Textile Exchange will be releasing an updated version of the Accreditation and Certification Procedures to align with the Materials Matter Standard in 2024/2025.

C6. Interpretations

Any uncertainty regarding the correct interpretation of a criterion should be resolved by the “Intent and Clarification” content, where possible. During this planning period of the Materials Matter Standard, if you find anything that may need to be amended or clarified, please send your comments and suggestions to standards@textileexchange.org so that they can be taken into consideration when compiling the effective version of the Materials Matter Standard. You may submit feedback to Textile Exchange’s standards system at any time via this [form](#).

Principle 1 – Organizational Management

The *organization*² demonstrates systems are in place that meet applicable criteria for certification, including assigning clear internal responsibilities; defining the *scope* for certification; maintaining up-to-date planning tools; and training all its *workers* according to their specific responsibilities.

1.1 General Requirements

1.1.1



Major

A management representative has been designated as having overall responsibility and authority for achieving the organization’s conformity to all applicable certification requirements.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to avoid any potential confusion by the certification body as to who has the authority to implement any necessary actions within the organization.
- 2) A person with sufficient authority and understanding of the Standard shall be officially designated by the organization.
- 3) The management representative shall be able to effectively communicate with the certification body regarding the organization’s operations, know where to locate relevant documentation, and know from whom to seek support (e.g. other staff) during the audit.



1.1.2



Minor

The organization’s description of its *site(s)* for production, collection, and/or processing, disclosed to its certification body and to Textile Exchange, is current and accurate, and includes the following:

- a. The organization’s name;
- b. The organization’s street address;
- c. The organization’s tax identification number in the country the business is registered to; and
- d. The type of activities within the *scope certificate* performed at each site.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall disclose a complete written description of its operations within the scope certificate, to its certification body and to Textile Exchange, and update this description as necessary to remain current and accurate.
- 2) For *group certification*: The group manager shall be responsible for collecting data from all its *group members*.



1.1.3



Critical

For auditing purposes, the organization allows access to:

- a. All the locations (including farmland, buildings, etc.), and processes/practices included within the scope certificate;
- b. All the animals within the scope certificate;
- c. All the documents and records related to the Standard requirements, which may include permits, contracts, pay slips, etc.; and
- d. All the workers (i.e. employed family members, employed staff, contract/agency workers, and *subcontractors*) involved in activities related to the scope certificate, for interviewing without any

² Words or phrases in *italics* are included in “Appendix B: Terms and Definitions” to explain their meaning. Those words or phrases are in *italics* only in their first usage for reference purposes.

restrictions, and in the absence of management as deemed necessary by the audit team and/or to protect the workers’ privacy.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is for the certification body to have a clear picture of the full operation and be able to determine a reasonable sample to audit, in line with the given risk ratings or other criteria as defined by the relevant certification procedures.
- 2) Even if/when the certification body is sampling (e.g. sites to visit, documents to review, or people to interview), the organization shall permit the certification body access to all locations, animals, documents, records, and workers as requested by the *auditor* to cross-check any needed information.



1.1.4

Major

The organization has a written, up-to-date management plan in place, which includes the following:

- a. The management objectives; and
- b. A description of the resources to be managed.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The management plan shall reflect the current operating circumstances of the organization.
- 2) The management plan shall be reviewed at least annually and updated whenever necessary, including to incorporate any improvements made to the overall management system based on gained experience or audit findings.
- 3) The management plan shall be appropriate to the *scale* and *intensity* of the operation, i.e. the larger and/or more complex the operation, the more detailed the management plan is expected to be.
- 4) The management plan does not need to be a single document. This could be a series of technical documents (i.e. specific plans required under different criteria, given the intended scope) which serve the purpose of guiding the activities within the certified operations.



1.1.5

Recomm

The organization’s written management plan includes the following additional details:

- a. A description of the resources to be managed, including the environmental conditions and limitations, the local socioeconomic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands; and
- b. Strategies for *waste* management, including reduction, reuse, recycling, and/or composting of *organic waste*.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Although this is a leadership criterion, all organizations are encouraged to align their management plan with these additional criteria.



1.1.6

Major

If *contractors* are used, the organization ensures that all relevant requirements related to contracting in the Standard are met. The organization clearly communicates the expectations of the Standard to its contractors.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This is a general requirement with the objective of raising awareness that there are additional requirements, in other sections of the standard, for whenever contracting activities specific to the scope certificate happen.



1.1.7

The organization maintains complete and up-to-date records of relevant documents to demonstrate its conformity with all applicable certification requirements.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Records shall be updated as necessary to maintain conformity with the Standard.
- 2) The methodology for record keeping shall be well established and known by the relevant workers, including how and where records are kept and who is responsible for them.



1.1.8

All records required by the Standard are retained by the organization for a minimum of five (5) years.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) New candidate organizations for certification can show conformance by retaining relevant records from the date of application or certification. There is no need for the certification body to request records prior to the time the organization was certified.



1.1.9

The organization does not conduct “parallel production,” i.e. all animals of the species included in the scope of the certificate meet the requirements of the Standard.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) All animals of the same species as that which is certified and that are kept on the same *farm* are managed according to the Standard. A farm includes adjacent and non-adjacent land parcels that are all under the same management (i.e. the same organization/*farmer*).
- 2) When a farm produces *waterfowl*, rearing a certified flock followed by a non-certified flock would also constitute parallel production.
- 3) For sheep wool only, where an exemption has been granted for a certified organization to purchase mulesed animals for breeding purposes or where mulesed sheep were already in the flock at the time of first certification, their presence on the certified site does not cause a non-conformance under this criterion. However, their wool cannot be considered certified under the Standard and must be separated from that of certified animals.



1.1.10 The organization complies with all applicable laws and regulations.

 Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization must be able to present information that demonstrates compliance with applicable laws and regulations relevant to the activities included in the scope certificate, whenever the certification body deems this necessary for audit evaluation.
- 2) While the auditor conducts a systematic review of how the organization is addressing the relevant standard requirements, if the auditor identifies any noncompliance with laws and regulations, then a corrective action shall be issued.
- 3) Any current noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations by the organization shall be addressed with the relevant agency. The essential element is that the organization shows awareness and willingness to rectify the situation, adopting measures to avoid the same case from occurring in the future.



1.1.11 The organization completes, on a yearly basis, the farm or facility questionnaire, including geospatial data using a system developed by Textile Exchange, which requests self-reported data and information that is used for monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

 Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The applicable questionnaire (farm or facility — depending on the type of site being evaluated) shall be provided by the certification body to the organization, with additional instructions for completing the information.



1.2 Shared Responsibilities

1.2.1 For each procedure, plan, and policy, the organization has assigned a *competent employee* as responsible for its implementation.

 Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Each procedure shall have a responsible person assigned to it who has sufficient and appropriate resources to fulfill the procedure, even for outsourced services.
- 2) Depending on the organization's size, one person could become responsible for multiple functions as long as it is clear whose responsibility is the implementation of a specific procedure.



1.2.2 All procedures, plans and policies are reviewed at least annually by the responsible person and updated as necessary.

 Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The objective is that the organization's procedures are maintained up-to-date for all current activities. Hence, the requirement is that the responsible person reads/reviews the documents at least annually and, if anything needs to be updated, modify the documents accordingly.

- 2) A means of verification by the certification body is to check if the documents contain up-to-date information, based on current conditions verified on site.


1.2.3


Minor

Workers have access to the Standard and are aware of the requirements relevant to their assigned responsibilities.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Interviewed workers demonstrate general knowledge of the Standard criteria relevant to their role and are able to describe what to do during situations when undertaking their specific duties.


1.2.4


Minor

Relevant procedures are available in written and/or visual form to workers in a language they understand.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Relevant procedures (e.g. handbooks, pictograms, or posters), must be made available to workers according to their local context and academic capacities. As applicable, procedures may include *euthanasia*, shearing, castration, *tail docking*, transportation, handling live animals, *stunning* and slaughtering processes for the slaughtered species, among others. The organization shall develop its procedures according to the type of organization and its specific needs for offering training to its workers.


1.2.5


Major

Workers receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the Standard, including the organization's management plan, procedures, and policies.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Training for all workers shall happen at least annually, as a reminder of key procedures and policies. Additional or specific training should be conducted as necessary to ensure that workers are knowledgeable and competent to perform their duties. Specific cases when training would be necessary include new hired workers, new procedures, nonconformity/issue identified, etc.).
- 2) The certification body shall verify conformance through observation of workers' and supervisors' performance on site, the review of training records (e.g. list of attendees, material used for trainings, pictures, etc.), and by interviewing workers and supervisors to verify their level of knowledge on key issues.



1.2.6

The organization maintains detailed records of completed training events.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Training records should include the training dates, names and qualifications of the people providing training, title/description of the training event, and names of attendees.
- 2) According to criterion 1.1.8, records shall be retained for at least five years.



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Principle 2 – Human Rights and Livelihoods

The organization respects human rights and livelihoods across its scope of activities, including labor rights. The organization follows due diligence standards, conducting *risk assessments* to identify critical risks based on its sector, location, and product. By prioritizing management systems to mitigate these risks and respond to threats to human rights, the organization demonstrates progress over time.

Notes about this Principle:

The level of conformity for some criteria in this principle varies depending on the type and size of the organization. The definitions for small, medium, and large producers and facilities are as follows:

| Tier 4 | Small | Medium | Large |
|--|---|--|--|
| Raw material production (sheep wool, mohair, alpaca, down) | A farm that is not structurally dependent on hired workers*. May be operated mostly by the farmer’s family members. | N/A | A farm that is structurally dependent on hired workers*. |
| First processing stage (all materials) | Facility with ≤ 5 hired workers*. | Facility with > 5 and ≤ 25 hired workers*. | Facility with > 25 hired workers*. |

* Hired workers: can be full-time and part-time employees, temporary workers, and seasonal workers (excluding contractors).

2.1 Policies, Management Systems, and Records

2.1.1



The organization has a publicly available, written commitment to respect all human rights, as recognized in international agreements and guidelines*, in its own operations and across its supply chain, including to:

- a. Avoid causing or contributing to adverse impacts to human rights;
- b. Address existing or potential adverse impacts to human rights, based on the organization’s connection to the impact (cause, contribution, or linkage); and
- c. Provide for, or cooperate with others in providing, fair, and just remedy in the case of adverse impacts to human rights (whichever applies, based on cause, contribution, or linkage).

***Specifically, the OECD Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct and the OECD Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains and Garment and Footwear Sector, which are rooted in the UN Guiding Principles (UNGP) on Business and Human Rights.**

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about the organization’s commitment to protect human rights within the organization and its supply chain.
- 2) Small producer: A commitment is in place, though may not yet be publicly available.
- 3) Large producer: A written commitment is in place and publicly available.
- 4) Facility (any size): A written commitment is in place and publicly available.
- 5) Available guidance will include the list of all applicable international agreements and guidelines that apply — either list full publications or individual declarations.



2.1.2

Minor

The organization has clear, written policies and codes of conduct, accessible to relevant stakeholders, to meet its commitment to respect internationally recognized human rights which outline the objectives, strategies, actions and intended outcomes related to each of the following topics, including relevant content from the corresponding section of the Standard:

- a. Stakeholder engagement;
- b. Grievance mechanism;
- c. Remuneration;
- d. Working hours;
- e. *Child labor*;
- f. *Forced labor*;
- g. *Freedom of association and collective bargaining*;
- h. Discrimination;
- i. Harassment and abuse;
- j. Health and safety;
- k. Workers' housing; and
- l. *Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' rights*.

Note: Per 1.2.2, the policies and codes of conduct are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary. Per 1.2.4, all policies are easily accessible to all workers.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about having policies explaining how the organization is going to meet its commitments to respect human rights.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: All priority policies are in place and fully implemented.
- 4) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 5) Medium and large facility: All priority policies are in place and fully implemented.
- 6) The organization is not necessarily expected to have policies on all of the listed topics, but rather should be able to:
 - Demonstrate its understanding of which *rightsholders* in its operations and supply chains are most vulnerable to human rights violations;
 - Identify the most salient human rights issues affecting them; and
 - Develop policies for those priority topics which demonstrate how the organization will appropriately manage the issues and adjust or develop new policies in line with the organization's ongoing due diligence and/or any changes to its saliency assessment over time.
- 7) The organization shall provide its written policies and codes of conduct to relevant stakeholders upon request if they are not publicly available/accessible.

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2.1.3

Major

The organization has identified, assessed, and documented the human rights risks associated with its operations and supply chains, maintains a list of indicators of those risks, and conducts regular assessment updates as conditions evolve. The risk assessment prioritizes the most salient (adverse) risks, by considering the severity and the likelihood of any actual or potential risks of infringement to any of the internationally recognized human rights; in particular those outlined below and in the following sections of the Standard:

- a. Remuneration;
- b. Working hours;
- c. Child labor;
- d. Forced labor;
- e. Freedom of association and collective bargaining;
- f. Discrimination;

- g. Harassment and abuse;
- h. Health and safety;
- i. Workers' housing; and
- j. Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' rights.

Note: Per the UNGP/OECD, “severity” refers to the scale (how serious), scope (how widespread), and remendability (how easy or possible it is to return rightsholders to their former state — prior to the human rights violation); “likelihood” considers the nature of the business activity, the operating context and business relationships; and takes into account any mitigation measures already in place.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about identifying potential human rights risks within the organization's operations and its supply chains. It is expected this risk assessment informs the prioritization and effective action on the part of the organization, as described further in the following criteria (see Management Systems, Labor Rights and Social Justice themes below).
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is applicable in a simplified way, which is not necessarily formalized but must be evidenced by actions undertaken on the production site.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Producer group member: This criterion can be met at the group level.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is applicable in a simplified way, which is not necessarily formalized but must be evidenced by actions undertaken on the production site.
- 6) Medium and large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.4

Minor

The organization maps and maintains an up-to-date record of its suppliers and service providers/contractors involved in the production of the relevant material, including the following:

- a. For each supplier:
 - i. Name;
 - ii. Address/location
 - iii. Type of supplier;
 - iv. Type of contract;
 - v. Materials received; and
 - vi. Volumes received.
- b. For each service provider/contractor:
 - i. Name;
 - ii. Address/location
 - iii. Type of contractor;
 - iv. Type of contract; and
 - v. Service(s) provided.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about mapping the supply chain.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: The supply chain mapping is in place; it is complete and regularly updated.
- 4) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 5) Medium and large facility: Supply chain mapping is in place; it is complete and regularly updated.
- 6) The expectation is that a risk-based approach will be used if the organization is not able to conduct a full mapping of its supply chain at the time of the audit. The organization shall focus on suppliers and contractors to whom the most salient

(adverse) human rights issues are most likely to occur (e.g. prioritizing the mapping of all labor providers over suppliers of machinery).



2.1.5



Minor

The organization engages with its stakeholders in accordance with the following:

- a. The organization has a written, publicly available commitment to actively engage with its identified stakeholders to meet their right to meaningful and effective participation in decisions which may affect them; and
- b. The organization maintains a record of the stakeholders who may be impacted by the organization’s activities (i.e. a stakeholders’ map).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about the organization’s engagement with stakeholders (some of which could be rightsholders).
- 2) Small producer: In situations where vulnerable groups have been identified based on the organization’s risk assessment and their engagement is necessary to address salient human rights risk, this criterion is implemented; otherwise, it is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: The stakeholder engagement plan is in place, active stakeholder engagement is taking place, and the plan is regularly updated.
- 4) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 5) Small facility: In situations where vulnerable groups have been identified based on the organization’s risk assessment and their engagement is necessary to address salient human rights risk, this criterion is implemented; otherwise, it is a recommendation.
- 6) Medium and large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) For full conformity, there is a publicly available commitment, record of stakeholders (i.e. stakeholders’ map), and the stakeholder engagement plan.
- 8) Stakeholder mapping should consider the following, at a minimum:
 - Workers;
 - Local communities;
 - Indigenous peoples;
 - Local businesses; and
 - Organizations that support or advocate for rightsholders (e.g. civil society organizations, independent unions, etc.).



2.1.6



Recomm

The organization has assessed the risk of impacts of its current activities on its identified stakeholders (i.e. a risk assessment). The organization also has and implements a stakeholder engagement plan based on the results of the organization’s stakeholder mapping and risk analysis (criterion 2.1.3) and engages with stakeholders in accordance with that plan. The organization’s engagement plan includes:

- a. The expected periodicity of engagement with each rightsholder/stakeholder (for example, once per year or once every month);
- b. A schedule for the implementation of specific consultation activities over a twelve (12) month period; and
- c. A written procedure for recording feedback received and actions taken.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The means of verification for conformance with this criterion are the existence of a publicly available commitment; the record of stakeholders (i.e. stakeholders’ map); and the stakeholder engagement plan.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.

- 3) Large producer: The stakeholder engagement plan is in place, active stakeholder engagement is taking place, and the plan is regularly updated.
- 4) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Medium and large facility: Criterion fully applies.



2.1.7

Major

The organization has a grievance mechanism which:

- a. Aligns with the UN Guiding Principles’ Effectiveness Criteria for Non-Judicial Grievance Mechanisms (Legitimate, Accessible, Predicable, Equitable, Transparent, Rights compatible, a source of continuous learning and based on engagement and dialogue);
- b. Relies on rightsholders’ engagement for its design, implementation and monitoring (per criterion 2.1.5);
- c. Includes procedures for receiving and addressing complaints from workers and other stakeholders, as well as internal and external remediation guidelines; and
- d. Shares the procedures and guidelines with workers upon hiring, and with all stakeholders when those procedures and guidelines are developed and if/when changes are made.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.



2.1.8

Major

The organization maintains a record of grievances, remediation actions and timelines (e.g. date the grievance is received and date it was effectively resolved).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.



2.1.9


Major

The organization protects the confidentiality and safety of affected parties, including by safeguarding their anonymity (when requested and lawful), managing anonymous grievances like any other matter.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.


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2.1.10


Major

The organization investigates reports submitted through their grievance mechanism and takes necessary corrective actions.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.


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2.1.11


Major

The organization prohibits all forms of retaliation against those who submit grievances in good faith.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.


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2.1.12

Major

The organization has a recruitment management system in place, which:

- a. Is aligned with all local and regional regulations;
- b. Applies to all workers, including those recruited via third-party hiring agencies;
- c. Includes verification of the age of workers; and
- d. Ensures that no fees are collected from workers as a condition for their recruitment, per the *Employer Pays Principle*.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how workers are recruited.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation, noting that small-scale producers are nevertheless expected to comply with all applicable laws and will be audited accordingly.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.13

Major

The organization ensures that workers hired for year-round tasks are hired directly, rather than contracted or secured through a third-party hiring agency. The organization ensures that contracted workers used for tasks that cannot be considered year-round are provided and expected to have the same labor rights as the organization’s directly hired workers.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Small producer: this criterion is a recommendation, noting that small-scale producers are nevertheless expected to comply with all applicable laws and will be audited accordingly.
- 2) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Some exceptions may apply if workers are hired through an established national employment program, such as a work visa program.



2.1.14

Major

The organization ensures that wages are paid in a timely manner and are not withheld under any circumstance. It also ensures that all wages and benefits are paid directly by the organization to the workers themselves, with the expectation that all workers are afforded all legally applicable social protections.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation, noting that small-scale producers are nevertheless expected to comply with all applicable laws and will be audited accordingly.
- 2) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.15

 Major

The organization maintains documentation on how contracted third-party hiring agencies recruit and pay the workers, where applicable. It maintains agreements with third-party hiring agencies, where applicable, which include:

- a. The right of the organization to perform annual inspections to verify conformance with labor rights criteria of the Standard; and
- b. For the organization, certification body, and Textile Exchange to have access to the workers' documentation and interview them when requested.

The recruitment management system includes procedures for the organization's annual inspection of its third-party hiring agencies, where applicable, to verify their conformity with the criteria of the Human Rights and Livelihoods principle of the Standard, and with the Labor Rights criteria (i.e. theme 2.2) in particular.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for organizations which contract with a third-party hiring agency.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation, noting that small-scale producers are nevertheless expected to comply with all applicable laws and will be audited accordingly.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.1.16

 Major

The organization maintains, for all its workers, written employment records, including the following:

- a. Maintaining confidentiality, the records are accessible to the workers by their request, and a copy of their contracts should systematically be provided in a format and language that they can easily understand;
- b. Each worker's record includes written contracts and supporting documentation for hiring; and
- c. The organization maintains additional records for young workers under the age of eighteen (18) years, detailing any potential risks or *hazards* associated with their work, and how these are being monitored to protect them.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about specific employment records that the organization must retain.
- 2) Small producer: If the organization employs any workers, the criterion is fully implemented; otherwise, it is not applicable.
- 3) Large producer: The organization has a full employment record system in place.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.1.17

 Major

All contracts are signed by both the worker and employer (i.e. the organization or contractor), prior to employment. And the employment contracts/agreements include at least:

- a. The date of birth of the worker, complete with age verification;
- b. Job description;
- c. Working hours and pay rate;
- d. Location of workplace, employer name and address;
- e. Contract length (start and end dates), complete with contract renewal provisions, conditions for early termination by the worker (with/without reasonable notice) and by the employer;
- f. Daily break time;

- g. Wage rates including overtime hours, payment methods and frequency, deductions from salary; and
- h. Benefits and leave provided, and repatriation terms (for overseas workers, this includes who arranges travel/pays).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about specific employment records that the organization must retain.
- 2) Small producer: If the organization employs any workers, the criterion is fully implemented; otherwise, it is not applicable.
- 3) Large producer: The organization has a full employment record system in place.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.18



Contractors keep similar records as detailed in 2.1.16 and 2.1.17 above, which are made accessible to the organization and auditors upon request. The organization keeps a record of all policies and procedures which have been passed on to contractors.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about specific employment records that the organization must retain.
- 2) Small producer: If the organization employs any workers, the criterion is fully implemented; otherwise, it is not applicable.
- 3) Large producer: The organization has a full employment record system in place.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.19



Following applicable national and regional regulations, the organization’s remuneration management system tracks the following for each worker:

- a. Daily start and end times;
- b. Total payment amount for regular working hours, or 48 hours per week³, whichever is lower;
- c. Total overtime payment for work performed over regular working hours;
- d. Pay rates for different units of pay (e.g. per unit of time, task or piece), quota amounts, overtime rates, disincentive pay, efficiency pay, etc.;
- e. Payment structures (including mixed job scenarios, piece work, quota-based, casual/as-needed work, etc.);
- f. Number of days of paid leave and unpaid leave earned and used, including for holiday, vacation, sick time, maternity leave, etc.;
- g. Daily break times, including for meals or before overtime begins; and
- h. Work status (e.g. formal, informal/casual/without social security, temporary visa, contractor labor, etc.).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about payment (i.e. remuneration) for workers.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.

³ In the context of the Standard, a week refers to seven (7) days.

4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.20



The organization has a written procedure, accessible to all workers, which clearly explains its remuneration management system, such that:

- a. Workers understand how their remuneration is determined (based on applicable national and regional regulations), including:
 - i. The unit basis of pay;
 - ii. The guaranteed cash earnings that they should expect; and
 - iii. Any performance-based earnings or other bonuses and benefits;
- b. Workers know when to expect their remuneration and how to read their pay slips;
- c. Workers understand that they have a right to review their information and know what to do if they have questions, would like to review their information, and/or believe that their payment is incorrect;
- d. All pay slips are translated in a language that workers fully understand, and/or are explained verbally to workers who are illiterate; and
- e. There can be no illegal deductions of wages. Wages are paid in a timely manner and cannot be withheld under any circumstance.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about ensuring that workers understand their payment/remuneration.
- 2) Small producer: Workers must understand their remuneration and be afforded reasonable opportunity to question remuneration, which auditors shall verify via worker interviews. The other components of this criterion are recommendations.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.21



The organization is actively working towards providing a living wage to all workers by:

- a. Identifying a recognized *local living wage benchmark*, according to forthcoming guidance;
- b. Tracking the living wage gap for all workers, not only the lowest paid workers, acknowledging that these figures can change over time;
- c. Having a written roadmap describing how the organization plans to progress towards achieving a living wage for all its workers, including what might be needed from other stakeholders; and
- d. Implementing its living wage plan and increasing wages to equal a recognized living wage benchmark.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about identifying a local living wage benchmark and setting a plan to meet it.
- 2) Producer (any size): This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Facility (any size): This criterion is a recommendation.
- 4) This criterion requires appointing a sufficiently knowledgeable person, with relevant expertise and/or training, as having responsibility for regularly reviewing living wage plans.



2.2 Labor Rights

2.2.1 The organization protects the health and safety of all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers), in accordance with applicable national and regional regulations.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place, undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.2 The organization implements preventative health and safety measures, training, and procedures to control any workplace hazards identified by its risk assessment which are, as a minimum, aligned with legal requirements or relevant international conventions — whichever affords the workers’ (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers) greater protection.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.3 The organization ensures that at least one worker at each site has completed first-aid training within the last five (5) years.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.4

Major

The organization ensures all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers) are provided clear instructions on safe usage of machinery and maintains clear signage to identify areas or equipment that are potentially hazardous.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.5

Major

First-aid equipment is available to all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers), as well as accessible and commensurate with the potential risks of the organizations' operations.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.6

Major

The organization ensures health checks are carried out for all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers) where the law requires it, and guarantees the results are not used in discriminatory ways.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.7

Major

The organization provides all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers) unrestricted access to clean, safe sanitation facilities (at least toilets and wash basins), and clean, safe drinking water to all workers while on site.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.8

Major

The organization provides appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) free of charge to all workers (i.e. both direct and contracted workers), as well as training on the proper usage of PPE, and bi-annual drills, free of charge.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.9

Major

The organization ensures machinery is appropriately maintained to limit hazards, and dangerous parts are guarded or encased.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.10

Recomm

The organization monitors the effects of extreme weather events (e.g. droughts, heatwaves, etc.) on all workers' health and safety, and introduces appropriate shift modifications to prevent adverse impacts.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 2) Large producer: A monitoring process is in place, active stakeholder engagement is taking place, and the corresponding action plan is regularly updated.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 5) Medium and large facility: A monitoring process is in place, active stakeholder engagement is taking place, and the corresponding action plan is regularly updated.



2.2.11

Major

The organization does not discriminate against any person for any reason, and takes actions to prevent discrimination of any kind in the workplace, through implementation of the following practices:

- a. The organization develops and implements employment procedures which identify and prevent discrimination, including through recruitment, compensation, benefits, work assignments, access to training, advancement, discipline, termination or retirement;
- b. The organization develops and implements a *remediation plan* for any identified cases of discrimination, which protects and prioritizes the welfare of the victim; and
- c. The organization maintains a record of identified issues, the remediation process, and outcomes.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about ensuring that workers are not discriminated against in the workplace.
- 2) Small producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through worker engagement), evidence of continuous improvement on documenting practices across all of the requirements included in this criterion is acceptable.
- 4) Large producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.12



Major

The organization forbids any kind of harassment or abuse, including gender-based-violence for all workers irrespective of their type of contract, and implements the following practices:

- a. The organization abides by all applicable regional and national laws pertaining to harassment or abuse, including gender-based-violence, and provides relevant training to all workers;
- b. Procedures are implemented to identify and prevent forms, and/or threats of verbal, physical, sexual or other harassment and abuse, including gender-based violence;
- c. A remediation plan is implemented for any identified cases, forms, and/or threats of verbal, physical, sexual, or other harassment and abuse, including gender-based violence, which protects and prioritizes the welfare of the victim; and
- d. Records are maintained of identified harassment and abuse cases, the remediation process, and the outcomes.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is designed to ensure that no worker is subjected to any kind of harassment or abuse, including gender-based violence, recognizing certain cross-sections of vulnerable workers are disproportionately targeted.
- 2) Small producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented in situations where vulnerable groups have been identified through the organization’s risk assessment; otherwise, it is a recommendation.
- 3) Medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through worker engagement), evidence of continuous improvement on documenting practices across all of the requirements included in this criterion is acceptable.
- 4) Large producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 6) The level of conformity shall be considered critical if incidences of harassment or abuse are identified and remediation procedures are not implemented.
- 7) Harassment or abuse may be indicated by differences in wages, occupational health and safety protections, contractual dispositions, and/or working hours.



2.2.13

Major

The organization aligns with all applicable local and regional regulations and ensures that its workers are free to exercise their right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, including by becoming members of a workers' association or trade union of their choice, through implementation of the following practices:

- a. The organization proactively engages, in good faith, with independent trade-unions or other worker representative organizations that are present locally and which currently or could potentially support workers, as national law permits;
- b. Workers are not subjected to discrimination or retaliation measures for exercising their right to freedom of association or collective bargaining;
- c. The organization has and implements a remediation plan for any identified cases of restriction of freedom of association or collective bargaining;
- d. Where national law restricts workers' organizations from operating, the organization supports the establishment of alternative means of workers' organization, such as worker-representative committees;
- e. Where there is an established worker-representative committee, its representatives are elected by workers and the organization offers an enabling environment for representatives' training (including the time necessary to carry out their duties);
- f. The organization recognizes and implements applicable sectoral *collective bargaining agreements*;
- g. The organization offers awareness-raising sessions to all workers (irrespective of whether they are affiliated to any worker organization or not) on their freedom of association; and
- h. The organization respects the independence of workers' organizations and is not involved in any way with regard to representing or providing funding which may influence their activities.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about freedom of association and collective bargaining rights for workers.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Small facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through worker engagement); undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 4) Medium facility: This criterion is fully applicable. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through worker engagement), evidence of continuous improvement on documenting practices across all of the requirements included in this criterion is acceptable.
- 5) Large producer/facility: This criterion is fully applicable.
- 6) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if workers are found to be subjected to discrimination or retaliation measures.

**2.2.14**

Major

The organization manages fair working hours for its workers through implementation of the following practices:

- a. The organization records the actual working hours for workers during each day of work, including the start time at the moment that they enter the site and the end time at the moment that they leave the site;
- b. The organization communicates expected working hours to its workers and their representatives in a transparent manner; and
- c. The organization keeps regular working hours to within (whichever is lower):
 - i. Legally established regular working hours;
 - ii. Collective bargaining agreement (CBA) negotiated working hours; or
 - iii. Forty-eight (48) hours a week.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about working hours.
- 2) Producers and facilities (any size): The criterion is fully implemented, except where there are no workers.


2.2.15


The organization ensures that workers receive at least one day of rest in seven. Besides, the organization does not require overtime work, and ensures that voluntary overtime hours (hours beyond the regular working hours) comply with (whichever provides more protection to the workers):

- a. Legal limits,
- b. CBA negotiated limits, or
- c. Do not exceed twelve (12) hours in the week.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about overtime.
- 2) Producers and facilities (any size): The criterion is fully implemented, except where there are no workers.
- 3) Exemptions to the criterion are permissible under exceptional circumstances, which meet the following requirements:
 - Overtime is always voluntary;
 - The overtime is necessary for specific activities that must be completed within a window of up to 6 weeks to prevent adverse impacts to production;
 - The maximum period is 12 weeks per year;
 - Overtime is capped at 24 hours total per week, with workers working a maximum of 21 consecutive days; and
 - Following the overtime period, affected workers are given time off in line with the worked time (e.g. after 21 consecutive days workers should accrue 7 days of rest).
- 4) The producer/facility should be able to demonstrate that the situation is truly an exceptional circumstance and not a regular practice, e.g. through having a production plan which is based on working time within limits, employing enough workers, etc.


2.2.16


Through its remuneration management system, the organization pays at least the applicable minimum wage to all workers for work performed during the defined regular working hours, in accordance with:

- a. The applicable regional or national legal minimum wage;
- b. The CBA negotiated wage; or
- c. The industry standard wage, whichever is higher.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about workers' remuneration.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer and facility with workers.
- 3) Small producer, small and medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. An informal record system is acceptable.
- 4) For all: Conformity with this criterion shall be verified by reviewing workers' contracts, organizational policies, and the organization's remuneration management system.



2.2.17



Through its remuneration management system, the organization pays a premium for any voluntary overtime according to (whichever is higher):

- a. What is legally required;
- b. What has been negotiated through a CBA;
- c. The industry standard; or
- d. The sum of 125% of regular wage.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about workers’ remuneration.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer and facility with workers.
- 3) Small producer, small and medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. An informal record system is acceptable.
- 4) For all: Conformity with this criterion shall be verified by reviewing workers’ contracts, organizational policies, and the organization’s remuneration management system.



2.2.18



The organization’s remuneration management system ensures that:

- a. Payments for all working hours are made according to legal requirements, or at least twice a month, whichever is greater;
- b. Workers are paid on time and in a form which is acceptable to them; and
- c. Workers receive paid annual leave (holiday and vacation), medical leave, and maternity leave.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about workers’ remuneration.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer and facility with workers.
- 3) Small producer, small and medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. An informal record system is acceptable.
- 4) For all: Conformity with this criterion shall be verified by reviewing workers’ contracts, organizational policies, and the organization’s remuneration management system.



2.2.19



The organization’s remuneration management system ensures that, if labor contractors are used, they meet the same requirements for their workers, and provide documentation to the organization on how their workers are hired and paid.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about workers’ remuneration.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer and facility with workers.
- 3) Small producer, small and medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. An informal record system is acceptable.
- 4) For all: Conformity with this criterion shall be verified by reviewing workers’ contracts, organizational policies, and the organization’s remuneration management system.



2.2.20 If the organization offers loans to its workers:


 Minor

- a. The loan system is within legal limits;
- b. The aggregate amount of a worker’s loan and salary advances cannot exceed 50% of one month’s base wage, and the monthly loan payment cannot exceed 10% of the base monthly wage;
- c. Terms and conditions are documented, including the loan request from the worker; and
- d. Any interest rate charged to workers:
 - i. Does not put undue burden on them for repayment and/or bind them to the job; and
 - ii. Does not exceed that set by government-regulated financial institutions, or the prevailing market lending rates in the region.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intent of this criterion is to avoid instances of debt bondage, which is commonly considered a marker of forced labor.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer or facility that offers (or intends to offer) loans to its workers.


2.2.21 The organization prevents and/or remediates child labor in its operations through implementation of the following practices:


 Major

- a. Children under the national or regional minimum legal working age (as applicable) are prohibited from working;
- b. Wherever young people between the minimum legal age and eighteen (18) years of age do work or are present in the workplace, the organization has and implements a plan that ensures that their work does not interfere with their schooling and that they are not exposed to hazardous work; and
- c. Children who are present on the farm/at the facility, but not working (e.g. who may be living on site), are protected from harm (e.g. by restricting access to hazardous operations, being supervised by a dedicated adult, etc.).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about prevention of child labor.
- 2) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.22 The organization has and implements a remediation plan, which considers the best interest of the young person, for:


 Major

- a. Any identified cases of child labor;
 - b. The exposure of young people to hazards; and/or
 - c. The interference with education which the organization has directly or indirectly contributed to.
- Moreover, the organization maintains a record of all incidences, remediation actions, and outcomes related to child labor or exposure of young people to hazardous work.**

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about the remediation of child labor.
- 2) Remediation shall be informed by expert organizations that specialize in child labor remediation or a child labor monitoring system, where possible.

- 3) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Level of conformity shall increase to critical if the worst forms of child labor are identified (per ILO Convention No. 182).
- 6) Level of conformity shall increase to critical if identification of child labor does not result in timely remediation measures (see forthcoming guidance).
- 7) Hazardous work is defined as work which could jeopardize a young person’s health, safety, or emotional development, and includes nighttime or overtime.


2.2.23

The organization ensures that it does not engage in any form of forced labor through implementation of the following practices:

- a. Development and implementation of a remediation plan which protects and prioritizes the welfare of the worker in the event that the organization’s risk assessment finds any risk indicators of forced or bonded labor;
- b. Maintaining a record of any identified issues (including discrimination, harassment/abuse, and forced or bonded labor), as well as the remediation process/outcomes;
- c. Not withholding workers’ belongings or documents such as passports, visas or other personal documents of workers; and
- d. Not withholding wages as a penalty or to force workers to work as a payment against debt to the organization.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about prevention of forced labor.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is implemented, with an understanding that more time may be necessary for remediation.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Small facility: This criterion is implemented, with an understanding that more time may be necessary for remediation.
- 5) Medium and large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 6) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if forced labor is identified without the activation of the organization’s remediation plan.
- 7) The expectation is that the organization does not engage in any of the risk areas identified through its risk assessment.
- 8) In cases where personal documents are kept as a service to workers for security purposes, it is based on a voluntary decision by the workers and secure storage facilities are provided, which enable them to access their own belongings directly and without restriction (note: this does not constitute withholding of documentation which is commonly regarded as an indicator of forced labor, and should not be regarded as such, provided the auditor ascertains unrestricted access on the part of workers).


2.2.24

When the organization provides housing to individual workers, or to workers and their families, the following applies:

- a. Housing meets either of the following, whichever is higher:
 - i. The space, safety, hygiene, and comfort specifications in the accompanying guidance, which follows ILO Recommendation, Workers’ Housing Recommendation, 1961 (No. 115); and ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Agriculture, 2010; or
 - ii. National legal requirements;
- b. The organization provides workers that are housed on site with safe and *well-ventilated* cooking facilities, and with clean, safe drinking water, and sanitation and cleaning facilities 24/7; and
- c. Any children who live on site are in a safe place during the workday and have access to age-appropriate schooling.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is designed to protect all workers against unhealthy living quarters (especially in the absence of relevant legal requirements) and thus is only applicable when workers are housed in accommodation provided, on or off site, by the organization.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.3 Social Justice

2.3.1

Major

The organization addresses Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' (IP/LC) issues through implementation of the following practices:

- a. The organization respects IP/LC's rights and enjoyment of their rights, as defined by local laws and customs, and international conventions and declarations;
- b. The organization does not engage in any actions that might affect the value of IP/LC's resources, limit their access to lands where they live or have the right to use, or infringe on the special connection they enjoy with those lands as necessary for their physical and cultural survival;
- c. The organization has and implements documented procedures and practices which prevent and address risks to IP/LC's rights including, where applicable, engaging in *Free, Prior, and Informed Consent* (FPIC) prior to any land acquisition or development, as well as law assessment, social baseline assessment and/or land tenure and use study as needed;
- d. The organization has and implements a remediation plan for any identified cases of infringement of IP/LC's rights, including those caused by potential environmental harms; and
- e. The organization implements a zero-tolerance approach to retaliating against forest, land and human rights defenders.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about respecting Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' rights.
- 2) Small producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through stakeholder engagement), undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented, though the details may not be fully articulated.
- 5) Per this Standard's requirement that organizations remedy adverse impacts and respect FPIC principles, additional guidance will specify expectations for conducting operations.
- 6) Level of conformity shall increase to critical if identification of IP/LC right violations does not result in timely remediation measures. Further guidance will be available.



2.4 Livelihoods

2.4.1



Recomm

The organization assesses the prices that it pays to raw material suppliers on an annual basis to ensure its payments are at or above established national and regional minimum or living wages, as applicable.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facilities (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 2) Producers (any size): This criterion is recommended.



2.4.2



Recomm

The organization assesses the impacts of its procurement practices and adjusts prices, accordingly, including adjusting purchasing prices for inflation on an annual basis.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facilities (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 2) Producers (any size): This criterion is recommended.



2.4.3



Recomm

The organization engages in fair and two-way negotiations with all suppliers, contractors, and third-party agencies.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facilities (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 2) Producers (any size): This criterion is recommended.



2.4.4



Recomm

The organization engages with its upstream and downstream supply chain to work towards achieving a living wage (or living income, as appropriate).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facilities (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 2) Producers (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 3) Effective implementation may require collaboration with supply chain partners to scale wages, benefits, and investments in decent work.



Principle 3 – Land Use

The organization monitors soil and land health throughout the entire farm for land-based material production, preventing or minimizing damage and taking proactive steps to mitigate any adverse effects. *Biodiversity* and ecosystem priority areas are recognized and managed, fostering harmonious coexistence between humans and wildlife.

3.1 Management Plan

3.1.1



Major

The organization takes action to ensure that soil and land health is maintained, guided by a written soil and land health management plan that is reviewed at least annually.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shows that a written plan exists, and that it considers the management actions on the farm listed in criterion 3.1.2 below.
- 2) For *communal farmers* on shared land, one plan for the shared production area, which all communal members shall adhere to, is sufficient.
- 3) A suggested template will be provided.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



3.1.2



Minor

The organization’s soil and land health management plan is used to guide its actions across farmed and non-farmed areas, which includes the following:

- a. Land tenure;
- b. Forage resources;
- c. Grazing practices;
- d. Soil erosion;
- e. Compaction;
- f. Organic matter;
- g. Soil biodiversity; and
- h. Other areas of risk relevant to the land.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall demonstrate that it refers to its soil and land health management plan when carrying out activities on the farm related to the topics listed in the criteria.
- 2) The soil and land health management plan describes how the activities under each of the elements cited above, b. to g., can contribute to soil and land health; e.g. rather than stating simply “erosion is avoided” under point d., the plan should instead note the areas at highest risk of certain types of erosion and what mitigation takes place — such as “Pastures 1 and 3 are prone to sheet erosion due to more bare ground. These pastures are managed with short intense grazing periods and longer rest periods to encourage vegetation cover establishment and avoid further degradation due to *overgrazing*”.
- 3) The plan describes the relevant activities carried out on the farm for each topic listed in the criteria. For any topics that are not relevant, this may be noted in the plan.
- 4) “Non-farmed areas” include areas of the farm not being utilized for the production of fiber, but which are still under the management control of the organization (owned or rented). This includes areas of non-grazed and/or non-cropped land such as woodlands and riparian areas.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



3.1.3

Major

Workers with responsibility for implementation of the soil and land health management plan are knowledgeable in current best practices for land management, and competent to recognize when they need to call on experts.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion applies to those workers who hold responsibility for the implementation of relevant sections of the soil and land health management plan. The expectation of the knowledge level for best practice is limited to the farm context in which they are working, and the sections of the plan they are charged with delivering.
- 2) This will be assessed through interviewing workers who hold this responsibility.



3.2 Soil Health

3.2.1

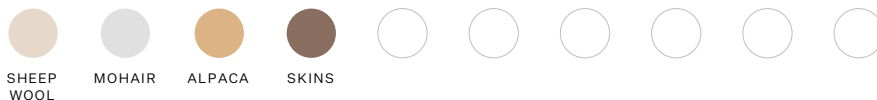
Major

The organization uses land management techniques that prevent or minimize:

- a. Soil compaction;
- b. Loss of soil organic matter;
- c. Soil erosion; and
- d. Degradation of vegetation cover.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that the organization applies land management techniques that do not degrade the soil and/or vegetation.
- 2) The soil and land health management plan shall include descriptions of soil management actions to prevent the degradation of soil and vegetation.
- 3) These techniques may include:
 - Animal *stocking rates* and grazing management; and
 - Erosion prevention and control systems.



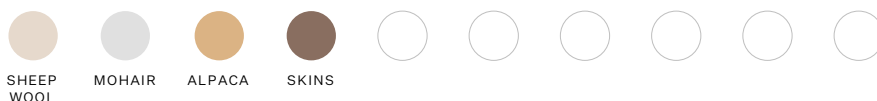
3.2.2

Minor

Where land or soil damage is detected, efforts are made to restore damaged areas in all land or soil under management.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion includes areas in production (e.g. pastures, rangeland and cropping land) as well as non-production areas (e.g. riparian areas, buffer strips, etc.).
- 2) Where areas of degradation are identified, strategic restoration efforts need to be implemented (e.g. soil erosion control, compaction restoration, and/or rehabilitation of vegetation through changes in production activities), to promote better soil health.



3.2.3

Minor

The organization maintains and implements a plan for the monitoring of:

- a. Soil compaction;
- b. Soil erosion;
- c. Soil organic matter;
- d. Vegetation coverage, composition and health;
- e. Efficacy of management techniques used to minimize damage to soil; and
- f. Efficacy of efforts to restore damaged areas.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) While monitoring efforts may vary among certified organizations, as a starting point all are expected to focus at least on basic-level, on-farm monitoring techniques that are available.
- 2) Monitoring systems should be designed to detect changes due to grazing and crop management (as relevant), and to gain objective information on the progress towards sustainable management of the land, including monitoring the effectiveness of restoration or threat mitigation interventions.
- 3) Monitoring site selection, sample size, and frequency will depend largely on the objectives of the organization, the impacts of the associated production system, and the conditions of the farm.
- 4) For communal farmers on shared land, one plan for the shared production area, which all communal members shall adhere to, is sufficient.



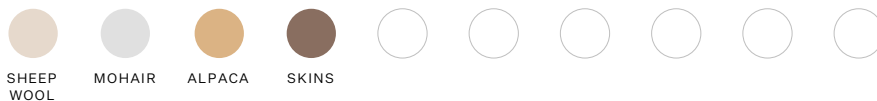
3.2.4

Minor

The number and distribution of monitoring sites conform with the Standard Monitoring Guidance, and ensure that monitoring points are strategically placed, and are representative of the scale of potential impact.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Monitoring guidance is provided in the Standard User Manual. This includes consideration of:
 - Selection of monitoring sites;
 - Number of monitoring points; and
 - Monitoring methodologies.
- 2) The organization shall show maps of monitoring point locations, the intention of the monitoring points, and records of data collection.
- 3) The action of effective monitoring is required but not the outcome of monitoring and demonstration of progress.



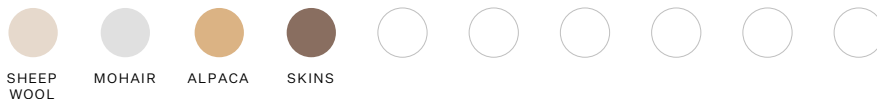
3.2.5

Recomm

Where land is reseeded or planted for fodder crops, conservation or low-till practices are implemented.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion only applies when the organization grows supplementary fodder or other crops to support certified livestock, or where pastures or rangelands are reseeded, noting that any reseeded of rangeland or other native pastures must not result in conversion.



3.2.6

The land is not degraded, due to overgrazing, undergrazing and/or other land management techniques.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall consider the impact of grazing pressure and animal presence/*stocking density* on land degradation. Examples of degradation include increasing bare ground, negative change in species composition, increases in unfavorable pioneer species, etc.
- 2) The soil and land health management plan (ref. criteria 3.1.1 and 3.1.2) should detail the risks and techniques to mitigate this.
- 3) Conformity with this criterion is based on evidence that management practices are in place to avoid degradation.



3.2.7

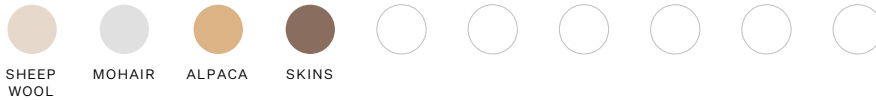
Soil health testing is conducted in line with management planning and objectives.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion recognizes any efforts made in soil health testing.
- 2) At minimum, basic, farm-based monitoring methodologies such as water infiltration tests, visual condition assessments, soil structure, and soil biodiversity tests (e.g. like soil community ratios) are encouraged.



3.2.8

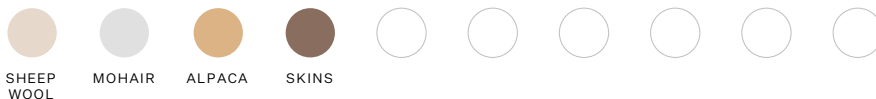
Where hazardous materials are disposed of on farmland, disposal occurs in designated areas and in compliance with the relevant local legal regulations.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Hazardous materials are defined per the categories stipulated by local regulations.
- 2) Hazardous materials are those which may pose risks to human or animal health, water, or soil quality. These may include waste materials from:
 - Animal health products (e.g. medicines, sharps, etc.);
 - Chemicals (e.g. fertilizers, *pesticides*, cleaning agents, antifreeze, etc.);
 - Certain building materials (e.g. asbestos, contaminated concrete, etc.);
 - Batteries;
 - Equipment containing refrigerants (e.g. freezers, air conditioners, etc.);
 - Lubricating oils and filters;
 - Paints or coatings;
 - Machinery tires;
 - Pressurized containers; and/or
 - Devices containing mercury (e.g. thermometers, fluorescent bulbs, thermostats, electrical switches, etc.).



3.3 Soil Nutrients

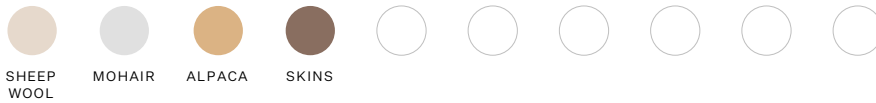
3.3.1

Minor

The organization has a written nutrient management plan in place, based on the principles of efficiency and reduction of use of synthetic fertilizers, which calculates likely crop requirements by considering the available nutrients in soil, organic manures, composts, and crop residues.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The nutrient management plan should enable the organization to strategically plan its nutrients application, including synthetic and non-synthetic nutrients (e.g. manure or compost), in terms of type of nutrients needed, timing and methodology of application, and specific crop requirements.
- 2) The level of management and details included in the plan may vary based on the scale of the farm, and the planned application.
- 3) For communal farmers on shared land where at least one farmer in the group is applying synthetic or non-synthetic nutrients, one plan for the shared production area, which all communal members shall adhere to, is sufficient.



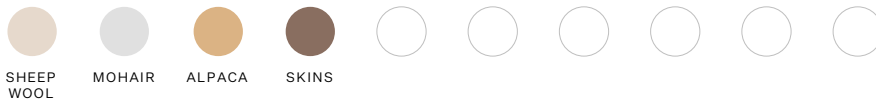
3.3.2

Minor

All nutrient applications are appropriate, specific to the crop needs, avoiding excess or waste.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion requires that nutrients be used efficiently through implementation of the nutrient management plan.
- 2) Appropriate applications shall identify the crops to be treated, their needs, and the application methodologies to ensure an efficient use, and therefore reduce any associated risks to the environment.



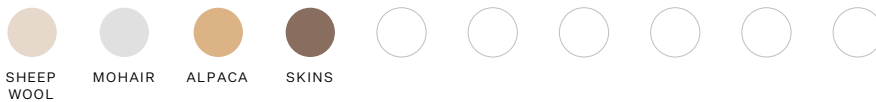
3.3.3

Minor

Nutrient application equipment is kept in good working order, cleaned after use, and regularly calibrated.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to avoid risks posed to human and environmental safety through proper maintenance of nutrient application equipment.



3.3.4

Recomm

The organization uses compost or other organic fertilizers produced on the property itself or originating from wastes and byproducts available in the region.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to encourage the use of compost and other organic fertilizers that are produced on the farm or in the surrounding region, for nutrient management, to reduce the need for external and synthetic fertilizer applications, which helps reducing greenhouse gas emissions.



3.3.5 All nutrient application types and amounts are recorded and applied in accordance with the nutrient management plan.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The nutrient management plan needs to have a record-keeping system attached that records the types and volumes of fertilizers applied over each cropping cycle, specifying the area (i.e. hectares) of application. This is aimed to support management planning, but also to exist as proof of application rates over time and monitor trends of such applications over time.

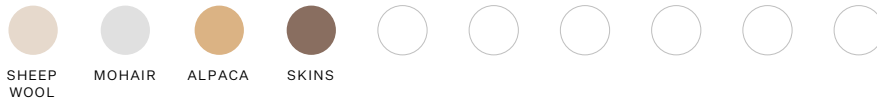


3.3.8 Fertilizers and manures are only applied to the intended crop area, with a *buffer zone* between the application area and water bodies, riparian zones, and natural ecosystems.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is aimed at ensuring that fertilizers and manures are applied as efficiently and responsibly as possible, and in a way that avoids or reduces associated risks to the environment.
- 2) The standard does not establish a specific width or area for buffer zones. The organization shall determine an appropriate zone, which meets the objective of the criterion, based on the nutrients being applied and the type of application (e.g. surface spreading versus manure injection).



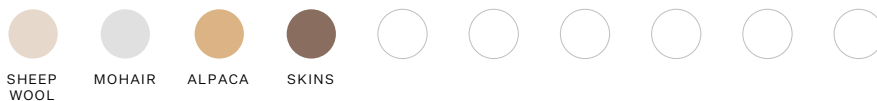
3.4 Pest Management

3.4.1 The organization has a written *integrated pest management (IPM)* plan that is implemented for each crop and year.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for farms that actively manage *pest burdens* through pesticide applications.
- 2) For communal farmers on shared land where pesticide applications occur, one IPM plan for the shared production area is sufficient. The group manager shall ensure that all communal members have the tools to implement this collective management plan.



3.4.2 The IPM plan is based on a systems approach and the principles of prevention, observation, monitoring, and intervention. The plan includes the recommended *thresholds* or triggers for the use of pesticides, where these are available.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The IPM plan describes the ecological justification for pesticides usage, rather than a list of applications at set growth states or times of year.



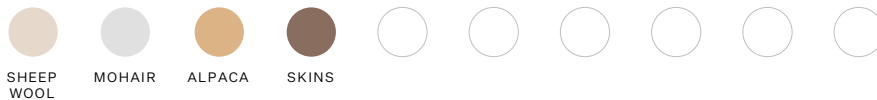
3.4.3

The organization has a monitoring program for crop and/or pasture, to establish when the thresholds or triggers for pesticide use, as identified in the IPM Plan, are reached.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall have a monitoring program that operates at times of risk with monitoring undertaken at a frequency to determine when thresholds for pesticide use are met, and before economic crop damage occurs.



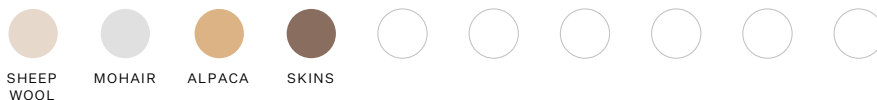
3.4.4

In accordance with the IPM plan, biological, physical, and cultural control methods are used as the first response, unless it can be demonstrated that they are ineffective.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall be able to demonstrate that non-pesticide usage is prioritized, and that biological, physical and/or cultural methods (e.g. intercropping systems, physical pest removal, etc.) have been shown to be ineffective before any pesticides are used for that crop and pest. The organization shall retain detailed records of non-pesticide methods that have been attempted and discarded due to ineffectiveness.



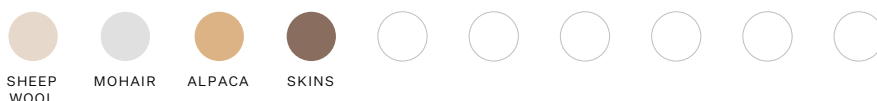
3.4.5

Pesticides applied are appropriate and specific to control the pest burden being addressed. There is no prophylactic use of pesticides.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Appropriate pesticides are those that target the specific pest, disease, fungus or weed, and that are applied at the correct dosage/frequency and (where appropriate) in mixtures as defined by the label and manner.
- 2) Prophylactic use of pesticides is when pesticides are used without any reference to monitoring or thresholds, but rather application at a set growth stage. Another example of prophylactic use is when one type of pesticide is justified, and another type is mixed into the tank and applied as an "insurance" against future problems. Research has shown that prophylactic use does not increase crop productivity, and generally results in larger volumes of pesticides being used.



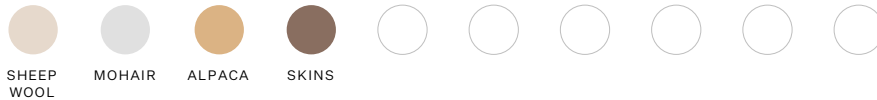
3.4.6

Minor

The organization applies pesticides responsibly, including in accordance with the directions on the manufacturer’s label, in appropriate weather conditions, and using appropriate and well-maintained equipment.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Directions on the label that shall be followed include dilution and application rates, acceptable mixes of various products, and specific crops for which the product is licensed for use.
- 2) Appropriate weather conditions are those that facilitate the accurate application of pesticides. Conditions to be avoided are windy weather (leading to a risk of spray drift); wet weather, which if it occurs soon after application can cause the leaching of chemicals to watercourses; or hot weather, which can lead to leaf scorching.
- 3) Appropriate and well-maintained equipment delivers an even application of the product at the correct rate.



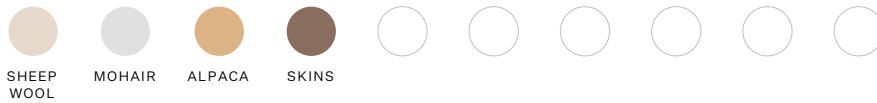
3.4.7

Minor

Pesticides are only applied to the intended crop area, with a buffer zone between the application area and water bodies, riparian zones, and natural ecosystems.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is aimed at ensuring that pesticides are applied as efficiently and responsibly as possible, and in a way that avoids or reduces associated risks to the environment.
- 2) The Standard does not establish a specific width or area for buffer zones. The organization shall determine an appropriate zone which meets the objective of the criterion, based on the nutrients being applied and the type of application (e.g. tractor-mounted sprayers versus handheld sprayers).



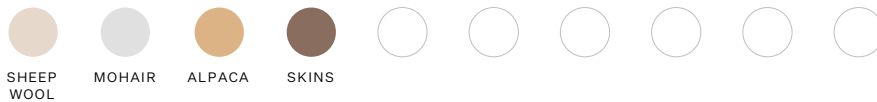
3.4.8

Minor

Damage to beneficial organisms is avoided.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall consider the potential impacts on beneficial organisms, such as soil microfauna and pollinators, when selecting a pesticide; choosing those which pose the least risk to these organisms.



3.4.9

Minor

Risks to human and animal health from pesticide application are minimized.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall consider the possible impacts on animal and human welfare, when making decisions regarding pesticide application.
- 2) Human welfare includes that of the person(s) conducting the application, other farm workers, and nearby communities.
- 3) Animals can also be negatively impacted by pesticide application, e.g. when spray drifts onto grazing land, or animals allowed to graze on recently sprayed cropping areas.
- 4) Per criterion 3.4.6, application is in line with label recommendations and applied responsibly.



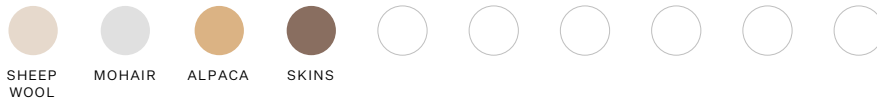
3.4.10

Chemicals are stored, handled, and applied in accordance with legal and best practice guidance, including user restrictions (i.e. age, pregnancy).

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The listed good practices shall be implemented, as applicable:
 - Chemicals are handled, stored and used in a responsible manner, as prescribed by any relevant health and safety laws and the latest related regulations;
 - The storage area is located above the 50-year flood line;
 - Only authorized and trained workers have access to the keys of the storage area;
 - The person responsible for managing the pesticide storage must be trained in pesticide handling and understand the implications of incorrect handling;
 - PPE is used, in alignment with the risk level and method of application of the product used;
 - No feedstuffs are stored in the same area used to chemical storage;
 - Large containers are stored either directly on the cement floor, on wooden pallets covered with thick plastic, or on plastic pallets;
 - Products in solid, powder or granular form are stored above liquid formulations (to reduce potential damage from accidental leakage); and
 - All products are stored in original containers with the manufacturers' labels intact.



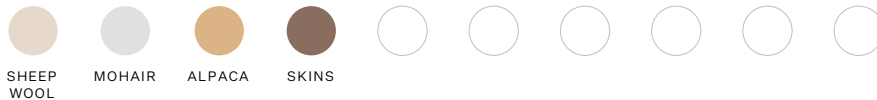
3.4.11

Chemical containers are not reused outside of their original purpose.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that no secondary poisoning or contamination results from the reuse of these containers, which is in line with numerous health and safety considerations.
- 2) Empty containers should be disposed of in accordance with applicable local regulation. They may or may not be accepted for recycling at local facilities.



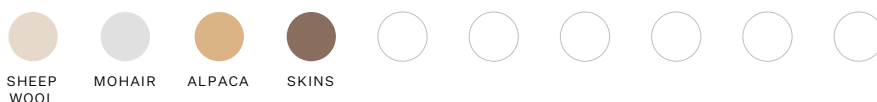
3.4.12

Actions are taken to avoid pesticide resistance.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Pesticide resistance can occur when the same pesticide, or pesticides with similar modes of action, are used repeatedly and/or at incorrect application rates (i.e., dosage/frequency). This allows the insect pest, disease, fungus or weed to develop resistance.
- 2) Following the IPM plan to decide when to spray and ensuring application rates are correct is a good starting point, but if multiple applications to control the same problem are necessary, different products with different modes of action should be considered.



3.4.13 Records are maintained for each application of any pesticides that have been used.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The IPM plan needs to have a record-keeping system attached that records the types and volumes of pesticides applied, specifying the area (i.e. hectares) of application. This is aimed to support management planning, but also to exist as proof of application rates over time and monitor trends of such applications over time.



3.4.14 Grazing areas are managed to reduce the risk of facial eczema, where applicable.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facial eczema can affect all ruminants, but alpacas seem to be particularly susceptible and can be affected at spore count levels which are safe for sheep.
- 2) The organization may reduce risk of facial eczema through the following, as appropriate:
 - Spore counts are conducted regularly to see which pastures are most at risk of causing facial eczema and these areas are avoided at peak risk periods (i.e. when the weather has been warm and wet);
 - Pasture management efforts are aimed at reducing the risk of facial eczema (e.g. harrowing the sward to reduce accumulated dead litter which can increase the risk of a build-up of fungal spores);
 - Animals grazing short pastures are kept at lower stocking rates; and/or
 - Animals' diets are supplemented with zinc to reduce liver damage caused by the fungus.



3.5 Water Management

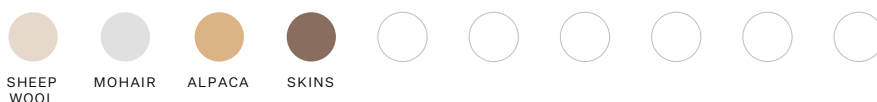
3.5.1 Where irrigation is used, a written water management plan is in place to protect and conserve local water resources, including:

Major

- a. Monitoring of irrigation/abstraction by volume (if measurable); and
- b. Adoption of best available methods, tools, and technologies to improve protection and use efficiency.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for organizations using irrigation.
- 2) A written water management plan is in place that meets the criterion and can be provided to the auditor.
- 3) Measurement of water abstraction may not be possible if measurement systems/tools are not available to the producer due to resource constraints or lack of local extension support.
- 4) For communal farmers on shared land, one plan for the shared production area, which all communal members shall adhere to, is sufficient.



3.5.2

Irrigation water, when used, is managed efficiently, in response to the plants’ needs, limited to essential times of day and stages of plant growth.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for organizations using irrigation.
- 2) Irrigation should be used in response to local conditions for the specific growing season and plant needs.
- 3) Irrigation is most efficient when applied at night or in the early morning, when temperatures and wind speed are generally lower and there is less evaporation from the sun’s heat.



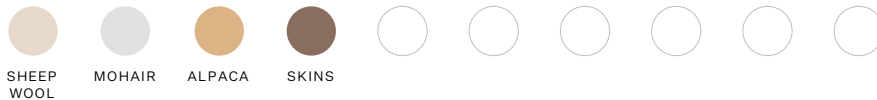
3.5.3

The volume of water used for irrigation is recorded per water source and area of distribution, where measurement is possible.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Measurement of water used for irrigation may not be possible if measurement systems/tools are not available to the producer due to resource constraints or lack of local extension support.



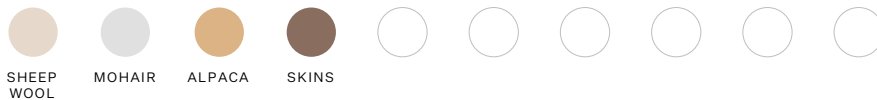
3.5.4

The volume of water abstraction does not exceed licenses or other agreements and does not contribute to long-term depletion of the water source.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Long-term depletion of water occurs where there is long-term abstraction pressure, regardless of climatic conditions.
- 2) While it is important to ensure licenses and agreements are met, on their own these do not ensure that no long-term depletion of water takes place.
- 3) It is recognized that water depletion is more relevant at a landscape level. If there is a national or regional report or statement that a water resource is under pressure, the organization should not continue to extract at the same rate regardless of what its water license allows. Even in the absence of a national or regional report, when the organization recognizes that levels of available water are low (e.g. reduced aquifer levels or low levels of snow from the previous winter, depending on water source), it should use less than its license allows to protect water stocks for future year.



3.5.5

The water pollution risk of runoff from sediment, composts, manure, fertilizers, and any other potentially polluting materials is assessed and managed.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Actions to reduce runoff could include: the use of buffer strips, precision application (e.g. not just application to general crop need, but to specific areas of any field or crop area with greater or lesser need), not making application to frozen or waterlogged soil, and/or not making applications in heavy rain or when this is forecast.



3.5.6 Flood or sprinkler irrigation are not used in place of more efficient alternative methods.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Flood and sprinkler irrigation can be used to cover large areas of land but may result in the use of more water than the crop needs. Alternative systems such as drip irrigation are more efficient.



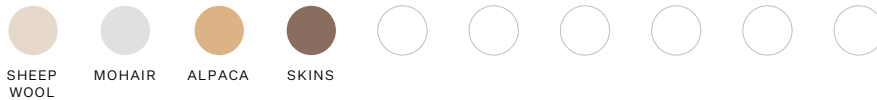
3.6 Biodiversity Management

3.6.1 The organization has a written biodiversity management plan (BMP) that guides management and monitoring of biodiversity on the farm.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion assesses whether a written BMP exists. The details of the plan are described in criteria 3.6.2 and 3.6.3 below.
- 2) For communal farmers on shared land, one plan for the shared production area, which all communal members shall adhere to, is sufficient.



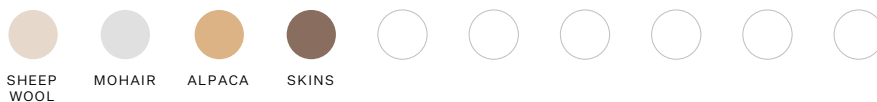
3.6.2 The biodiversity management plan includes management of land in each of the following sensitive areas, where these exist on the farm:

Minor

- a. Protected areas;
- b. Key biodiversity areas;
- c. *Biodiversity hotspots*;
- d. Rare, endangered and endemic species;
- e. Riparian areas and aquatic ecosystems; and
- f. *Wildlife corridors* and migration routes.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The BMP shall describe and spatially represent any of these sensitive areas that are found on the farm.
- 2) This section of the BMP may be supported by the farm profile created through the completion of the Farm Questionnaire and spatial data support through climate and nature impact, which will identify any protected areas, key biodiversity areas, and biodiversity hotspots.



3.6.3

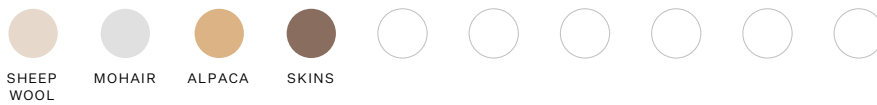
Minor

The biodiversity management plan identifies and addresses each of the following threats to biodiversity:

- a. Grazing pressure;
- b. Crop management;
- c. Soil degradation;
- d. Alien and *invasive species*;
- e. Hunting, fishing, or gathering of protected, threatened, or endemic plant or animal species; and
- f. Human-wildlife conflict.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This section of the BMP describes management interventions to address the threats to biodiversity relevant to farming activities. These considerations overlap with other land management criteria, but this criterion ensures planning for the benefit of biodiversity.



3.6.4

Recomm

The biodiversity management plan includes considerations for rewilding low productivity or unproductive land into habitat for biodiversity enhancement.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Rewilding refers to efforts to restore biodiversity and ecosystem health.
- 2) Areas on the farm that are low value in terms of productivity may deliver more benefits by being rewilded.



3.6.5

Recomm

Cropping practices are used to encourage biodiversity, using native or locally adapted species.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Native or locally adapted species often require less nutrient and/or pesticide inputs to thrive, as they are adapted to local conditions.
- 2) Including native or locally adapted species in their native environments may support local biodiversity.



3.6.6

Recomm

The biodiversity management plan takes an ecological systems approach and follows the principles of agroforestry, agroecology and/or permaculture.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The Convention on Biological Diversity’s definition of the ecological systems approach is: “a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way”.



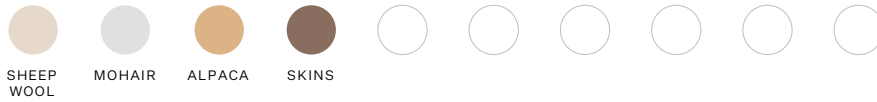
3.6.7

The biodiversity management plan includes actions taken by the organization to improve habitat connectivity across the farm.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to recognize the organization’s effort to reduce habitat fragmentation.
- 2) Potential actions include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Removing areas of land from production to connect other areas of existing habitat;
 - Establishing trees or plants that are maintained as habitat areas;
 - Allowing existing habitat areas to encroach onto farmland, etc.
- 3) These and other options contribute to improved ecosystem functions and improve the movement of wildlife.



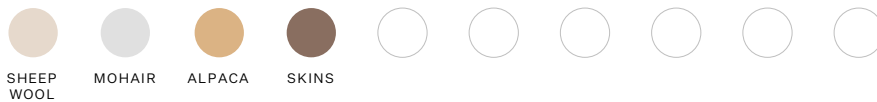
3.6.8

The organization implements non-lethal measures to foster human-wildlife coexistence.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Non-lethal measures are in place if any risks to human-wildlife coexistence are present.
- 2) Non-lethal measures can include the use of:
 - Exclusionary fencing;
 - Livestock guardian animals;
 - Lights and sirens (may be motion activated); and/or
 - Fladry lines (i.e. flags/strips of fabric attached to fences).



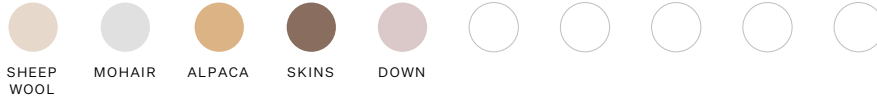
3.6.9

Lethal control of wildlife is only used where non-lethal measures have been demonstrated to be ineffective (i.e. wildlife remains a problem after non-lethal measures have been used), and lethal control is legally permitted.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Rats and mice are not considered “wildlife” under this criterion.
- 2) The organization shall be able to describe the choice of non-lethal methods attempted and how they were applied, demonstrating that all relevant non-lethal methods were exhausted before lethal control or live trapping were considered.
- 3) Lethal control or live trapping shall only be used if legal in the country of operation. It is the organization’s responsibility to check the relevant legislation in the country of operation to ensure that control measures are legally permitted, and that the species involved are not protected by law.
- 4) If used, live traps shall be managed to target the specific problem animal and shall be checked at least twice every 24 hours.
- 5) In situations where invasive species are being controlled under government-mandated programs where lethal control is the first response, the organization is exempt from meeting this criterion 3.6.9 for the invasive species named in the program if the organization can demonstrate it is following the program.



3.6.10

Lethal control targets the specific animal(s) that is/are posing a risk to human-wildlife coexistence.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to reduce the chances of non-selective persecution of non-conflict species, and to reduce the negative effects of such an action on biodiversity.
- 2) If one individual animal is causing a problem that cannot be controlled by non-lethal means, it is not acceptable for all members of that species to be targeted for lethal control. The organization shall implement monitoring to identify the animal(s) that is/are presenting a risk to livestock or crops. The only exception to this is when the species in question is invasive and being controlled under a national or regional plan.



3.6.11

Lethal control is not used for any protected or threatened endemic species.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Endemic species considered include IUCN red list species that are listed as near threatened, vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered.



3.6.12

The organization ensures that lethal control of any animal posing a risk to human-wildlife coexistence results in instantaneous unconsciousness and death.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure the humane treatment of the animal prior to death, and to reduce pain and suffering. The only exception to this criterion is when all the requirements of criterion 3.6.14 below are met.
- 2) Acceptable methods include the use of a firearm by a skilled expert shooter.



3.6.13

The organization does not use leg hold traps or snares.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to reduce pain and suffering, and the mutilation of non-select species that may need release from such traps.
- 2) Regardless of country legislation, this method of trapping, including “soft hold” traps, is prohibited.

**3.6.14**

Major

A baiting program using poison for any species other than rats and mice is only used if all the following criteria are met:

- a. The target species is classified as invasive;
- b. If the target species is a *predator*, it presents an active threat to the animals covered under the certificate scope;
- c. The organization has a written wildlife management plan that details the issue, the proposed control, and who does what, where and when;
- d. The wildlife management plan has an integrated approach that includes other species that could increase if the target wildlife population is reduced;
- e. Alternative compliant methods of control (i.e. shooting individual problem animals, use of CO₂ traps, etc.) are considered by the plan, with justification as to why they are unsuitable for the farm situation;
- f. At least two non-lethal control methods have been attempted (e.g. wildlife proof fencing, light or sound deterrents, livestock animals, etc.);
- g. The decision to use poison took into consideration the landscape or regional level impacts, and involved expert input from external bodies;
- h. The choice of poison took into consideration environmental impact, animal welfare, and legal restrictions;
- i. All bait (including that which is unused or uneaten), is utilized and disposed of according to product label requirements;
- j. The poison bait is distributed so as to avoid non-target wildlife, whether this is by primary or secondary poisoning; and
- k. Monitoring takes place before and after poison bait is used, to firstly determine where invasive wildlife is active, and secondly to determine the success of the baiting program.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only permitted if all the associated conditions (those applicable to the country and specific local context), are met and must be part of a wider conservation or regional program informed by experts.
- 2) Rel. 3.6.14.a. This means that the animal in question must be formally recognized as an invasive species and not just something considered a pest by the organization.
- 3) Rel. 3.6.14.a. An “invasive species” is a species that is:
 - Non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration; and
 - Whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health.
- 4) Rel. 3.6.14.a. Non-native species are plants and animals living in areas where they do not naturally exist. “Non-native species” and “invasive species” cannot be used interchangeably.
- 5) Rel. 3.6.14.b. This means that the animal species to be controlled needs to be an active threat to the certified animals, and cannot be persecuted for historical issues, but rather current actions.
- 6) Rel. 3.6.14.c. The organization’s written wildlife management plan needs to align with or form part of the larger conservation or regional management plan, guided by the experts driving the invasive predator management program.
- 7) Rel. 3.6.14.d. An integrated approach takes account of the unintended consequences of the proposed control program. For example, foxes may be causing issues for sheep farmers, but they may also be keeping rabbit numbers in check and thereby supporting the reduction of crop damage done by that species.
- 8) Rel. 3.6.14.e. This sub-criterion calls for a baiting program to only be used where it can be demonstrated that all other compliant methods under the Standard are not effective or suitable for the purpose.
- 9) Rel. 3.6.14.f. This sub-criterion requires that at least two non-lethal controls have been attempted prior to lethal control being considered.
- 10) Rel. 3.6.14.g. These baiting programs cannot be done by individual organizations in isolation. Instead, they should be part of larger landscape-driven management programs and should therefore rely on the experts informing these programs and the considerations made in line with landscape needs.

- 11) Rel. 3.6.14.h. Programs to control invasive species must include the reasoning behind the poisons chosen, including consideration for the environment, animal welfare, and any legal restrictions. The goal is to avoid as many potential negative knock-on effects as possible and promote the most humane options (e.g. avoiding anti-coagulant products where possible).
- 12) Rel. 3.6.14.i. The bait is not to be used for any reason other than for the purpose of the program and must be managed as per the product label requirements. Unused bait must be collected and disposed of safely.
- 13) Rel. 3.6.14.j. The bait needs to be distributed in such a way as to reduce the risk of poisoning non-target wildlife (primary poisoning). This needs consideration of location, accessibility to the bait by non-target wildlife, and the possibility of scavenging on poisoned carcasses; thereby, resulting in secondary poisoning. No indiscriminate distribution of bait or poisons, such as aerial or spray applications, is permitted.
- 14) Rel. 3.6.14.k. Monitoring is crucial to ensure that the progress of the program is tracked to inform adaptation of interventions, and to assess the necessity of continuing with the program at all. Evidence-based outcomes are essential to monitor impact, both positive and/or negative, to ensure that these programs are effective and implemented responsibly.

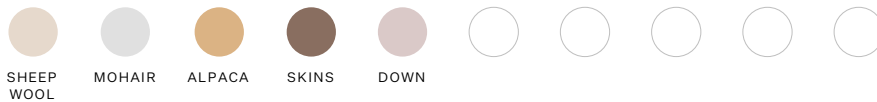


3.6.15 The organization maintains records of each time lethal control methods are used, including date, target species, and reason for use of lethal methods.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion aims to ensure careful consideration is given to lethal control methods and requires justification for why the lethal methods were used. Tracking these interventions over time may help to monitor trends that can further inform management planning.



3.6.16 If lethal control has been necessary, non-lethal control methods used to support human-wildlife coexistence are immediately reviewed to identify improvements and to avoid further conflict.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion ensures that lethal control does not get adopted as an ongoing method of wildlife management in the future, and that constant investigation into alternative non-lethal methods is implemented.

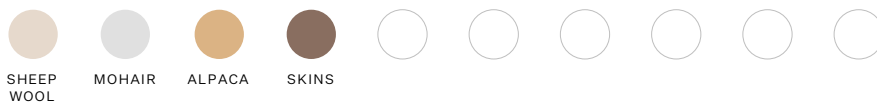


3.6.17 No deforestation or conversion of natural ecosystems to agricultural land occurred from June 1, 2016, onwards.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Deforestation and conversion under the Standard align with the definitions as set out by the Accountability Framework initiative (AFI) and relate to the deforestation and conversion of natural ecosystems and forests also defined under AFI. This cut-off date is applicable to any fiber historically recognized under the original RAF standards as the cut-off dates were set in line with the release of the initial RWS in 2016.



3.6.18

Greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting tools are used to determine annual GHG emissions and sequestrations, and the findings are used in the organization’s annual planning.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion recognizes any efforts made by the organization to record or track its GHG emissions with the intention of adapting management planning to reduce these by promoting the efficient use or the reduction of reliance on these inputs.

SHEEP
WOOL

MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



DOWN



Principle 4 – Animal Welfare

The organization which raises animals adheres to the principles of The Five Domains Model of Animal Welfare throughout the entire lifespan of the animals. The objective is to ensure the animals have adequate nutrition, good health, a favorable environment, appropriate behavior, and a positive mental state. Those responsible for caring for the animals receive proper training and are competent in their roles.

4.1 Health and Welfare Plan

4.1.1



Major

The organization has a written health and welfare plan in place, which includes the following where applicable:

- a. How nutritional requirements are met;
- b. How access to clean and safe drinking water is maintained;
- c. Prevention and monitoring of health issues (e.g. prevalent diseases, vaccination, lameness, injuries, internal and external parasites);
- d. Standard procedures for animal husbandry operations (e.g. castration and euthanasia);
- e. Biosecurity;
- f. Grazing management; and
- g. Loading and transport.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For communal farmer groups, the written management plan for herd and/or flock health and animal welfare may be met at the group level.
- 2) Grazing management is not applicable to waterfowl producers.
- 3) A suggested template for this plan will be provided in the user manual.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



DOWN



4.1.3



Recomm

The organization's health and welfare plan was developed by a veterinarian, and/or reviewed by a veterinarian at least annually.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For fiber animals, there can be challenges in getting access to veterinarians. For this criterion, the veterinarian could support the development and/or review of the organization's health and welfare plan remotely.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



4.1.5



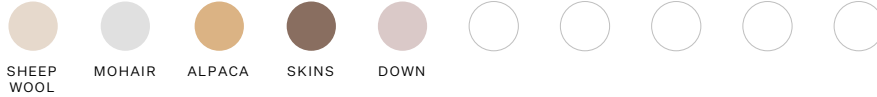
Minor

An emergency plan is in place to maintain animal welfare under exceptional circumstances (e.g. fire, power or water cut off, flood, snowstorm, feeding system breakdown, transport vehicle breakdown, epidemic disease outbreak, etc.), including:

- a. Measures that will be taken to ensure adequate feed and water are available;
- b. A strategy for the provision of *shelter*;
- c. A strategy for assessment and treatment of animals in an epidemic disease outbreak; and
- d. How arrangements will be made, if necessary, to relocate, sell, or humanely euthanize animals to ensure their welfare is not adversely affected.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A written emergency plan exists, addresses the points listed in the criterion and is applicable to the organization (i.e. mitigation of circumstances that are at higher risk of occurrence are given more detail).
- 2) For communal farmer groups, the written emergency plan may be prepared at the group level.
- 3) A suggested template for this plan will be provided in the user manual.



4.1.8

When there is a risk of parasite infestation that cannot be resolved through management, animals are treated preventatively.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Preventative treatment may be used under this criterion, but only when management cannot resolve the risk. It is therefore not acceptable to routinely worm any animals on set dates or at set intervals.
- 2) Preventative treatment could be justified for specific parasites where there are industry forecasts to guide farmers on expected peak levels according to climate (e.g. nematodirus), or at stages in the production cycle (e.g. females in late gestation often suffer a temporary decline in their resilience to internal parasites, and a preventative treatment before they give birth can reduce them shedding parasite eggs that would otherwise infect their offspring).
- 3) *Mulesing* and other breach modifications are not included as “treatments” under this criterion.



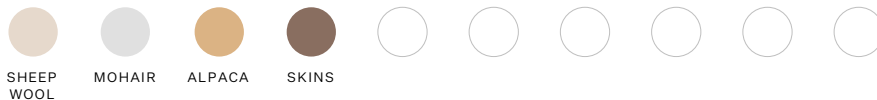
4.1.10

The organization conducts routine welfare inspections and monitors for signs of disease, lameness, injury, or any other signs of ill health. The frequency of inspections is increased when appropriate (e.g. for extreme weather events, birthing times, flystrike, etc.).

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that animals are inspected frequently enough to avoid unnecessary suffering.
- 2) The frequency of inspections shall be appropriate to the scale and type of farming system.
 - When animals are housed or penned off pasture, stock keepers shall conduct daily inspections to inspect their livestock and equipment. Records shall be kept for incidences that need any treatment.
 - When animals are in extensive pasture settings, the frequency of inspection of individual animals and groups may be less often. It is expected that organizations have a daily routine for checking animals, but not that they visit every occupied pasture or range area on the certified site nor that they see every group or individual each day.
- 3) If high levels of injury, morbidity and/or mortality occur on farm, this could be an indication that inspection frequency is insufficient.
- 4) A more detailed guidance note for inspection frequency will be included in the user manual.



4.1.11

Workers are *knowledgeable* and demonstrate competency in handling animals, possess and practice the ability necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals, and conduct husbandry procedures, euthanasia, and on-farm *slaughter* that meet the requirements of the Standard.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Workers are knowledgeable in current best practices for animal welfare for the species they work with, as well as recognize when they need to call on veterinarians or other experts.
- 2) Workers who are responsible for conducting any handling, husbandry procedures, euthanasia and on-farm slaughter can describe, when interviewed, techniques that align with the requirements of the Standard.



4.1.12

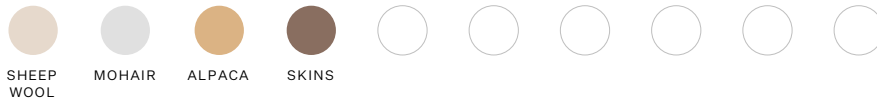
All contractors working with animals had signed the animal fibers contractor declaration before providing their services.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A contractor declaration template (optional to use) is available in the user manual.
- 2) One signed declaration, by a person from the contracting company who will have on-farm responsibilities for the contracting team, is sufficient. There is no need for every member of the contracting team to sign a declaration.
- 3) For contractors providing multiple services to the organization for one year, an annual declaration is sufficient.



4.1.13

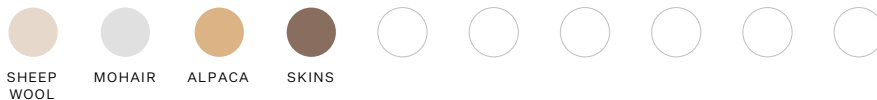
The animals' body condition is routinely monitored, as part of the organization's health and welfare plan.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Routine monitoring requires that at least a sample of animals are assessed at least twice each year. Ideally, farms should get in the habit of performing an assessment every time animals are gathered and handled for other management tasks.



4.1.14

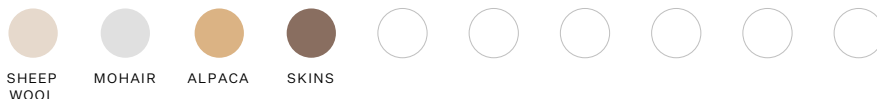
The organization has workers capable of measuring the animals' body condition score (BCS).



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Workers are aware of the BCS system and have been trained on the correct points of the body (i.e. the muscle and fat coverage at these points) on which to base their assessment.
- 2) Body condition scoring guidance and templates for record keeping will be included in the user manual.



4.1.15

If a body condition score measurement identifies evidence of inadequate nutrition, the organization takes appropriate action to return the animal(s) to good health, and these actions are recorded.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Inadequate nutrition is a score of 2.0 or less when using a BCS system of 1.0 to 5.0.



4.1.17

Animals have no more than 20% of their body covered in plaques of dirt, or no more than 30% covered with liquid dirt.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The animal’s head, neck and legs below the knee or hock are excluded for the calculation of the percentage of its “body”.
- 2) Plaques of dirt are built up, three dimensional, areas of mud or dirt which indicate prolonged exposure to dirty or muddy conditions.
- 3) Groups of animals are assessed visually, ideally within a few meters from each individual. It can be difficult to get this close to animals on extensive pastures, but the risk of dirtiness is in any case highest for animals held in pens or housing.
- 4) Further guidance on this criterion will be included in the user manual.



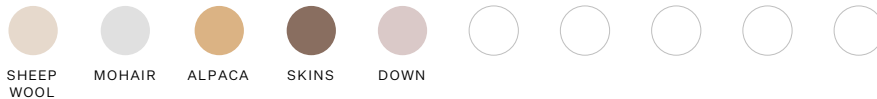
4.1.18

Animals that are found suffering from welfare or health problems are treated promptly.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Treatment is “prompt” when it is delivered as soon as possible after the health problem is discovered. For housed animals, this could be within minutes and certainly within an hour, for animals out on pasture that must be caught before treatment, potentially requiring a return to the farm for equipment and the assistance of other workers, it could be several hours before treatment can be accomplished.



4.1.19

Treatment is not withheld in order to preserve the eligibility of individual animals, herds, or flocks for market.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is most relevant where additional certifications that prohibit the use of some medications are held by the certified organization. For example, some retailer programs for meat prohibit all use of antibiotics.



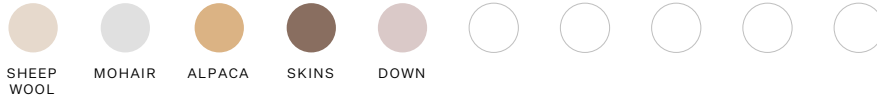
4.1.20

Sick or injured animals that need to be removed from the herd or flock are provided a safe space for their treatment and recovery.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Not all sick or injured animals need to be removed from the herd or flock for care or treatment to be done, and treating animals within the herd or flock can sometimes lead to quicker recovery.
- 2) Animals that are unable to keep up with the rest of the herd or flock and/or find it difficult to access feed and water may need to be placed in hospital pens or similar.
- 3) The organization does not need to have a designated hospital pen or similar available at all times but, if the organization does not have a designated area, it shall be able to show how it could create one if needed.



4.1.21

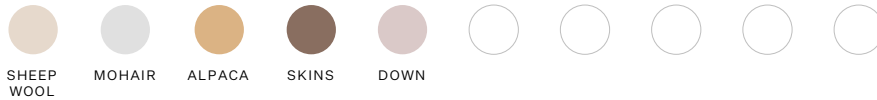
When advice is needed on prevention, treatment and/or strategies to avoid the development of resistant parasites, such advice is sought from a veterinarian or other specialist advisor.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is specific to the challenges of parasites that are or may become resistant to treatment, as is happening with some types of medication in certain regions.



4.1.22

When dipping is conducted, stress to the animals is minimized and the health and safety of workers is safeguarded by following best practice guidelines, including the following:

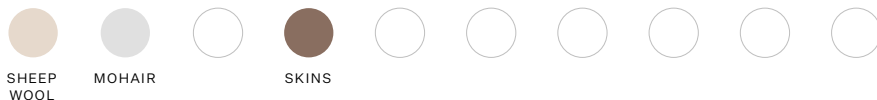


Major

- a. The animals are fully submerged in the solution, with care taken to ensure they do not drown;
- b. Females and unweaned offspring are separated so that the young animals do not get trapped by bigger animals while in the dip;
- c. Animals are not dipped with open cuts or wounds, to minimize any risk of infection;
- d. Animals are not dipped when they are wet, tired, or thirsty;
- e. The dip solution is kept at the required concentration and does not become excessively contaminated with soil or feces as this can lead to post dipping lameness; and
- f. Workers' safety is maintained by ensuring correct personal protective equipment is worn by workers, dipping takes place in an area where there is good ventilation, and splash boards and screens are provided to reduce the splash onto workers from animals entering the dip.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Animals are ideally dipped in the morning, so they have time to dry before nightfall, and avoid any potential complications such as pneumonia.
- 2) Note that dip residues can remain on animals for several weeks following dipping, so protective equipment should be used if handling those animals is required during that time.



4.1.23

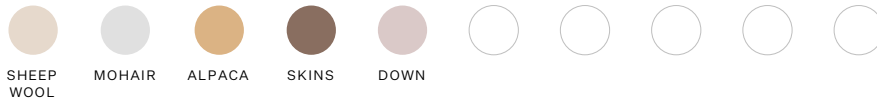
Treatments for the health of the animals are administered according to the label or veterinary advice.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall have guidance available to workers on the use of common health treatments and/or interviewed workers responsible for administering treatment can describe how they assess dosage and administer the products appropriately.



4.1.24 For all treatments, the organization maintains records detailing:

Minor

- a. Substance (product) administered and reason for treatment;
- b. Animal or group identification;
- c. Number of animals treated;
- d. Date of treatment; and
- e. Withdrawal period.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Records provided by the organization demonstrate that this criterion is met.

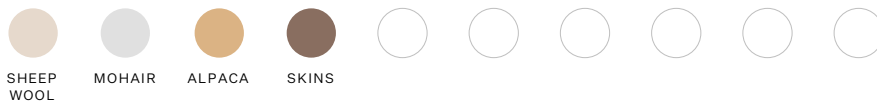


4.1.25 Animals needing treatment but unable to move on their own due to illness or injury, are moved humanely (e.g. by truck, sled, or cart).

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall assess any sick or injured animals:
 - If an animal that has a chance of recovery after treatment cannot rise and walk easily but needs to be moved in order to get treatment, the movement shall be done carefully to avoid any further pain or distress (e.g. by using a truck, sled, or cart, depending on type and size of animal).
 - Animals that do not have a chance of recovery after treatment shall not be moved, but euthanized where they are.



4.1.26 The organization maintains mortality records for animals that die or are euthanized.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Records provided by the organization demonstrate that this criterion is met.
- 2) Records distinguish between animals that die (or are found dead) and those that are euthanized and provide a reason for death (where known).



4.1.27

Unexpected deaths and disease outbreaks are investigated; preventive and remedial actions are taken.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization is aware of prevalent diseases and/or other risks that could lead to disease or death.
- 2) If deaths or disease outbreaks occur outside normal expectations, these are investigated, with external expert advice if necessary, and remedial actions taken to avoid recurrence.
- 3) Records are kept of any remedial actions taken and their result.



4.1.28

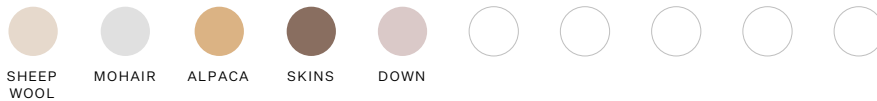
If mortality rates exceed expected levels, actions are taken to resolve the problem.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) There is no set “expected level” of mortality determined by the Standard.
- 2) The organization shall document its expectations for overall mortality and/or mortality for different types or age groups of animals and, if rates exceed these limits, the organization shall demonstrate that it investigates the cause and takes action to bring mortality back to its expected levels.
- 3) The organization shall keep records of mortality rates and the actions taken as a result.



4.1.29

Species of animals kept on the farm which are not included in the certificate scope are also treated humanely. These animals are not continuously under close confinement, and receive nutrition, care, handling, and veterinary attention as necessary for their health, safety, and comfort.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The auditor is not expected to perform a full audit of the welfare for all non-certified species on the site, but if concerns about the management and welfare of other species are observed while auditing the certified species, this criterion is applicable.
- 2) Other species may include working animals, guardian animals, and/or other species of livestock on the certified site.
- 3) Close confinement is defined as situations when an animal does not have freedom of movement to stand up, lie down, move around, and/or get away from other animals.



4.2 Animal Nutrition

4.2.1

When planning for feeding and nutrition, the organization takes into consideration animal numbers, seasonal forage production, brought-in food, and changing climate patterns.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Climate change has resulted in changes to expected growing conditions in some regions. For example, regions where drought was previously an emergency situation are now finding this to be a common occurrence. Planning for feed and nutrition shall take into account evolving climate patterns and their impact on the available feed for animals.



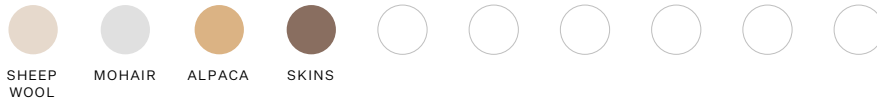
4.2.2

Animals have access to adequate forage-based nutrition, suited to the animals’ age and needs, to maintain health and to prevent prolonged hunger or malnutrition.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Overall nutrition is based on forage which may be grazed and/or offered in harvested forms (e.g. hay, baleage). This does not preclude the use of grains or protein feeds to maintain animal health and welfare.
- 2) All feeds are palatable and together deliver the appropriate dietary needs in terms of protein, energy, minerals, etc.
- 3) Forage content in the daily diet is sufficient to avoid negative outcomes, such as acidosis.



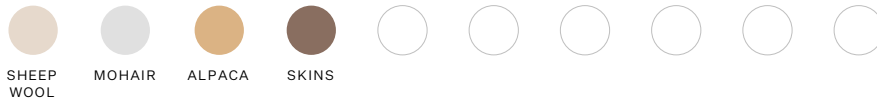
4.2.3

Changes in diet are introduced gradually.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization has a protocol in place so that when animals are transferred from pasture to crop grazing (or vice versa), and/or introduced to supplementary feeding, this is done at a rate that allows them to adapt to the new feed.
- 2) The time needed for adaptation will vary with the severity of the change in diet.



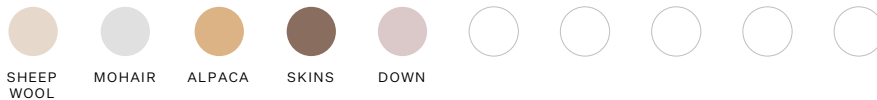
4.2.7

Growth promoters are not used.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Growth promoters are not routinely used in waterfowl or fiber animal production, and are prohibited in many countries; however, this criterion is included in the Standard as some farming systems still use growth promoters for flock or herd-based treatments.
- 2) Antibiotics can function as growth promoters, so any herd- or flock-wide use of such products is justified as addressing a disease rather than simply promoting growth.



4.2.11

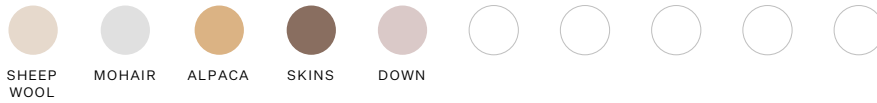
Animals have an adequate supply of clean, safe drinking water every day.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Water (supplied from troughs, drinkers, or natural water sources) is clean and of good quality, and at an easily accessible level at all times.

- 2) Where sheep, goats and alpacas cannot have continuous access to water (e.g. in nomadic herding systems), they are able to drink their fill at least twice per day – in the morning and the evening.
- 3) Waterfowl shall have continuous access to water.



4.2.12

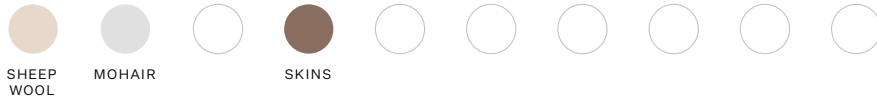


Major

Sheep and/or goats are only deprived of feed and water when reasonable for management practices (such as shearing, transport, or slaughter), and not for longer than twenty-four (24) hours.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The time that sheep or goats are held off feed and water is never more than the minimum required for the task at hand.
- 2) When successive groups of animals are removed from feed and water over a period of time (e.g. for shearing), the organization may need to implement a system to track which animals were taken off feed and water at which time, to ensure that all animals are returned to feed and water by the maximum time permitted by the Standard.



4.2.13

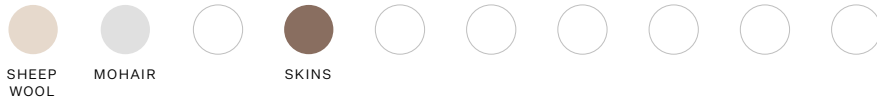


Major

Ewes and/or does in late pregnancy or lactating are not deprived of water for more than twenty (20) hours.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Late pregnancy ewes and does are those that are within the last third of gestation.
- 2) The organization can describe how it tracks the time when each group of late pregnancy or lactating ewes or does are removed from water and returned to water, ensuring the time does not exceed 20 hours.



4.2.15

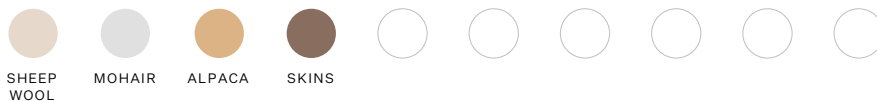


Major

Animals held off feed and water for animal husbandry practices are monitored for signs of distress, and remedial actions are taken immediately if these are seen.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Animals are closely monitored during any deprivation periods, with special attention for those animals in late pregnancy or lactation.
- 2) Remedial action is taken immediately if animals show signs of discomfort or distress from deprivation, for example excessive panting or unsteadiness on their feet in hot conditions or shivering and huddling in cold conditions.
- 3) Monitoring includes post-shearing impacts. A rise in metabolic disease, such as pregnancy toxemia or abortions, could be linked to stress from deprivation periods.
- 4) Remedial actions (depending on conditions and severity of reaction) could include provision of additional shelter, adjusting stocking density, moving animals to areas with more or less ventilation, or providing feed or water. Remedial action could also include management to reduce the length of deprivation periods in the future.



4.2.16 Animals in poor health/condition are not deprived of food or water.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall be able to demonstrate how animals in poor health or poor condition (i.e. BCS of 2.0 or less) are identified and removed from any group that will be undergoing food or water deprivation (e.g. prior to shearing).



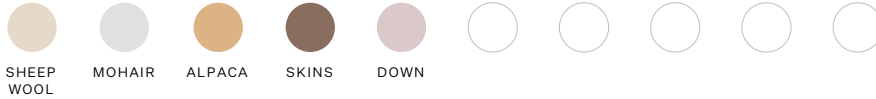
4.2.18 Feed is properly stored to ensure that quality is maintained, and contamination is avoided.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion applies to stored forages (e.g. hay) as well as concentrate or grain-based feeds.
- 2) Proper storage ensures feed remains dry, does not allow easy access for rodents or wild birds, and does not lead to contamination with mold or foreign bodies.



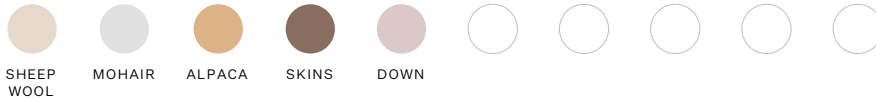
4.2.19 The organization performs regular checks and monitoring to ensure feed and water quality and quantity are maintained, and promptly rectifies any identified supply or storage problems.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The appropriate frequency of checks will depend on the source and availability of feed and water (e.g. natural pasture and water sources where animals always have free access require less oversight than when animals are housed).
- 2) Feed and water are checked whenever animals are inspected.
- 3) Any problems found shall be addressed promptly.



4.3 Living Environment

4.3.1 Housing and handling systems are designed, constructed, and maintained so as to minimize stress and the likelihood of injury to the animals.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The maintenance of housing and handling systems ensures that there are no sharp edges, projections or other features that could cause injury to animals, and that animals do not have access to any electrical points.
- 2) Handling systems are only relevant for fiber animals (i.e. mammals). They shall be designed to accommodate the animals to be handled (e.g. animals tend to move better around curves than at right angled corners).
- 3) This criterion is also applicable to shearing sheds for fiber animals (i.e. mammals).

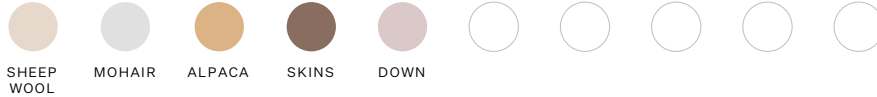


4.3.3 All buildings that are in use on the site are structurally sound.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A building or outdoor pen is considered to be structurally sound if it is capable of adequately and safely confining animals without risk of injury (e.g. from collapse of all or part of the structure).



4.3.4 Infrastructure is inspected regularly and maintained in good condition or repaired, as necessary.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The frequency of inspection and maintenance relates to the frequency of use (e.g. shearing sheds shall be inspected and any necessary maintenance conducted ahead of shearing; however, if the sheds are not used at other times of the year there is no need for monthly inspections).



4.3.5 Animals in housing or outdoor pens are protected to prevent them from suffering from heat and/or cold stress.

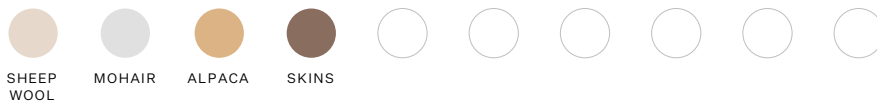
Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Housed or penned animals at the time of audit do not show signs of heat or cold stress. If no animals are housed or penned at this time, interviewed workers can describe the signs of these stresses and the action they would take should they be observed.
- 2) Signs of heat stress include:
 - Panting;
 - Rapid breathing; and
 - Weakness/difficulty standing.

Remedial actions for heat stress include moving the animals to a cool shaded area with good air circulation and offering water.
- 3) Signs of cold stress include:
 - Shallow breathing;
 - Shivering; and
 - Huddling together with other animals.

All fiber animals can be at risk of cold stress post-shearing and extra attention to this risk is needed at this time. Remedial actions for cold stress include moving animals to a sheltered area and feeding them. For individual alpacas, the use of coats or capes can also reduce cold stress.

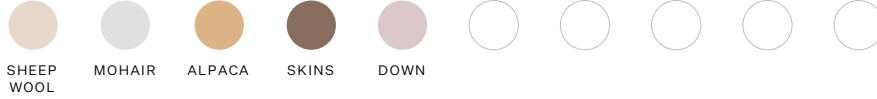


4.3.8 Animals are protected from the threat of predators.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that the organization is aware of local predator threats and takes appropriate action to protect its livestock. This criterion does not set an expectation that no animal will ever be attacked or injured by a predator.
- 2) There are many acceptable options for protecting animals from predators, including fencing, use of night kraals, herders that accompany animals, livestock guardian animals, shelters on the range for waterfowl that are outside, etc.

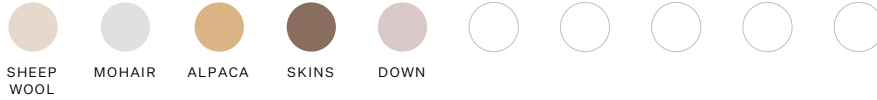


4.3.10 Housing is well ventilated.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable when animals are held in roofed buildings.
- 2) Buildings are effectively ventilated so as to avoid high humidity, condensation, or the build-up of harmful concentration of gases such as ammonia and carbon dioxide.
- 3) Levels of dust and ammonia in housing are not at levels which are noticeably unpleasant to humans. Ammonia and dust are checked at animal height, not at human height.



4.3.11 Where automatic ventilation systems or other mechanical systems of ventilation are required to maintain air quality, an alarm system is in place that alerts workers to failures in these systems.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable where there are automatic or mechanical ventilation systems in place.
- 2) Alarm systems may issue an audible or visual alarm at the building where systems have failed or an automated call or text to a cell phone belonging to someone who can and will take action.



4.3.12 Housing and pens are kept in a sanitary and safe condition.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable to outdoor pens as well as buildings.
- 2) For fiber animals, manure is removed from housing or shelters on a regular basis depending on how often housing is used, and the length of time animals are housed.
- 3) For waterfowl, litter does not need to be removed throughout the lifetime of the flock, but litter management should be carried out in a way which reduces any risk of disease transfer between flocks.
- 4) All applicable equipment and services, including water bowls and troughs, ventilating fans, heating and lighting units, fire extinguishers, and alarm systems are inspected and cleaned regularly.



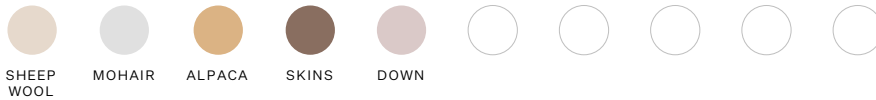
4.3.13 Housing and shelters provide animals with dry, safe, and comfortable footing.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Animals are not seen to slip or fall when being moved in pens or housing.
- 2) For fiber animals: If the floor in holding pens is made of smooth concrete it should be grooved to provide grip and/or covered with bedding or rubber matting.
- 3) For waterfowl: For hatchlings in particular, slippery flooring can lead to leg problems (splay leg), but abrasive flooring can also cause damage to the bottom of the waterfowl's feet.



4.3.14 Animals have access to natural light for the normal period of daylight hours.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Animals shall not be housed in buildings where some or all pens inside the building have no natural light.
- 2) The organization may supplement natural light with artificial light.



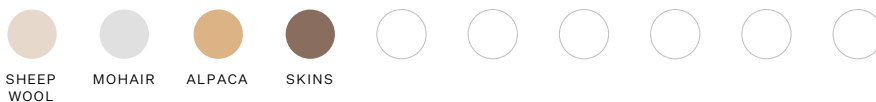
4.3.19 Animals are not held in the long term in close confinement or by tethering. Close confinement or tethering is only used for a minimum time to address a special need, such as the provision of medical care.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Close confinement and tethering are only acceptable when there is no other option to manage the animals.
- 2) If animals are held in close confinement or tethered for longer than the time needed to complete the work, this becomes “long term” confinement.
- 3) The amount of time needed will vary with the task at hand, e.g. an individual animal placed in a foot trimming crate could be released in minutes, whereas a group of animals brought in for drenching might be in pens and races for several hours. An ewe or doe restrained so that lambs can be fostered onto them might be restrained for a couple of days. All of these examples are acceptable.
- 4) Close confinement is when the animal does not have freedom of movement, e.g. animals held in a race, turn crate, or crush; or the use of fostering/grafting crates where the ewe or doe is held in a yoke at the neck and is unable to turn around.
- 5) Tethering similarly restricts the animal from having freedom of movement.



4.3.20 Housed animals have pens that provide sufficient freedom of movement and floor space for them all to lie in a normal resting posture.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that house animals can perform their normal behaviors, considering the pen layout as well as the total space available.
- 2) Exact space per animal is specified in criteria 4.3.21 and 4.3.22 below and is assessed separately there (e.g. could be the organization meets this criterion but does not meet the applicable criterion below).



4.3.21

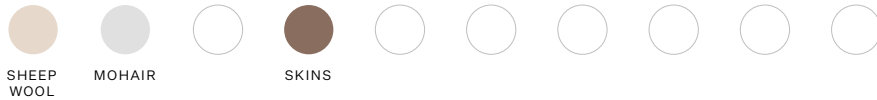
Minor

When housed for more than twenty-four (24) consecutive hours, each sheep/goat has at least the following minimum area per animal:

- a. Ewe/doe - 1.4 m²
- b. Ewe/doe and single lamb/kid - 2.0 m²
- c. Additional lambs/kids up to three (3) months of age - 0.6 m²
- d. Lamb/kids from three (3) to twelve (12) months of age - 0.9 m²
- e. Rams/bucks - 2.0 m²

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is not applicable if animals are never housed for more than 24 consecutive hours.
- 2) The total area shall be at least as specified in the criterion, based on the type of housed animals.
- 3) To determine the space available per animal, the total area of the pen or house is divided by the number of animals that are in housing (or the maximum number the organization states it would place in that area).



4.3.23

Recomm

Goats housed for periods longer than forty-eight (48) consecutive hours have access to raised platforms.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Raised platforms can be made of various materials (e.g. bales of hay or straw, wooden platforms, or similar items). Research has shown such provision reduces aggression in groups of housed goats.
- 2) This criterion is not applicable to does and kids housed for bonding soon after birth, nor when housing is provided in an emergency, even if in either case housing extends beyond 48 hours.



4.3.28

Minor

When housed for more than twenty-four (24) consecutive hours, animals have access to dry, mold-free bedding sufficient to avoid discomfort.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The bedding area shall be large enough such that all animals can lie down if they choose. As a guide, if the minimum housing area required is provided, at least half of this should be bedded.
- 2) The depth of bedding provides comfort such that animals choose to lie in this area. Animals do not show abrasions, lesions, or similar signs that bedding is insufficient, and discomfort has been caused.
- 3) Pens with slatted flooring are not exempt from the need to be bedded. Slatted flooring areas may be covered or partially covered to create the equivalent of a solid surface to hold bedding.



4.3.29 Wood-based bedding products are not made from chemically treated wood.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If wood-based bedding products are used, the organization can show that these are sourced from non-chemically treated wood.



4.3.33 Animals have access to pasture at all times, unless emergency or severe weather conditions would otherwise negatively impact their welfare.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that fiber animals are kept in a herd or flock on pasture, to be able to perform their normal behaviors.
- 2) Keeping animals off pasture is not permitted, aside from exceptional circumstances when they are removed from pasture for animal welfare reasons (e.g. in extreme weather events such as ice storms or similar). Keeping animals in dry lots or feedlots for the purpose of feeding them to be ready for slaughter is prohibited.

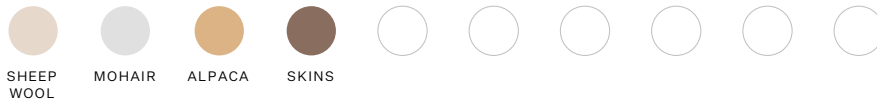


4.3.34 Animals on pasture have access to effective natural or artificial shade, shelter, and/or windbreaks as necessary, to prevent them from suffering from heat or cold stress.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Changing climate patterns must be considered when reviewing whether shade and shelter are sufficient to protect animals on pasture. Climate change has resulted in changes to seasonal weather in some regions. For example, high summer temperatures and drought are becoming the norm in some places.
- 2) Planning for shade, shelter and/or windbreaks needs to take account of these evolving climate patterns and their impact on the conditions for animals.
- 3) The risk of heat or cold stress can be exacerbated or relieved by factors other than air temperature such as wind speed and humidity. It is not necessary for every outdoor area to offer sufficient protection for all possible weather conditions that could cause heat or cold stress, but organizations must, in this case, be able to describe how they allocate animals to different areas with different options for shade, shelter or windbreaks at times of risk.
- 4) In hot conditions, animals are not seen panting, or concentrating themselves in available shade areas with not all animals able to access the shade they seek.
- 5) In cold conditions, animals are not seen crowded together, hunched down or shivering. Cold animals may also show a reluctance to move or feed.



4.3.35 Fencing is appropriate for the species and age/type of animal and is regularly inspected and maintained.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When any type of mesh fencing is used, in particular for horned animals and around pastures used for birthing, it is inspected frequently to ensure animals are not trapped in it.
- 2) Fences are of sufficient height to discourage animals from trying to jump over them.

- 3) Fences around handling areas are of sufficient strength to withstand the side forces applied by animals held within them.
- 4) Electric fences are designed, installed, used, and maintained so that contact with them does not cause more than momentary discomfort to the animal.



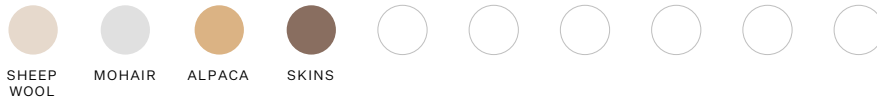
4.3.47 Stocking rates are appropriate, based on the:

Major

- a. Land type;
- b. Pasture quality;
- c. Seasonal conditions, including water availability;
- d. Class of stock;
- e. Available feed; and
- f. Total grazing pressure.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Calculation of stocking rates considers all the factors in the criterion. Total grazing pressure includes the total number of animals on the site, the grazing techniques used (e.g. high-density rotational grazing versus low density set stocking), and an assessment of the needs of local wild herbivores as well as livestock.
- 2) Stocking rates are appropriate if they ensure animals have the desired nutritional intake.
- 3) The organization maintains and can provide a copy of its seasonal stocking rate records. If the organization has a plan to use each year for stocking different areas of its land, they also indicate where actual stocking rates differed from those planned. Stocking rate records may be at the level of each individual pasture, or groups of pastures that are managed together.
- 4) Seasonal stocking rates at least cover stocking rates in the growing season and outside the growing season but may be more detailed depending on the farm system.
- 5) For stocking rate impact on soil health and land degradation, see criteria in the Land Use principle.



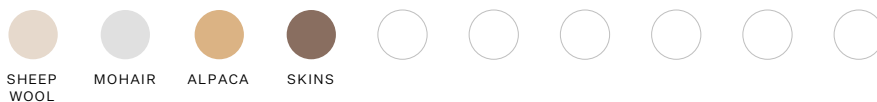
4.4 Husbandry Procedures

4.4.1 Good hygiene practices are followed in relation to facilities, workers, handling, and instruments.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion relates to animal husbandry practices such as castration, tagging for identification, etc.
- 2) Good hygiene here relates to preventing the risk of disease when implementing husbandry procedures that break the skin or otherwise provide an entry point for bacteria.
- 3) Hygienic equipment applies to the organization’s own equipment, as well as that borrowed or brought onto the certified site by contractors or others.



4.4.2

Equipment used for animal husbandry procedures is well-maintained and designed specifically for the purpose.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Equipment is clean, in good condition, and designed for the procedure. For example, tools for inserting ear tags are the right size for the type and design of tag used and can insert the tag with a single closure of the tagging pliers.



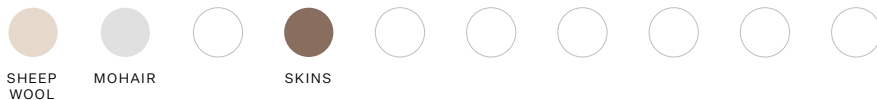
4.4.3

Husbandry procedures are not implemented on lambs or kids until the maternal bond has become established.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Female animals are given time to establish a maternal bond with their offspring in the hours that follow birth.
- 2) Incidences of rejection or abandonment after husbandry procedures should not be seen.
- 3) The bond is primarily dependent on recognition of smell. If offspring are handled and husbandry procedures performed such that their smell is changed before the bond is established, the mother may then reject the offspring.



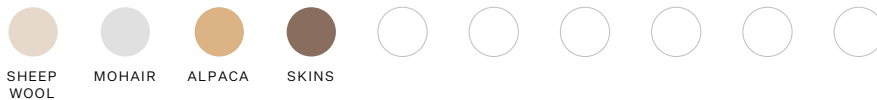
4.4.4

Where injurious husbandry procedures, including tail docking (sheep only) and/or castration are implemented, this is based on a written and well-justified welfare risk/benefit analysis, in accordance with the health and welfare plan.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall provide a copy of the welfare risk/benefit analysis, and this clearly shows the on-balance welfare benefit of any procedures that are undertaken.
- 2) The welfare risk/benefit analysis may be included in the organization’s health and welfare plan.
- 3) A suggested template for the welfare risk/benefit analysis will be provided in the user manual.



4.4.5

The welfare risk/benefit analysis is reviewed annually, and considers the following:

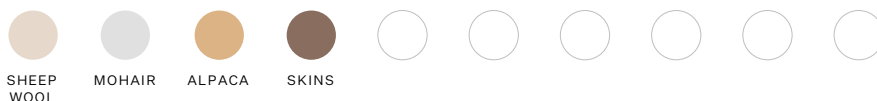
Major

- a. The welfare challenge that the injurious husbandry procedure seeks to address;
- b. For castration, whether the animal will be kept beyond puberty;
- c. Alternative practices that protect the animal’s welfare and their effectiveness;
- d. Methods best suited to the procedure and the age of the animal; and
- e. Steps to be taken to minimize pain and distress, as advised by a veterinary surgeon.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization’s written welfare risk/benefit analysis includes all the elements listed in the criterion.
- 2) When assessing whether animals will be kept beyond puberty, the expectation is that this is done at a group level, not at the individual animal level. For example, if within a group of animals some may be sent to slaughter before puberty, but others will definitely be retained after puberty, the organization may treat the entire group as potentially being kept beyond the time they reach puberty.

- 3) Puberty is defined as reaching sexual maturity.
- 4) For group certification: Advice from a veterinary surgeon can be obtained annually by the group manager and shared with its group members for inclusion in their welfare risk/benefit analyses.
- 5) For communal farmer groups: The written welfare risk/benefit analysis may be met at the group level.

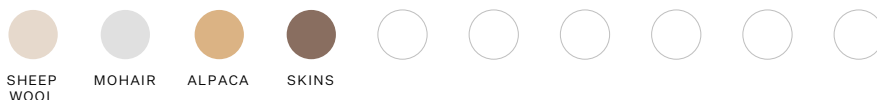


4.4.6 For all injurious husbandry procedures, regardless of method, *pain relief* is applied when *suitable pain relief* is available.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A suitable product is defined as one that has a pain-relieving effect for the method of castration/tail docking that is used. Some pain-relieving products act quickly for acute pain, others take longer to show an effect, but last for a greater time period. Methods of castration and tail docking similarly vary. Some methods will give acute pain at the time of the procedure (e.g. scalpel castration); others may give rise to chronic pain post-operatively (e.g. rubber ring tail docking). In addition, some pain-relieving products are designed to be applied to a wound, and not all methods of castration or tail docking leave a wound.
- 2) An available product is one that is licensed for use by the farmer, in the relevant country, for the relevant species, for pain relief. This definition does not require the farm’s veterinarian to make a judgement call regarding the use of off-label drugs, and the farmer does not have a reason not to get access to the appropriate product. This definition includes drugs where the farmer needs to get a prescription from a veterinarian to obtain the product, as long as the license allows the farmer to use the product without the veterinarian being present.
- 3) When the first suitable pain relief is newly licensed in a country, an implementation period is permitted. Individual farmers must fully implement the use of suitable pain relief within two years or the second lamb marking period after the first date of licensing, whichever is soonest. Farm groups must ensure that all members fully implement the use of suitable pain relief within four years of the first date of licensing and must additionally demonstrate increasing use of pain relief within the group from the end of the first year after licensing onwards.
- 4) Use of pain relief is assessed by reviewing invoices or other evidence that there has been purchase of the correct volume of pain-relieving medication for the number of animals to be treated each year.

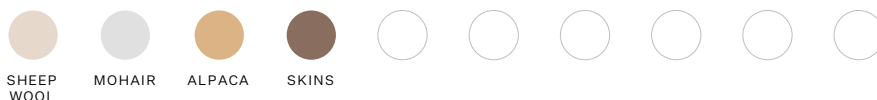


4.4.7 A combination of local anesthetic and analgesia are used when both types of suitable pain-relieving products are available.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Multi-modal pain relief offers the best option for animal welfare, covering both acute and longer-term pain.
- 2) Use of multi-modal pain relief is assessed by reviewing invoices or other evidence that there have been purchases of the correct volume of both types of pain-relieving medication for the number of animals to be treated each year.



4.4.8 After any injurious husbandry procedures, the animals are monitored for signs of post-operative complications, and corrective actions are taken, as necessary.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization can describe how it ensures that any post-operative complications are identified and treated, as well as actions to ensure the cause is mitigated for future operations.
- 2) Complications will vary depending on operation and tools used, e.g. herniation, hemorrhage, infection, sepsis, and inappropriate banding technique causing injury or disease.



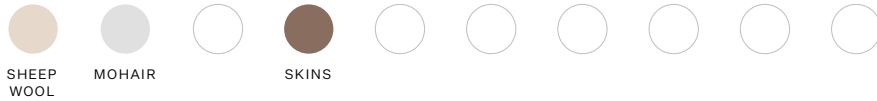
4.4.9 When castration is performed on sheep and/or goats, one of the following methods is used:

Major

- a. Bloodless *emasculator*;
- b. Application of a rubber ring, including shortening of scrotum; or
- c. Surgical methods with mandatory pain relief.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall specify in its animal health and welfare plan which of the listed methods is used and its procedure for use and make this available in a way that is easy for its workers to understand.
- 2) If scalpel is the chosen method, pain relief is mandatory. If the organization or its veterinarian cannot access any pain relief, castration shall not take place.



4.4.12 Goat castration using rubber rings or surgery is performed before eight (8) weeks of age.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The maximum age of eight weeks is calculated as a herd average, not on an individual kid basis.
- 2) The average castration age of the herd can be calculated by reviewing the spread of kidding dates, and the date of castration.
- 3) The herd should be gathered for castration as soon as the youngest kids are capable of safely following their mothers.



4.4.13 Goat castration using bloodless emasculator is performed before fourteen (14) weeks of age.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The maximum age of 14 weeks is calculated as a herd average, not on an individual kid basis.
- 2) The average castration age of the herd can be calculated by reviewing the spread of kidding dates, and the date of castration.
- 3) The herd should be gathered for castration as soon as the youngest kids are capable of safely following their mothers.



4.4.14 Castration of sheep and goats above the ages specified above only takes place if the following happens:

Major

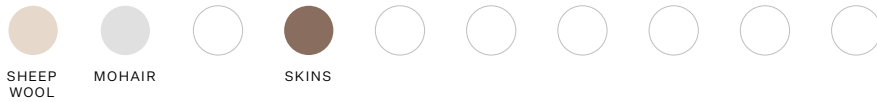
- a. The organization must raise rams or bucks for sale, or retention as breeding stock;
- b. The organization must have a set of criteria to assess rams or bucks for suitability as breeding stock such as conformation, parents' genetics, etc., (i.e. they should not be keeping every ram or buck that is born as a breeding animal);
- c. An initial assessment of young rams or bucks against the criteria must be made by the time all sheep and kids to be castrated with rubber rings are eight (8) weeks of age or by fourteen (14)

weeks of age for kids that are to be castrated with bloodless emasculator. Any young rams or bucks that do not meet the criteria must be castrated at this time; and

- d. Young rams or bucks that pass the initial assessment, but which later develop traits that make them unsuitable for breeding may be castrated for retention in the herd/flock, but only if castration is carried out using a bloodless emasculator with mandatory pain relief.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall demonstrate that it either sells breeding males (e.g. advertisements, invoices for sale), or retains them for its own use (e.g. no records of bought-in breeding males, breeding records show retention of home-bred males).
- 2) The organization shall describe the selection criteria it uses for assessing whether males are suitable to be retained for breeding.
- 3) The organization shall have evidence of pain relief that is used for any males that were deemed unsuitable for breeding and castrated at later ages than specified as the maximum in the Standard.



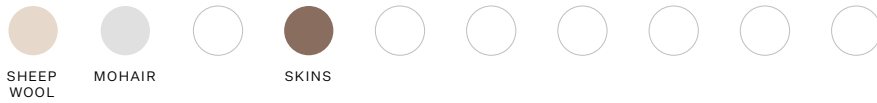
4.4.20

Horned animals are inspected regularly to ensure the tip (or another part of the horn), is not in contact with the face.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) These checks shall be part of routine animal inspection, and actions taken as necessary before welfare issues occur.



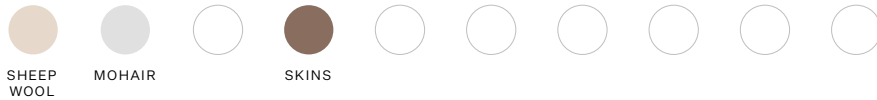
4.4.21

Dehorning, disbudding and substantial horn trimming is not conducted, unless needed to address animal welfare.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Disbudding does not take place, and dehorning and substantial horn trimming are only carried out when necessary to protect the animal’s welfare, e.g. when a horn has partially broken off and/or when the horn is found to be digging into the animal’s skin and more than minor tipping is needed to resolve the issue.
- 2) Minor horn trimming (i.e. removal of the tip of the horn) in adults is acceptable if done above the “quick” where the tissue is devoid of nerves and blood vessels. If blood vessels are involved, this becomes substantial horn trimming.



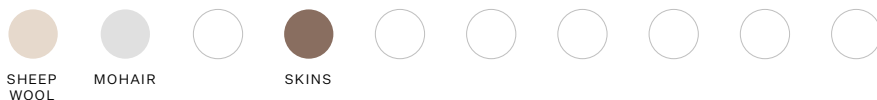
4.4.22

Where a more substantial horn trimming (i.e. where parts of the horn with blood vessels and nerves are cut into) is necessary, it is performed by a veterinarian using pain relief.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Where substantial horn trimming is justified, only a veterinarian carries this out and pain relief shall be applied.



4.4.23 Any marking of animals for identification purposes is done in accordance with current legislation and best practices.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Best practice ensures that identification is applied in such a way that the animal can easily be identified, the risk of identification falling out or getting torn out is reduced, and the risk of infection from any identification that breaks the skin is also reduced. For example, ear tagging placement shall be in the middle of the ear, away from veins.
- 2) Some countries have legal requirements for animal identification, which may include the type of identification and its placement.



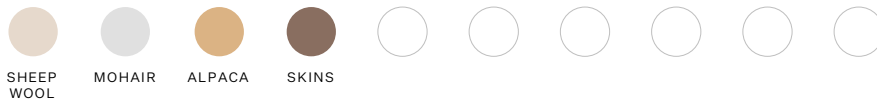
4.4.24 Branding is not conducted.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Branding here refers to the application of heated or cooled tools to permanently mark the skin or horn of an animal.



4.4.25 Earmarking (i.e. notching) is only conducted when all of the following conditions are met:

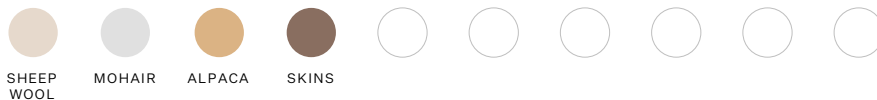


Major

- a. There is a risk of loss of tags from the natural environment or theft of the animal;
- b. Ear notching does not remove more than 10% of each ear; and
- c. Ear notching tools, or surgically sharp scalpels are used.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall provide details of the risks that made this practice necessary, where applicable.
- 2) Ear notching tools that cut a measured shape out of the ear should be used in place of a scalpel so that the size of the cut is controlled.
- 3) Assessment of conformance with the 10% threshold is determined at the herd or flock level. Individual animals may have caught ear tags or otherwise torn their ears, and the amount of ear removed by deliberate notching should not include this.



4.5 Animal Shearing

4.5.1 Pre-shearing planning takes into consideration the climatic conditions and ensures that mitigation measures are in place in the event of changing conditions.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Cold stress is a risk post shearing, as animals adapt to the removal of fiber. This is particularly the case when shearing is on a cycle to optimize staple length and animals are sheared in the winter.

Signs of cold stress include:

- Shallow breathing;
- Shivering; and
- Huddling together with other sheep.

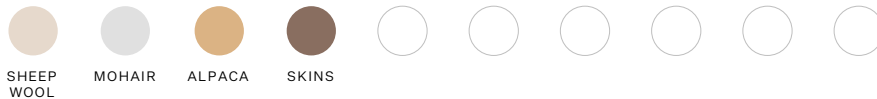
Remedial actions for cold stress include moving sheep to a sheltered area and feeding them.

2) Conversely, immediately prior to shearing sheep may be at risk of heat stress.

Signs of heat stress include:

- Panting;
- Rapid breathing; and
- Weakness/difficulty standing.

Remedial actions for heat stress include moving the sheep to cool shaded areas with good air circulation and offering water. Note that spraying the wool with water stops air moving through the fleece and may be counterproductive. Wetting areas that do not have wool may help.



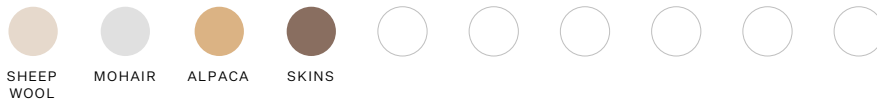
4.5.2

The entire process of shearing is performed under the direct supervision of the organization, or a person appointed by the organization.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

1) For this criterion, direct supervision means that the organization or person appointed by the organization is on site while shearing takes place.



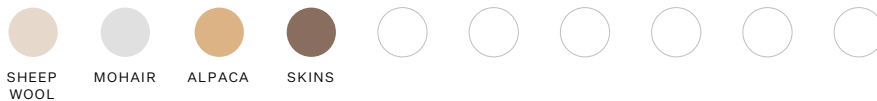
4.5.3

Shearing is performed by, or under the direct supervision of, a competent shearer.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For this criterion, direct supervision means that a competent shearer is present in the shearing area throughout the fiber removal process.
- 2) A competent shearer is someone with the knowledge and competence to conduct shearing that meets the criteria of the Standard, including animal handling, maintenance and use of equipment, how to deal with injuries, etc.



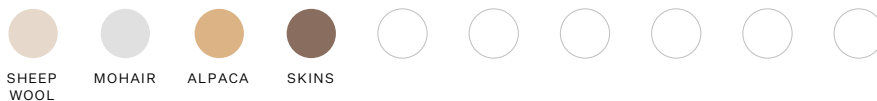
4.5.4

Animals are handled calmly and confidently to minimize stress at shearing.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

1) Animals will need to be moved around as part of the shearing process. Handling of all species is conducted carefully.



4.5.5 Shearing is done using techniques and equipment designed to minimize stress and injury.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Shearing is one of the procedures detailed under the required animal health and welfare plan, which then has to be available in a way that is easy for workers to understand. The techniques described there are put into practice when shearing takes place.
- 2) Equipment is designed for the task and well maintained. Hand shears and clipper blades should be kept sharp, and electric powered machines maintained in good condition as per the manufacturer’s instructions.



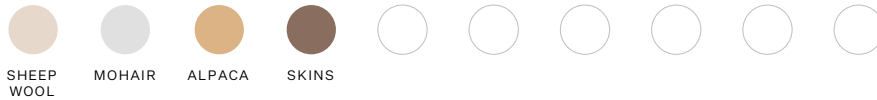
4.5.6 Particular care is taken not to cut or injure the animal, especially the teats/udders of female animals, and the penis/sheath and scrotum of male animals.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If the audit takes place at shearing time, no cuts or injuries of the kind described here are seen. At other times, the organization is able to describe the steps taken to ensure the animals are not cut or injured.



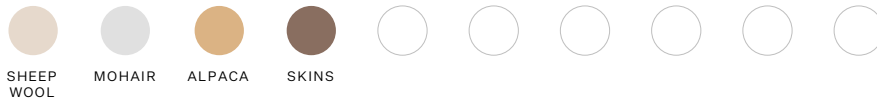
4.5.9 Animals are restrained for the minimum necessary time.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) While completing the job carefully, and without injury to the animal takes precedence over speed, no animal shall be restrained for more than ten minutes.
- 2) For reference: experienced shearers can shear an alpaca within four or five minutes, a sheep or goat by hand within a similar time, and a sheep or goat with electric clippers within two to three minutes.



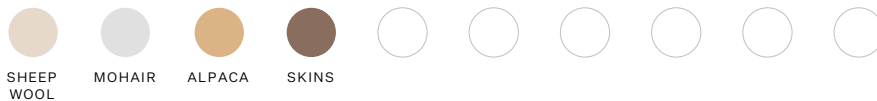
4.5.15 In the event of a serious cut or injury, the shearer ceases shearing immediately to allow the injury to be treated.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Whether a cut or injury is serious depends on its location, length, and depth. Examples of serious injuries include the following: open wound that is greater than six centimeters, or a wound of any length at a depth that reaches the muscle layer; the removal of teats; damage to the prepuce; and removal of the tip of the vulva.
- 2) Example of treatment for a serious injury: sutures, application of a wound repair spray, and an antibiotic injection.



4.5.16 Pain relief is applied for serious shearing injuries when suitable pain relief is available.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A serious cut or injury is as follows: open wound that is greater than six centimeters, or a wound of any length at a depth that reaches the muscle layer; the removal of teats; damage to the prepuce; and removal of the tip of the vulva.
- 2) It is noted that even when pain relief might be licensed for use on fiber animals when husbandry procedures are conducted, it is possible that such products are not suitable or available for shearing injuries.



4.5.17 The organization maintains records of serious shearing injuries.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall provide copies of records of serious shearing injuries.
- 2) A serious cut or injury is as follows: open wound that is greater than six centimeters, or a wound of any length at a depth that reaches the muscle layer; the removal of teats; damage to the prepuce; and removal of the tip of the vulva.



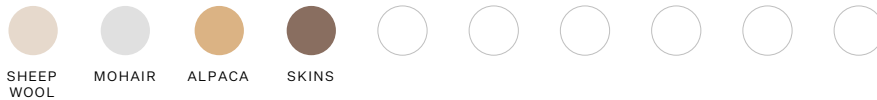
4.5.18 If there are recurring problems with shearing injuries or mishandling, appropriate action is taken to address and prevent those.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If observation at shearing time or records of injuries from previous shearing sessions show that there are recurrent issues, the organization can describe how those are addressed for future prevention. This could include removing workers from the shearing process until they can be retrained.



4.6 Herd Management

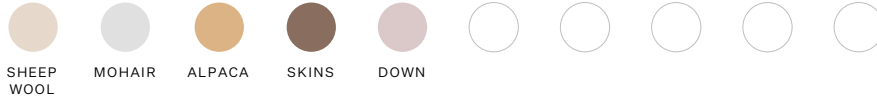
4.6.1 Animals are maintained in stable groups; mixing animals within the certified herd or flock is avoided.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to allow established social order to be maintained by minimizing mixing. This is not a prohibition on any mixing of animals.
- 2) Mixing is specific to the mixing of animals within the certified herd or flock. This criterion is not applicable for mixed species grazing.
- 3) Whenever necessary to mix groups of animals, additional monitoring should take place to ensure non-dominant animals are not injured while a stable hierarchy is formed.
- 4) For down production, mixing may occur if young waterfowl are initially kept in multiple brooder circles and then all released into the main house. This is not a risky time for aggression. Mixing of older waterfowl should not be done.

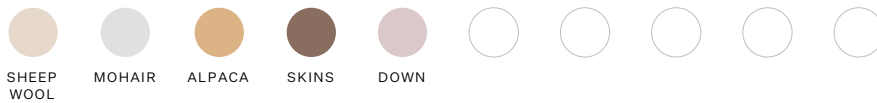


4.6.2 Isolation of individual animals is minimized.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Isolation shall only take place when necessary for animal health and welfare (e.g. treatment of a sick or injured animal may necessitate isolation).
- 2) If isolated animals are seen during the audit, the organization shall have good reason for this, based on supporting the animal's welfare.
- 3) The organization shall be able to describe instances where isolation may be necessary, and these relate to promoting the health and welfare of individual animals, and the wider herd or flock.

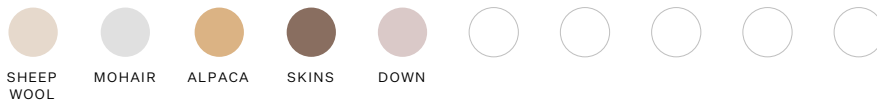


4.6.3 In case individual isolation cannot be avoided, the confined animal is given a companion or able to maintain visual contact with other animals of the same species. Exception may be made for quarantine purposes.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Where it is not possible to have a companion in the same pen as an isolated animal, others of the same species shall at least be in sight.
- 2) Exceptions may be made for quarantine, where there is a potential risk of disease that could be spread to companion animals in close proximity to the isolated animal.
- 3) If an animal needs to be isolated for health reasons, it is understood that having a healthy companion in the same pen may not always be the best option (e.g. there may be a risk of disease transfer, or of an injured animal being knocked over by a companion). However, all the animals in scope of the Standard are herd or flock animals, and complete removal from the sight, smell, and sound of other animals of the same species can lead to stress.



4.6.4 Any livestock guardian animals are suitable for the farm environment and the expected predator threat.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Any guardian animal that could pose a threat to livestock (e.g. guardian dogs with sheep and goats), is well trained before being left unsupervised.
- 2) Several animal species have been successfully used as livestock guardians. The most common are livestock guardian dogs, but donkeys and llamas have also been used.
- 3) The success of guardian animals will depend on the type and number of predators, the size of the herd or flock, and the number of guardians bonded to that flock. For example, llamas have been shown to chase small predators such as foxes away from the flock, but if the main threat is jackal or coyote, guardian dogs will be more appropriate. With a large flock and/or multiple potential predator attacks, multiple guardian animals will be needed.



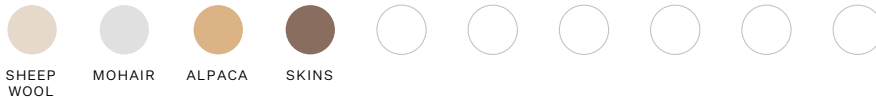
4.6.5 Quarantine procedures are followed when new animals are introduced.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of quarantine is to prevent the transmission of any disease between the incoming animals and the existing herd or flock.
- 2) Quarantine is considered part of the biosecurity planning in the health and welfare plan for all organizations.
- 3) To meet this leadership criterion, the organization shall be able to demonstrate or describe how new animals are quarantined before they are introduced to the herd.
- 4) Quarantine may be as simple as keeping incoming stock away from the existing herd or flock for a few weeks to see if any diseases develop, or in situations where higher disease risks are present, it could include vaccination and worming programs and/or blood tests.



4.7 Breeding, Birthing, and Caring for Young Animals

4.7.1



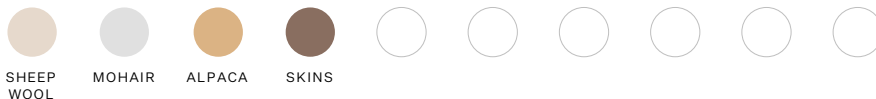
Major

The organization’s breeding strategy takes into consideration welfare traits and suitability for the type of environment in which the animals are raised, and includes at least the following:

- a. Foot and leg health;
- b. Overall conformation;
- c. Mothering ability;
- d. Temperament; and
- e. Ease of birthing.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Breeding stock selection includes selection of young animals to be retained for the breeding herd or flock, as well as annual selection of older animals to be rebred.



4.7.2

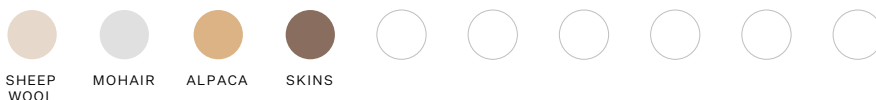


Major

Birthing is supervised and timely action taken, while keeping disturbances to a minimum.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall be able to describe its monitoring at time of birth and how it balances the avoidance of disturbance with the need for extra oversight, e.g. when weather conditions increase the risk of neonatal hypothermia.
- 2) The degree of supervision (i.e. how often and how close) will vary depending on the system and breed of animal.



4.7.3



Major

In extensive systems, where animals are unaccustomed to daily supervision, breeds or strains suited to easy births and good maternal care are used.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Where close daily supervision is not possible, the breed or strain used (including choice of breeding male), should be such that there is not an expectation that females will need assistance to give birth, nor that they are likely to abandon or otherwise mistreat offspring without ongoing human intervention.



4.7.4

The birthing period is planned to coincide with local climatic conditions favorable to good welfare and survival.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The birthing period is planned to avoid times of the year when snow, ice storms, flooding or other extremes of weather that could adversely affect young animal survivability are common.
- 2) Planning the birthing period shall also take into consideration which animals are bred at what time. If young females are bred too early, there may be a higher risk of mortality for them and their offspring due to multiple factors, including: young females producing lower birth weight offspring; complications at birthing from young females that are not big enough to give birth without assistance; and poorer maternal instinct from young females.
- 3) If there are health and welfare problems at birthing time, the organization shall review its planning for the next cycle.



4.7.5

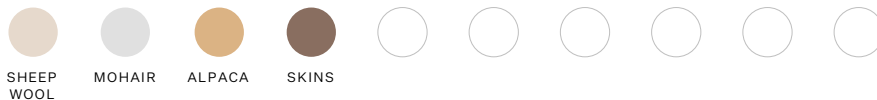
Practices and procedures for feeding young animals and provisions for fostering are planned prior to the start of the birthing period.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) There is always a risk that some young animals will not be able to be raised by their mothers. The risk and expected number of young animals that will need to be fed and/or fostered to new mothers will vary with the system of production. Preparation prior to the birthing period will depend on the organization's situation and the species involved.
- 2) Practices and procedures may range from the organization knowing where it will obtain milk or milk replacer and feeding equipment (if the use of these in previous years has been very rare), through to having feeding equipment for multiple young animals and milk or milk replacer present on site prior to the expected start of birthing.



4.7.6

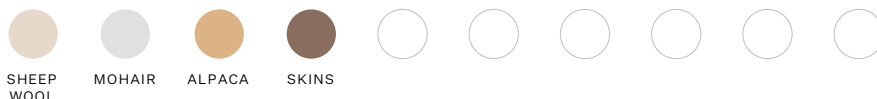
The organization ensures that cervical artificial insemination (AI) is carried out by competent operators and that records are maintained if any external people, other than qualified veterinary surgeons, are used.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Cervical artificial insemination may be carried out by the organization's workers, in which case they shall have specific training on these procedures, or by external people.
- 2) If external people, other than qualified veterinary surgeons, are used, the organization maintains a record including their signed contractor declaration, and a description of their relevant training, qualifications and/or experience.



4.7.7

Laparoscopic artificial insemination is performed only by veterinarians or by trained and competent operators under veterinarian supervision, and with appropriate pain relief.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Where applicable, the organization shall provide details of the veterinarian who performs or supervises the procedure and what pain relief is used.



4.7.8

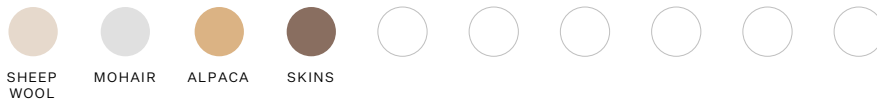
Electroejaculation is permitted for fertility testing if the following requirements are met:

Major

- a. Electroejaculation is only performed by a veterinarian;
- b. Records for each male examined are kept; and
- c. If there is any evidence of undue stress or pain from the handling or the stimulation, either the procedure is abandoned, or an analgesic or general anesthetic administered.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) On most commercial farms, electroejaculation should be a rare procedure and may only be performed when the veterinarian recommends this. However, stud farms may need to use this technique to test the fertility of males that will be sold for breeding.



4.7.9

The organization shall ensure that pregnancy diagnosis is only performed by individuals trained and competent with the techniques, and that records are maintained if any external people, other than qualified veterinary surgeons, are used.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If external people, other than qualified veterinary surgeons, are used, the organization maintains a record including their signed contractor declaration, and a description of their relevant training and/or qualifications.



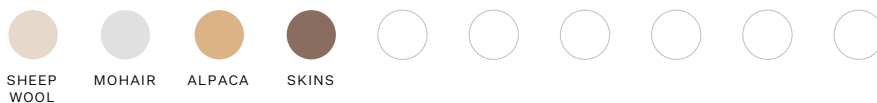
4.7.10

Fetotomy is only performed by a skilled person or veterinarian on unborn animals that are dead.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Fetotomy (also known as embryotomy), is only performed after the death of the unborn animal has been confirmed. Ideally a veterinarian will perform this operation.



4.7.11

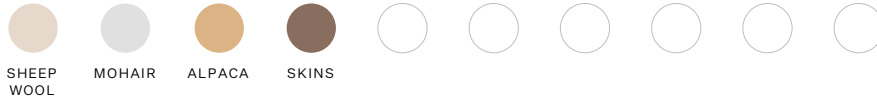
When cesarean section is necessary and possible, this is only performed by a veterinarian using an appropriate pain relief.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If the organization has any history or potential for cesarean section to be used, it shall provide details of the veterinarian who performs the procedure and what pain relief is used.
- 2) If an animal is unable to give birth naturally, a cesarean section may be necessary to preserve the life of the mother, and also her unborn offspring.



4.7.12

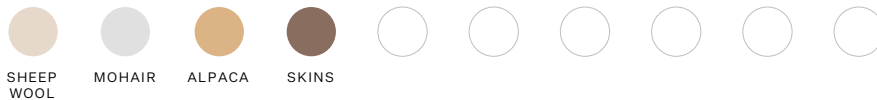
Artificial rearing is only conducted when the animal cannot be naturally fed, e.g. when the young animal is rejected by its mother or the mother is sick, dies, or has insufficient milk, and fostering to an alternative female is not possible.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) In large commercial herds and flocks there may be multiple young animals each birthing season that fall into the categories described here.



4.7.13

Artificially reared young animals receive a sufficient amount of *colostrum* after birth to ensure their welfare.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Within the first 24 hours of life young animals shall receive around 10% of their bodyweight in colostrum spread over several feeds.
- 2) Colostrum intake is important to provide the newborn animal with antibodies to prevent disease. Colostrum will be produced by the mother for around 24 hours after birth. While most naturally reared animals will suckle without assistance, artificially reared animals may need to be provided with colostrum.



4.7.14

Where lambs and kids are reared artificially, they have access to milk in their diet until they are at least six (6) weeks old, and they have an adequate intake of other feeds that ensure their nutritional needs are met.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Milk is not withdrawn before lambs and kids are eating other feeds, whether these are concentrates and/or forages. As a guide, lambs and kids should be at least three times their birthweight at the time of weaning.
- 2) If automatic milk feeding equipment is used, lambs and kids are trained on how to access milk and are checked to ensure their intake is sufficient through monitoring of their growth rates.
- 3) Milk can include whole milk and/or a milk replacer that is suitable for the species being raised artificially.



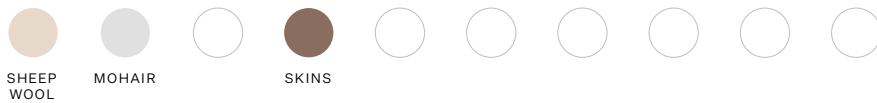
4.7.16

Lambs and kids are not weaned from their mothers until they are at least eight (8) weeks old.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The Standard describes a pasture-based system for sheep and goats, and although in more intensive systems (and artificial rearing) earlier weaning without detriment to lambs’ and kids’ health and welfare can be achieved (e.g. when concentrate feeding is introduced early in life), a minimum of eight weeks of age is deemed appropriate for this type of system.
- 2) Minimum weaning age can be calculated by reference to the date of birth of the youngest animal in the group to be weaned, and the date of weaning.
- 3) See also criteria 3.1.2.b., 3.1.2.c., 4.1.1, 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 related to planning land and animal management, including supporting lactating ewes and does to ensure that the eight weeks minimum weaning age can be met.



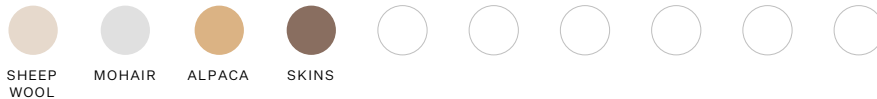
4.7.18

Animals are maintained in the same social group for at least two (2) weeks after they are weaned from their mothers.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This is considered a leadership criterion as it is understood that other management needs may take precedence.
- 2) Letting animals that have been together in a group with their mothers stay together after their mothers have been removed can help reduce stress.



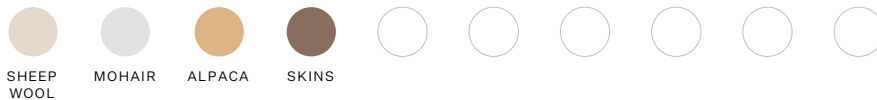
4.7.19

From the date animals are weaned from their mothers, at least an interval of two (2) weeks is left before any potentially stressful procedure is conducted, such as gathering stock for vaccination or other treatments.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Conformity may be assessed by reviewing records (e.g. medical or management records) to ensure there is no evidence of treatments or other group management activities having occurred in the two weeks following weaning.



4.8 Handling and Transport

4.8.1

Animals are handled humanely; mistreatment of animals does not occur.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for all handling and movement of animals, including loading and unloading for transport.
- 2) The organization shall be able to describe its handling methods, and how it ensures all workers handle animals carefully and calmly at all times.
- 3) Workers shall be able to describe the signs that animals are becoming stressed (e.g. a lot of vocalization), and what actions they take to reduce stress.
- 4) No mistreatment of animals or poor treatment shall be seen during the audit.
- 5) Mistreatment includes but is not limited to rough physical contact such as kicking, striking, slamming gates on animals, tripping, throwing, or dropping animals, dragging, or pulling animals by the fleece, wings, tail, ears, head, horns, or neck, dragging by the back legs, or lifting by the legs.



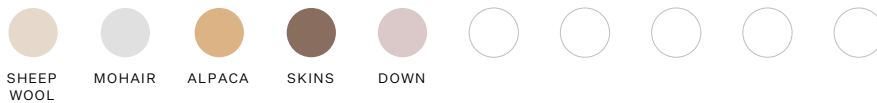
4.8.2

Positive human-animal relationships are developed through confident handling of animals from an early age.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion goes beyond the avoidance of bad handling, as covered by criterion 4.8.1, to the promotion of good handling and positive interactions between humans and animals.
- 2) The workers shall be able to demonstrate how they implement positive handling practices, especially when young animals are gathered for management tasks. Examples to show that workers understand positive handling could include stopping shouting or whistling when handling young animals for the first time or avoiding the use of dogs where possible. Workers may also provide evidence of completion of a low stress livestock handling course.
- 3) For waterfowl, handling of animals may be less important than how workers walk through houses, and otherwise interact with the waterfowl.



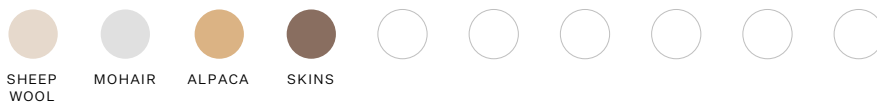
4.8.3

Extra care is taken when handling animals with special needs, including young animals, heavily pregnant females, lame or injured animals, and breeding males. Heavily pregnant females are only handled when absolutely necessary.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall be able to describe what is meant by an animal with special needs and the accommodation available for these animals. If heavily pregnant females (e.g. those in the last third of gestation) are handled, there is rationale for this that is linked to their overall welfare.
- 2) Extra care includes letting animals with special needs have more time if they are being moved, or providing vehicular transport when other animals are moved on foot.
- 3) Extra care also involves extra thought about whether animals with special needs even need to be handled or moved, and if this is necessary, minimizing the time these animals have to wait in handling systems.



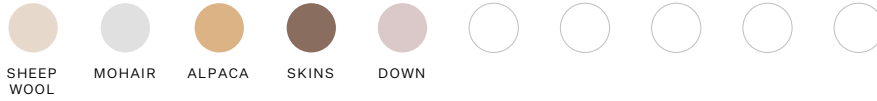
4.8.5

Animals are driven on foot in a calm manner at a relaxed pace, natural to that animal, and not faster than the pace of the slowest animal.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If animals are observed being moved during the audit, animals at the back of the group are not being pushed along or asked to speed up to a trot to keep up with those at the front.
- 2) Waterfowl in free ranging systems may be moved on foot to different ranging areas. If this is the case, this criterion also applies.



4.8.6

When moving animals on foot, contingency plans are in place to move by vehicle any animals that become lame or weak.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If animals are ever moved on foot, the organization can describe its contingency plan should animals become lame or weak during movement on foot.



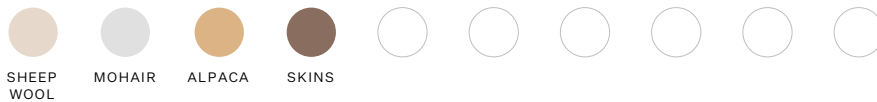
4.8.7

Audible or visual aids to handling (e.g. rattles or flags) are used in preference to physical contact.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization utilizes suitable audible or visual tools for handling animals.
- 2) Audible aids to handling may not include sudden or loud noises (e.g. shouting or whistles) that could cause fear or stress.
- 3) If handling is observed during the audit, noise levels are low, tools are used correctly, and physical contact is only made when other methods are ineffective.
- 4) If handling is not observed during the audit, the organization can describe acceptable and unacceptable use of audible and visual handling aids.



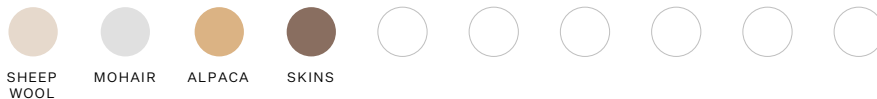
4.8.8

Electric prodders are not used.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No device that administers an electric shock to an animal for any reason is permitted under the Standard. The only exception is the use of *electric stunning* devices for slaughter.
- 2) “Electric prodders” may also be known as “electric prods”, “hotshots” or by other names.



4.8.9

If halters are used, they are comfortable and fitted so as not to chafe or obstruct breathing.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Halters are used only as a temporary handling aid.

- 2) If animals wear halters for extended periods, at least twice daily checks are needed to ensure haltered animals are safe and not at risk of getting the halter caught on items in their environment.



4.8.10 When dogs are used to move animals:

Minor

- The dogs are trained, or undergoing training, for moving livestock;
- Dogs that may nip or bite are fitted with suitable muzzles;
- The responsible workers have good control of the dogs; and
- Dogs are not allowed to force animals to move too quickly, nor to continue to force animals to move when they have nowhere to go.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- The good care of dogs is covered under criterion 4.1.29.
- Suitable muzzles are those that fit comfortably and allow the dog to breathe and pant easily.

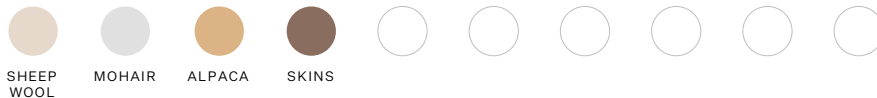


4.8.11 Animals are appropriately prepared for transport, including through the provision of sufficient food and water as suitable to the species, age, condition, and expected length and conditions of the journey, to avoid pain, injury, or distress to themselves or other animals.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- The preparation that is needed will depend on the proposed transport.
- Examples of appropriate preparation include:
 - Putting animals into their transport groups with enough time prior to transport such that a stable hierarchy is in place;
 - Moving animals close to handling and loading areas, and giving them a chance to settle there before the date of transport;
 - Ensuring animals have access to feed and water for as long as possible prior to loading (this does not preclude feed or water withdrawal that might be necessary for some animals being transported to slaughter); and
 - When animals are to be transported in warm conditions, ensuring they have had access to cool water before being loaded.



4.8.12 For transportation where the animals will be fed and watered during the journey, animals are familiarized with the feed to be offered, and the methods by which the feed and water will be provided.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- If feed and water is to be provided during the journey, the organization ensures that animals have been exposed to feedstuffs or systems of delivering water that will be offered to them as part of transport. For example, animals that have only ever drunk from natural water sources will not recognize a nipple or bite drinker as a source of water without prior exposure to these systems.



4.8.13



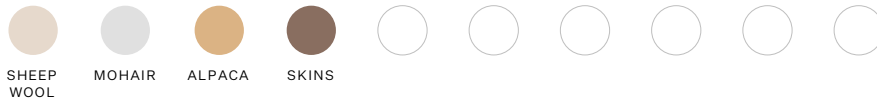
Critical

Before being transported, all animals are assessed to determine if they are fit for transport. The following animals are not transported (including to auction or slaughter), unless it is for the purposes of veterinary treatment:

- a. Sick, injured, weak, or disabled animals;
- b. Those that are unable to stand unaided and bear weight on each leg;
- c. Those that are blind in both eyes; and
- d. Those whose body condition would result in poor welfare because of the expected climatic conditions.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If animals meeting these conditions are suffering and unlikely to recover, they are euthanized on the farm and not transported to slaughter.
- 2) If loading is observed during the audit, no animals meeting the descriptions in the criterion are seen being loaded. If loading is not observed by the auditor, the organization can describe a list of animals that will not be transported, which aligns with the list in this criterion.



4.8.14



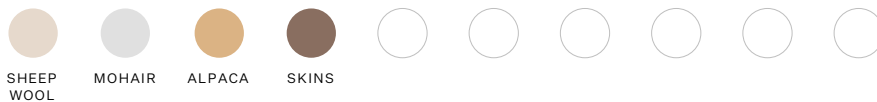
Major

The following animals are only transported if the journey is short (i.e. less than 50 km), the purpose is to improve conditions for the animals, and the journey will not cause unnecessary pain or suffering:

- a. Heavily pregnant females (past 90% gestation);
- b. Newborn animals, where the navel has not completely healed; and
- c. Females that have given birth in the previous seven (7) days.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The distinction between this criterion and 4.8.13 is that the list in criterion 4.8.13 is for animals that can only be moved for the purposes of veterinary treatment. The list here is of vulnerable animals that will need special care during transport, but which can be moved short distances for reasons other than veterinary care. For example, heavily pregnant animals might need to be moved to pasture with exclusionary fencing to protect them from predators, or females that have recently given birth might need to be moved to pastures that offer better nutrition.
- 2) The organization either does not move the animals on this list, or only moves them less than 50 km, and can justify this transport by showing that this will benefit welfare overall.
- 3) It is not acceptable for animals listed under this criterion to be moved more than once in any week.



4.8.16

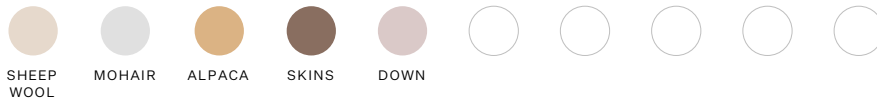


Minor

No animals shall have their legs tied or restrained.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No animal is seen during the audit with its legs tied, and interviews with workers confirm that this does not take place as part of any handling or transport.
- 2) The only exception to this criterion is when alpacas are being sheared, in which case the criteria of the Animal Shearing theme shall be met.
- 3) Alpacas shall not be restrained with ropes during transport (e.g. to ensure they remain sitting down).



4.8.17

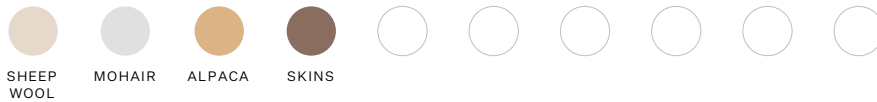
Where there are loading and unloading facilities at the farm, these are designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid injury and suffering, and to ensure the safety of the animals.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion includes both fixed and mobile loading and unloading facilities.
- 2) The maintenance of loading facilities ensures that there are no sharp edges, projections, or other features that could cause injury to animals.
- 3) Raised loading bays that offer a gradual incline make loading and unloading easier. Ramps in loading facilities are designed so animals cannot fall off the side of the ramp.
- 4) Ideally, loading facilities have solid sides, so the only obvious way forward for the animals is onto the truck. Shadow patterns, drain covers, and any other apparent obstacles should be eliminated.



4.8.18

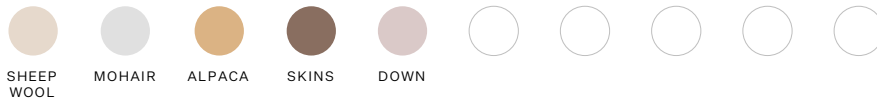
Animals are loaded and unloaded in a way that minimizes the risk of pain, injury, or distress.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If loading is observed during the audit, animals are loaded and/or unloaded carefully and calmly.
- 2) If loading is not observed during the audit, the organization describes how loading is conducted, and can describe how it reduces risks of pain, injury, or distress. The most important factor is ensuring sufficient time to allow animals to find their own way onto or off the truck.



4.8.25

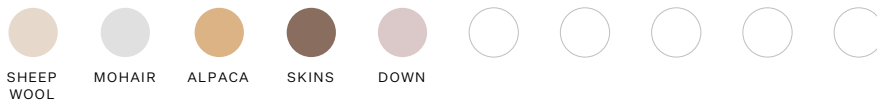
The organization maintains records of injury and death rates associated with transport of its animals and takes appropriate action to address high rates.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall have a goal that no animals are injured or die during transport.
- 2) The organization shall provide records of any injuries and deaths that are associated with transport.
- 3) Any instances where rates of injury or death exceed 0.5% of transported animals or, where injury and/or death rates below this start to show an increase, the organization shall investigate and take actions to reduce that rate in future transport.



4.8.26

The organization does not knowingly sell its animals to traders or brokers who intend to export its livestock for slaughter internationally.

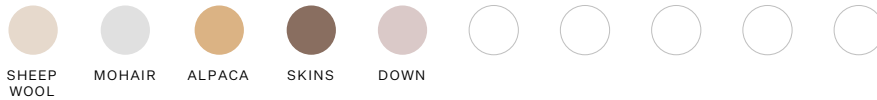


Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Live export refers to the sale or transfer of animals from one country to another.

- 2) Knowingly selling animals for live export means that the organization is selling directly to a trader or broker who only deals in live export, and/or when the buyer has advertised or otherwise communicated to the organization that animals sold will be sent for live export.
- 3) If an organization sells animals through an auction barn or market where there are multiple buyers, and the organization has no control over who purchases the stock, this is not considered knowingly selling for live export.
- 4) This criterion is not applicable when live export is across a single border to a neighboring country, animals are only transported on land, and transport is accomplished within all criteria of the Handling and Transport theme of the Standard.



4.9 Handling and Transport Managed by the Organization

4.9.1



Critical

At every stage of transport, animals are cared for by a sufficient number of workers, who collectively possess the appropriate ability, knowledge, and competence necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) When responsible for transport, the organization knows all the different people involved in transport from loading and departure from the certified site to final destination and unloading; and can confirm that they are all competent to ensure the requirements of the Standard are maintained throughout transport.



4.9.2



Minor

Where the responsibility changes, the person(s) or organization(s) accepting the animals for transport provides a copy of all relevant procedures.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The person in charge of animals may change as they move from the farm to their final destination. The responsibility for implementing the criteria in the Standard related to transport lies with the person(s) selecting and presenting animals for transport and the person(s) or organization(s) accepting the animals for transport.
- 4) Where responsibility changes, there shall be a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.

For example:

- Producer/consignor (prior to loading): Responsible for mustering and assembling animals; handling prior to loading and during loading.
- Transporter/driver (loading, unloading and management of animals during the journey): Responsible for loading density; additional inspections of livestock post loading; unloading at the destination.
- Receiver (e.g. processor, agent, saleyard manager/superintendent): Reception of animals at the destination; responsible for oversight when unloading.



4.9.3

Minor

All required documentation is completed prior to embarking on travel, and accessible to relevant workers during travel, so that incomplete or inaccessible documentation does not cause any delay in animals reaching or being unloaded at the destination.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) The organization is aware of required documentation (e.g. animal health status certificates, lists of animal identification, etc.), and ensures these are available when animals are transported.



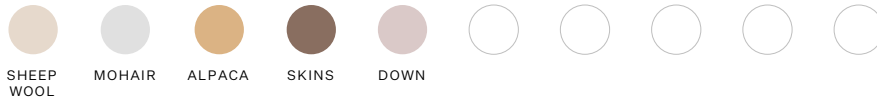
4.9.4

Minor

In the event of any delays arising during the journey, there is a contingency plan in place to ensure the needs of the animals are met.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The organization shall be able to provide details of contingency plans. These could include sources of alternative tractor units for trucks if there is a breakdown that cannot quickly be repaired, alternative route planning in case of road closures, options for rest stops if excessive delays prolong the journey, etc.



4.9.5

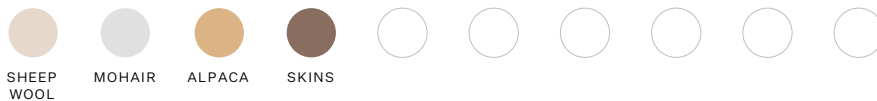
Minor

Except where animals have been raised in compatible groups, are accustomed to each other and where separation would cause distress, or where animals are accompanied by dependent young, animals are handled and transported separately by species, and as follows:

- a. Animals of significantly different sizes or ages;
- b. Sexually mature males from females;
- c. Animals with horns from animals without horns;
- d. Animals hostile to each other; and
- e. Tied animals from untied animals.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) The organization shall have a protocol for separation of different types of animal and workers shall know how to react if/when hostility between animals intended to travel in the same group is seen.
- 3) Animals shall only be tied in transport with a halter and lead rope only when they are accustomed to being haltered.
- 4) While it is understood that not every possible hostile reaction once animals are loaded for transport can be predicted, some hostility can be assessed by observation of animals in the holding pens prior to transport, and actions taken to ensure animals displaying this behavior are not loaded into the same compartments.



4.9.6

The vehicle used for transport is designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid injury and suffering, and to ensure the safety of the animals.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) Vehicles are designed or adapted for the transport of livestock and the maintenance of transport vehicles ensures that there are no sharp edges, projections or other features that could cause injury to animals.
- 4) Vehicles are constructed so that animals cannot get body parts stuck in vents, or other openings and cannot fall from the vehicle.



4.9.8

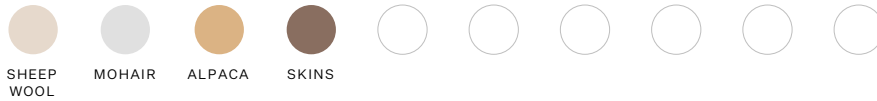
Ramps are set at an incline of no greater than twenty (20) degrees, and there are measures in place to prevent injury.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) A slope of 20-degrees is equivalent to a rise of 4 in 11. Ramp angles that are steeper than this are harder for animals to negotiate and can lead to problems when loading and unloading.



4.9.9

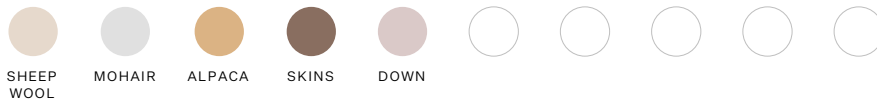
Animals have adequate ventilation or oxygenation during transport, even when stationary, which prevents the buildup of harmful concentrations of gases or impurities, water vapor or temperature.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The organization understands these principles for ensuring good ventilation and ensures that vehicles have adequate vents which can be adjusted (opened/shut) according to the number of animals on the truck and the outside conditions.
- 4) Animals in transport generate heat and moisture. If this is not removed through ventilation, animals can overheat.
- 5) If animals are transported in vehicles that are not well ventilated, there can also be a buildup of gases such as ammonia from manure and urine, and/or CO₂.



4.9.10

Where animals show signs of heat or cold stress or distress from exposure to noxious gases, immediate corrective actions are taken.

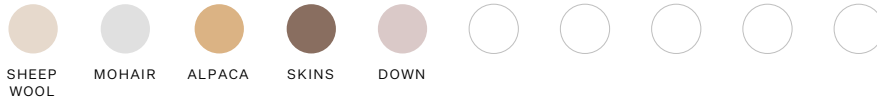


Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The organization has a protocol to take immediate actions if animals show any sign of distress during transport, e.g. adjusting vents, moving the vehicle to force air through or to get cross winds to clear out a buildup of noxious gases, or unloading some or all animals if necessary.

4) Levels of ammonia in vehicles shall not be at levels which are noticeably unpleasant to humans.



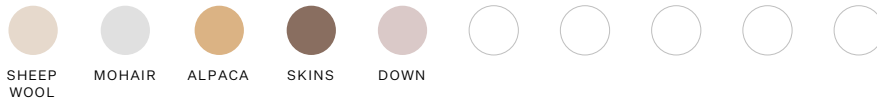
4.9.11

Animals are protected from adverse weather that may be a risk to the animals’ health and welfare during transportation.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The organization is aware of the weather conditions that could impact health and welfare, and ensures vehicles protect animals from these. If extreme weather conditions arise, and the available vehicles cannot protect the animals, transport should be rescheduled.
- 4) The adverse weather that could impact animal health and welfare will vary with season and region. Whether vehicles need to be roofed, how many vents are provided and whether this is natural, or fan assisted, and whether bedding is provided in transport, etc., will all vary depending on the situation.
- 5) In very cold weather, a vehicle with a solid front shall be used to reduce the wind chill factor.



4.9.12

Animals are not transported when climatic conditions are likely to cause significant discomfort or harm.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) For waterfowl, the air temperature within the load should remain in the range of 10°C to 30°C (50°F to 86°F).
- 4) In hot regions, transport should take place in the early morning or evening when temperatures are lower and stopping for long periods should be avoided. If it is necessary to stop in hot weather, the vehicle shall be parked in the shade, and at a right angle to the wind direction to improve wind flow between animals.
- 5) The length of fleece on fiber animals will affect whether they are at risk of heat or cold stress. For example, animals that have recently been shorn are at risk of cold stress if transported in cold weather, and animals with a full fleece can be at risk of heat stress at 28°C (82°F), whereas for shorn sheep the upper critical temperature is 32°C (90°F).
- 6) An exception to this criterion is when animals are being moved away from regions where there is extreme weather, to better conditions. For example, moving animals out of drought-stricken regions where regardless of the time of day of the transport, the conditions may be very hot.
- 7) External temperature alone is not a good measure of the risk of heat stress. Including humidity as part of a temperature-humidity index will provide better insight as to whether fiber animals are at risk of heat stress.



4.9.13

Stocking density is sufficient to allow animals to adopt a natural posture during the journey.

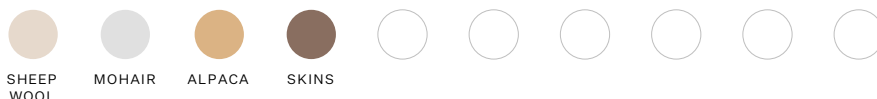
Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) Exact space per animal is specified in criteria below. This criterion allows for the assessment of vehicle/compartments height to ensure that all animals can stand easily during transport. This is at least 20 cm above the backbone of the largest sheep or goat

to be transported, and at least 50 cm above the backbone of the largest alpaca to be transported. If the vehicle has multiple decks, these heights shall be provided on all levels.

- 3) This criterion also allows for freedom of movement (e.g. freedom to turn around or get closer to vents, etc.). This can only be assessed if loaded animals are observed during the audit. If this is not the case, only height of compartment can be assessed under this criterion and freedom of movement is assessed under the following two criteria. Exact space per animal is specified in criteria 4.9.14 and 4.9.15 below and is assessed separately there (e.g. could be the organization meets criterion 4.9.13 but does not meet the applicable criterion below).



4.9.14 Each sheep or goat has at least the following minimum area in transport.



Minor

- a. Sheep and goats that have been recently shorn:

| Mean live weight (kg) | Minimum floor area (m ² /head) |
|-----------------------|---|
| 20 | 0.17 |
| 30 | 0.19 |
| 40 | 0.22 |
| 50 | 0.25 |
| 60 | 0.29 |

- b. Unshorn sheep and goats:

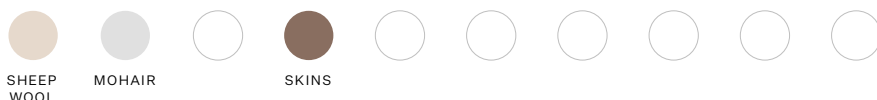
| Mean live weight (kg) | Minimum floor area (m ² /head) |
|-----------------------|---|
| 20 | 0.22 |
| 30 | 0.25 |
| 40 | 0.29 |
| 50 | 0.33 |
| 60 | 0.39 |

- c. Ewes and does more than 100 days gestation:

| Mean live weight (kg) | Minimum floor area (m ² /head) |
|-----------------------|---|
| Up to 50 | 0.40 |
| More than 50 | 0.50 |

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) To check stocking density when transport is observed during the audit: the size of the transport vehicle and/or the size of each pen or compartment within the transport vehicle is divided by the number and type of animals present.
- 3) If transport is not observed during the audit: the organization provides information on the size of the transport vehicle and/or the pens or compartments within the vehicle, and the maximum number and type of animals that would be placed on the vehicle or in each pen or compartment.



4.9.20 Journeys are direct, without any prolonged stops.

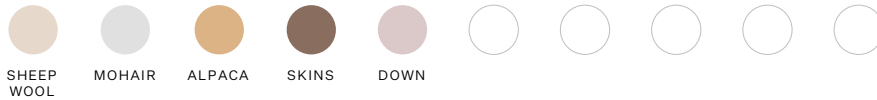


Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.

- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) When the organization transports animals to slaughter or market, it does not bypass a nearby site to go to a further destination without a good reason.
- 4) Stops that take place as part of the journey, where animals remain on the transport vehicle should be planned, so there are no delays. For example, if the transport vehicle needs to pick up a second group of animals from a different site, there is coordination so that the second group has been mustered and is ready to load when the transport vehicle arrives.
- 5) Rest stops are not considered stops for this criterion.
- 6) Note that transport durations, as specified in the following criteria, shall be met for the animals that are loaded first.



4.9.21 Animals are transported for the shortest possible time.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) Journeys that take animals straight from origin to destination are preferred but, if the transport vehicle has to make several pickups, the route shall be planned to avoid major detours and/or doubling back.



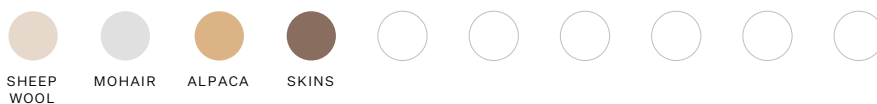
4.9.22 Water, feed, and the opportunity to rest are made available to animals as appropriate, to meet their health needs.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) The organization shall be able to demonstrate how it ensures that water, feed, and rest stops are provided, based on the species and type of animal and the duration of transport, to ensure that animal health and welfare is maintained.
- 3) Specifics of the minimum requirements for feed, water, and rest stops are covered in the following criteria of this theme.



4.9.23 During every specified rest period, animals of all ages:



Major

- a. Are unloaded;
- b. Have access to food and clean water; and
- c. Have enough space for exercise and rest.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) The intent of a rest period is that it provides animals with a chance to rest, stretch, rehydrate, and eat before continuing a long journey, so all the facilities listed are essential.
- 3) Any required rest period shall meet all the requirements of this criterion; otherwise, it does not qualify as a rest period.

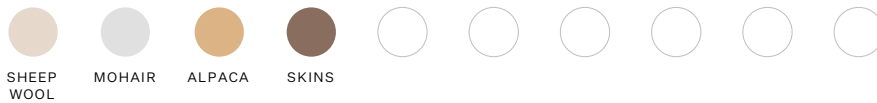


4.9.24 After each twenty-four (24) hours of transport, adult animals have a rest period of at least twelve (12) hours.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) Transport duration is calculated from the time loading starts, not the time the vehicle leaves the certified site.
- 3) Adult animals are those above 12 months of age. See criteria 4.9.25; 4.9.26; and 4.9.27 for requirements for younger animals.
- 4) If adult animals reach their final destination within 24 hours from the start of loading, then rest periods are not required. If the journey duration is longer than this, rest periods shall be provided that last at least 12 hours from the time the last animal is unloaded until reloading begins.

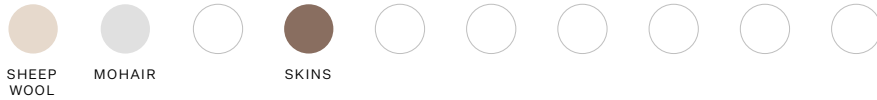


4.9.25 Sheep and goats between weaning and twelve (12) months of age have a rest period of at least twelve (12) hours after every eighteen (18) hours of transport.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) Transport duration is calculated from the time loading starts, not from the time the vehicle leaves the certified site.
- 3) If sheep or goats between weaning and 12 months of age reach their final destination within 18 hours from the start of loading, then rest periods are not required. If the journey duration is longer than this, rest periods shall be provided that last at least 12 hours from the time the last animal is unloaded until reloading begins.

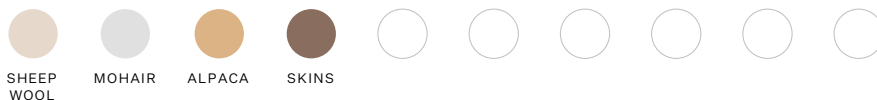


4.9.28 Animals are inspected for injury or signs of pain or distress at regular intervals during the journey, including during rest periods, as well as during breaks taken by the operator of the conveyance, and at refueling stops.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) The driver of the vehicle shall check the animals at intervals sufficient to identify any problems. This will vary depending on the type and age of transported animal, climatic conditions, and overall transport duration. The driver should be able to access all compartments of the vehicle as necessary to deal with any sick or injured animals.

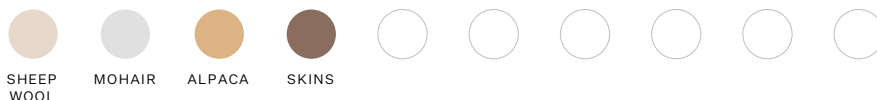


4.9.29 Animals found to be distressed or injured are assisted, treated or, if necessary, euthanized as soon as practicable.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) The driver of the vehicle knows who to contact if treatment of animals beyond his/her competence is needed during the journey.
- 3) Either suitable equipment for euthanasia is in the transport vehicle, and the driver is trained and competent to use it, or the driver has contact details for someone who could come and perform euthanasia if this were required.



4.9.31

The words “LIVE WATERFOWL” or “LIVE ANIMALS” are visible in the local language on the outside of the truck.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 2) If the vehicle can be seen during the audit, the auditor can confirm this. Otherwise, the organization shall confirm this is the case, ideally with photographic evidence.



4.10 Euthanasia and On-Farm Slaughter

4.10.1

There is a clear set of criteria for recognizing when an animal needs to be euthanized that all workers are aware of and competent to follow.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization has developed guidance on when euthanasia is appropriate, and interviewed workers are aware of the guidance. This shall be included in the euthanasia protocol within the animal health and welfare plan (ref. criterion 4.1.1).
- 2) No animal that meets the criteria for euthanasia is seen during the audit. Examples of when euthanasia may be appropriate include:
 - When the animal is suffering a high level of pain;
 - When treatment is unlikely to be effective and/or cannot alleviate the animal’s pain and suffering;
 - Where even if treatment saves the animal, it will not be able to return to normal function; or
 - When a seriously sick or injured animal shows no sign of improvement 24 hours after treatment.
- 3) Once an animal has been identified as being sick, injured or otherwise in need of care, it is never acceptable to then leave it to die.



4.10.2

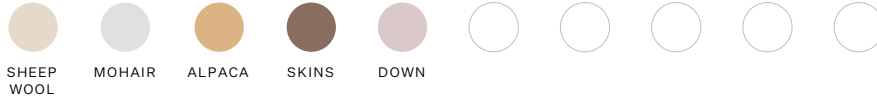
When animals are experiencing severe pain or illness and do not have a reasonable expectation of improvement, they are euthanized without delay.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No animals in need of euthanasia are seen on the certified site during the audit.

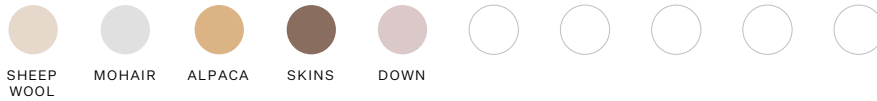

4.10.3


Critical

Euthanasia and/or on-farm slaughter is performed using a method that is quick, causes minimal stress and pain, and results in a rapid loss of consciousness followed by death, without the animal regaining consciousness.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization is aware of this overarching principle for euthanasia and on-farm slaughter and reflects it in its euthanasia protocol, as part of the health and welfare plan (ref. criterion 4.1.1).
- 2) Details of how this shall be achieved are provided by the criteria in the rest of this theme.


4.10.8


Major

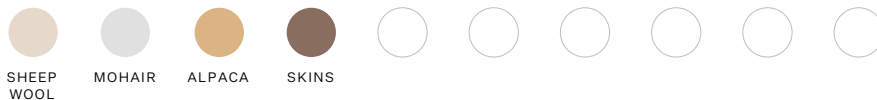
Except in emergency situations (e.g. where the animal is in severe pain and finding access to tools for stunning would prolong the suffering), animals are stunned prior to being euthanized.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for euthanasia; not for any planned on-farm slaughter.
- 2) Where firearms or captive bolts are available to farmers, it may not be possible to carry these tools every time workers inspect animals. If an animal needing euthanasia is discovered during an inspection a long way away from the main farm buildings, the best option may be to euthanize it without pre-stunning. The most common option would be using a knife.
- 3) In addition, in some regions there is no legal availability of tools to effectively stun animals. Using a knife for euthanasia would again be the most common option. Circumstances under which this would be permitted include:
 - Where licensing restrictions limit the access to the appropriate equipment;
 - Where the appropriate equipment is not available for purchase; or
 - Equipment may be available within the country or region but not yet on-farm, and it can be demonstrated that the farm is working towards having suitable equipment and trained staff to use it.

When a knife is used for euthanasia under these circumstances the procedure described in 4.10.9 below shall be followed.

- 4) This allowance is only applicable for euthanasia; not for any planned on-farm slaughter.

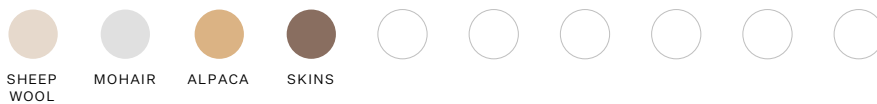

4.10.9


Major

If emergency euthanasia is conducted by cutting the animal's throat, best practice guidance is followed.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Knife euthanasia is a method of last resort that is only permitted as defined under 4.10.8 above.
- 2) For effective knife euthanasia the following steps are followed:
 - The knife used is very sharp, and at least 15 cm long;
 - The animal to be euthanized is restrained, with its chin held to extend its neck;
 - A swift cut is made across the upper part of the neck, severing the carotid arteries and jugular veins, and allowing rapid blood loss; and
 - The animal continues to be restrained until it loses consciousness and is monitored until death can be confirmed.
- 3) This shall also be included in the euthanasia section of the organization's health and welfare plan.
- 4) See the user manual for additional slaughter and euthanasia guidance.

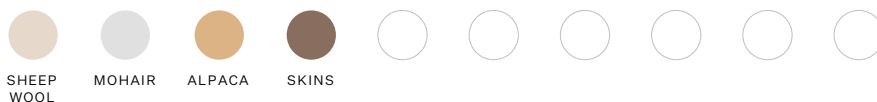


4.10.10 Planned on-farm slaughter is conducted by trained, competent workers, or a veterinary surgeon.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization has nominated trained and competent workers, or it has access to a veterinary surgeon to perform on-farm slaughter.
- 2) Workers responsible for on-farm slaughter who are interviewed during the audit demonstrate their competence by being able to describe the process of handling, stunning and killing animals within the parameters of the Standard.



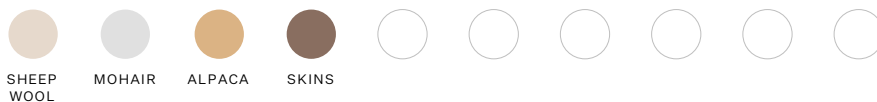
4.10.11 When euthanasia or planned on-farm slaughter takes place, only the following acceptable methods for stunning and slaughter are used:

Major

- a. Firearm;
- b. Penetrating and non-penetrating captive bolt gun followed by a secondary method to ensure death (e.g. *pithing*); or
- c. For sheep and goats only: head-only electric stunning followed by a secondary method to ensure death (e.g. exsanguination).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Only the methods listed are used for stunning. If captive bolt guns are used, pithing or bleeding is applied as soon as possible and within a maximum of 60 seconds post stun.
- 2) If head only-electric stun is used followed by exsanguination, this takes place within 15 seconds of the stun to ensure that death occurs before the animal regains consciousness.
- 3) Electric stunning using equipment designed for this purpose and operated within the manufacturers’ guidelines is an acceptable method as listed here, but it is recognized that this equipment is rarely found on farm.

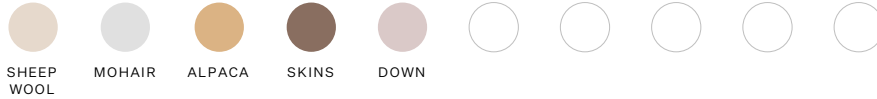


4.10.12 When euthanasia or planned on-farm slaughter takes place, the stunning or killing device is positioned correctly, according to the species and the method being used.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Interviewed workers can identify the correct placement of the device they use.
- 2) The correct position for captive bolt or firearm slaughter of alpacas is with the device placed at the crown position (i.e. the highest point on the head), aiming downwards to the base of the jaw.
- 3) The correct position for penetrating captive bolt for polled sheep or goats is with the device placed at the intersection of two lines drawn from the outside corner of each eye to the middle of the base of the opposite ear.
- 4) In horned sheep and goats, an alternate position and orientation for penetrating captive bolt or gunshot is on a line from the poll and aimed downward towards the back of the throat.
- 5) An alternative position for placement of the penetrating captive bolt or firearm in horned animals is the front of the skull directing the bolt or bullet toward the spinal cord.
- 6) For waterfowl, the captive bolt should be placed on the highest point of the head with the device aimed straight down.
- 7) See the user manual for additional slaughter and euthanasia guidance.

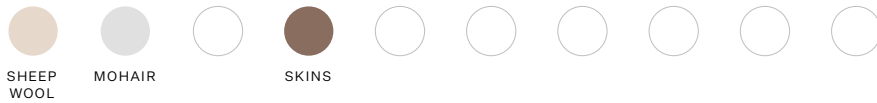


4.10.13 If electrical stunning is used for planned on-farm slaughter, a minimum current of 1.00 amp is achieved.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If electrical stunning is used, there shall be a way to ensure the minimum current is achieved. This may be through the use of a visible meter where workers check the correct current has been reached before applying the device, or use of devices that will not work unless the minimum current is reached.

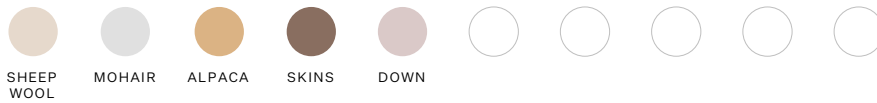


4.10.14 If captive bolts or firearms are used for euthanasia or planned on-farm slaughter, the appropriate cartridge or propellant for the species and size of animal is used.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall justify its choice of cartridge or propellant for the animals on the certified site.
- 2) The right propellant will vary with the device used, the manufacturers' recommendations, and the species and type of animals to be euthanized or slaughtered.

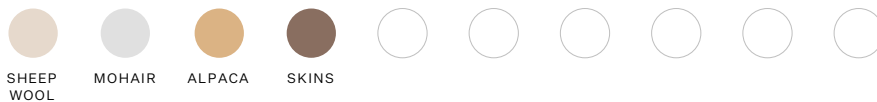


4.10.15 The spinal cord is not severed or broken in any animal until after confirmation of death.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization's protocol for euthanasia (as part of its health and welfare plan), and discussions with workers responsible for euthanasia, provide evidence that no animal will have its spinal cord severed or broken until death is confirmed.



4.10.16 Death is confirmed prior to disposal or further processing, through observing the following:

Major

- a. Fixed dilated pupils;
- b. Lack of corneal response;
- c. No jaw or tongue tone; and
- d. Lack of respiration for at least five (5) minutes.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Interviewed workers shall be able to demonstrate that all the listed signs are checked and confirmed before the animal is moved or further processing takes place.
- 2) If there is any doubt that the animal is dead, the stunning/killing method is repeated, and the animal is again monitored to confirm the signs of death.

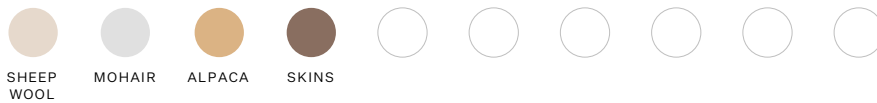


4.10.18 On-farm slaughter or euthanasia takes place away from the view of other animals, except in unavoidable cases.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Unavoidable cases include:
 - When moving a sick or injured animal to be euthanized away from other animals would cause it additional pain and distress; and
 - When emergency euthanasia is necessary, and the person performing it is unable to move other animals away.
- 2) Planned on-farm slaughter is always away from the view of other animals.



4.11 Slaughterhouse

4.11.1 The organization has documented standard operating procedures for all parts of the slaughterhouse operation, which are reviewed at least annually, and implemented appropriately.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Documented standard operating procedures that meet the requirements of this criterion are provided by the organization on request.



4.11.2 The organization has appointed a person responsible for animal welfare, who has the authority to stop slaughter operations if there is a risk to animal welfare.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization provides details of the worker or workers who meet this criterion.
- 2) At least one person is available at all times to make sure the slaughterhouse is operational.



4.11.3 The slaughterhouse complies with all applicable legislation on animal welfare and environmental management.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization presents information that demonstrates it is not currently under investigation for, or has been prosecuted for, failure to meet applicable laws and regulations.



4.11.4

All workers unloading, handling, stunning and slaughtering animals are competent to accomplish the tasks required of them, so as to protect animal welfare.

●
Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Workers observed during the audit demonstrate competence and are not seen to do anything that puts animal welfare at risk.
- 2) Workers who are responsible for conducting the procedures listed in this criterion describe, when interviewed, techniques that align with the requirements of the Standard.
- 3) The organization provides details of any internal oversight or evaluation of workers' competence to include areas that are monitored (e.g. the stunning point), and how often monitoring takes place.



4.11.5

Workers responsible for unloading, handling, stunning and slaughtering animals have received training, which includes the following:

●
Major

- a. Animal welfare principles;
- b. Good handling practices;
- c. Identification of sick/injured animals;
- d. Stunning methods and checking effectiveness of stunning; and
- e. Slaughter methods.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization provides details of training programs (whether conducted internally or externally) that cover all the topics listed in the criterion. Details include the name and qualifications of the person delivering the training, the topic(s) covered in each training session, date on which the training took place, and how the success of training is assessed.
- 2) The organization provides a list of workers who handle live animals, and evidence that those workers have successfully completed training relevant to the area(s) in which they work.



4.11.6

Relevant procedures (e.g. posters or pictograms) are in view of workers in a language they understand.

●
Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Relevant procedures are available to all workers, according to their local context and educational capacities.
- 2) Procedures include handling live animals, and stunning and slaughtering processes for the slaughtered species.



4.11.10 Animals are handled humanely; mistreatment of animals at the slaughterhouse does not occur.

 Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for all handling and movement of live animals at the slaughterhouse.
- 2) The slaughterhouse has a strict policy on good handling of animals, and ensures all workers are aware of their responsibilities.
- 3) The organization shall be able to describe its handling methods and how it ensures all its workers handle animals carefully and calmly at all times. For example, the unloading and handling of individual waterfowl and/or transport crates containing live waterfowl is conducted carefully. Waterfowl and/or crates are not thrown or dropped, and movement is smooth and calm.
- 4) Workers know the signs that animals are becoming stressed (e.g. a lot of vocalization) and take actions to reduce this.
- 5) No mistreatment of animals or poor treatment is seen during the audit.
- 6) Mistreatment includes but is not limited to rough physical contact such as kicking, striking, slamming gates on animals, tripping, throwing, or dropping animals, dragging, or pulling animals by the fleece, wings, tail, ears, head, horns, or neck, dragging by the back legs, or lifting by the legs.

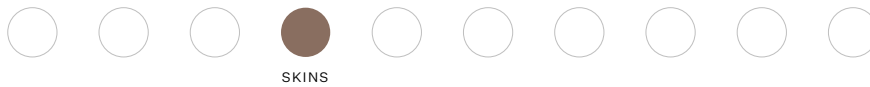


4.11.15 Electric prodders are not used at the slaughterhouse.

 Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No device that administers an electric shock to an animal for any reason is permitted under the Standard. The only exception is the use of electric stunning devices for slaughter.
- 2) “Electric prodders” may also be known as “electric prods”, “hotshots” or by other names.



4.11.16 Animals that are down and unable to rise are euthanized promptly, using a method defined in the Standard.

 Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for animals on transport vehicles that arrive at the slaughterhouse, as well as animals that have been unloaded into pens and other handling areas.
- 2) The organization has clear guidance on when euthanasia is appropriate, and interviewed workers are aware of this guidance.
- 3) Euthanasia takes place using a method described in the Standard. Slaughter without pre-stunning at a slaughterhouse is never acceptable.
- 4) During the audit, no animal that is down and unable to rise is observed, unless the process of euthanasia is underway.
- 5) Once an animal has been identified as being sick, injured or otherwise in need of care, it is never acceptable to then leave it to die.



4.11.17 Holding pens provide enough space for animals to move around and lie down together.

 Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If holding pens are occupied during the audit, animals have sufficient space to move around and lie down without obstruction and the auditor shall check that the maximum number is not exceeded.

- 2) The organization has a plan or list detailing the available holding pens, and the maximum number and type of animals that can be held in each one.



4.11.18 Holding pens provide shade and shelter to maintain animal thermal comfort.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Construction of holding pens is suitable for prevailing conditions. For example, pens may be roofed or not, have full or part walls and passive or active ventilation, depending on potential weather and extreme temperatures.
- 2) If holding pens are occupied during the audit, no signs of animal discomfort are seen (e.g. if animals panting, it is too hot; or if animals shivering and huddling, it is too cold).
- 3) The organization shall be able to describe any necessary adaptations that are made during extremes of temperature (e.g. the provision of electric fans in summer, or the use of curtains or similar windbreaks to fill gaps in winter).



4.11.19 Clean, safe drinking water is always available to the animals in holding pens.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Water that is accessible to the type of animals held in that pen/area can be seen in all holding pens.
- 2) If buckets or troughs have to be manually filled, the organization provides details on how often checks take place and water is topped up.
- 3) Accessibility includes both height of water source and type of water source. If water is provided through any means other than open troughs/buckets (i.e. bite or nipple drinkers), the organization can show that animals are used to this type of drinker and can easily access water.



4.11.20 Animals are fed if they are held for twelve (12) hours or more.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable if animals are held for 12 hours or more.
- 2) If animals may be held for 12 hours or more, the organization has stocks of feed suitable for any animals that might need to be fed, or if this is an uncommon occurrence, the organization can show how it plans for animals that may need to be held for extended periods, where it sources the feed, and any evidence of previously purchased feed (i.e. invoices), and/or evidence that feed is supplied by the farmer for animals that are held for this length of time.
- 3) If animals may be held for 12 hours or more, feeding equipment is available (e.g. racks for hay, or troughs for concentrate feed).



4.11.21 The flooring, in all areas accessed by live animals, provides good traction to prevent animals slipping or falling.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The surface of flooring that may be accessed by live animals is grooved, covered with non-slip mats or some other material that provides good traction.
- 2) Floors are not covered with wet manure to the extent that otherwise non-slip surfaces become slippery.
- 3) If animals are observed during the audit, they are not seen slipping or falling. As a guide, no more than 1% of animals are seen to fall and no more than 3% are seen to slip. If less than 100 animals are observed, the tolerances are one and three respectively.
- 4) Slipping is defined as a situation where an animal loses its footing and/or a portion of the leg, other than the foot, touches the floor.
- 5) Falling is defined as a situation when any part of the body, aside from the legs or feet, touches the ground.



4.11.22 Suitable equipment is available for the slaughter of the species, including reserve equipment.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Primary and reserve stunning equipment are observed at the slaughterhouse. Reserve stunning equipment may be of the same or a different type to the primary stunning equipment, as long as both conform to the Standard.



4.11.23 Stunning/slaughter equipment is well maintained, as per the manufacturer’s instructions.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Both primary and reserve stunning equipment are kept in good working condition.
- 2) The organization can provide details of its maintenance schedule for both primary and reserve equipment, and this conforms to the manufacturers’ instructions.



4.11.33 Animals are stunned prior to slaughter using one of the following methods, ensuring immediate unconsciousness that lasts until death:

Critical

- a. Head only electric stunning;
- b. Head/heart electric stunning;
- c. Penetrating captive bolt guns; or
- d. Firearm.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The available equipment and methods of stunning that are used are appropriate for the species to be slaughtered.
- 2) Stunning causes immediate insensibility, which is maintained until death. For captive bolt and firearm stunning at least 96% of all animals are effectively stunned at the first attempt. If less than 25 animals are scored, the tolerance is one animal.
- 3) For electric stunning, at least 99% of all animals are effectively stunned at the first attempt. If less than 100 animals are scored, the tolerance is one animal.



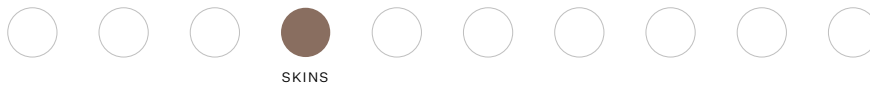
4.11.34 The stunning or killing device is positioned correctly according to the species and the method being used.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) It is observed during the audit that workers can correctly place the device(s) used at the slaughterhouse.
- 2) The correct position for penetrating captive bolt for polled sheep or goats is with the device placed at the intersection of two lines drawn from the outside corner of each eye to the middle of the base of the opposite ear.
- 3) In horned sheep and goats an alternate position and orientation for penetrating captive bolt or gunshot is on a line from the poll and aimed downward towards the back of the throat. An alternative position for placement of the penetrating captive bolt or firearm in horned animals is the front of the skull directing the bolt or bullet toward the spinal cord.
- 4) The correct position for head-only electric stunning electrodes, is so that they span the brain as directly as possible. When scissor-type tongs are used for sheep and goats, the tong position is on either side of the head between the eye and ear.
- 5) For sheep and goats, head/heart electric stunning is likely to be carried out using a device that has electrodes fixed in a handpiece that can deliver head-to-back stunning. The rear electrode is placed in the middle of the back above the heart. The front electrode is placed on the head, level with, or forward of the eyes.



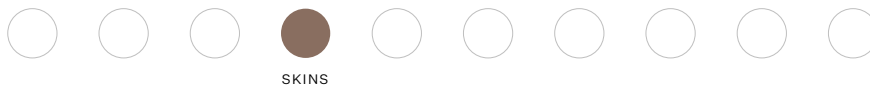
4.11.35 If electrical stunning is used, a minimum current of 1.00 amp (A) is achieved.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If electrical stunning is used, there shall be a way to ensure the minimum current is achieved (e.g. through use of a visible meter where workers check the correct current has been reached before applying the device, or use of devices that will not work unless the minimum current is reached).



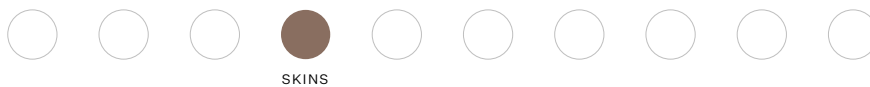
4.11.36 If captive bolts or firearms are used, the appropriate cartridge or propellant for the species is used.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall be able to justify its choice of cartridge or propellant for the animals being slaughtered.
- 2) The right propellant will vary with the device used, and the species, and type of animals to be euthanized or slaughtered.



4.11.37 Animals are not shackled and/or hoisted unless they have first been effectively stunned.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A check is made after the animal is stunned to ensure it is unconscious.
- 2) Animals are not shackled and/or hoisted until a check has been made to confirm that stunning was effective, and the animals are unconscious.
- 3) Checks for consciousness could include corneal reflex, eyelash reflex in response to touch, rhythmic breathing where the ribs move in and out at least twice, spontaneous blinking, vocalization, righting reflex on the rail.



4.11.38 If animals show any sign of consciousness, they are immediately re-stunned.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If there are any signs of an animal returning to consciousness, it is immediately re-stunned.
- 2) Checks for consciousness could include corneal reflex, eyelash reflex in response to touch, rhythmic breathing where the ribs move in and out at least twice, spontaneous blinking, vocalization, righting reflex on the rail.



4.11.39 Animals are checked to ensure they are unconscious before being bled.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Animals are not bled until a check has been made to confirm that stunning was effective, and the animal remains unconscious.
- 2) Checks for consciousness could include corneal reflex, eyelash reflex in response to touch, rhythmic breathing where the ribs move in and out at least twice, spontaneous blinking, vocalization, righting reflex on the rail.



4.11.40 Following stunning, animals shall be bled as soon as possible.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Bleeding takes place without any delay.
- 2) Animals are only stunned when there is someone available to bleed them, and that person is ready and able to perform the bleed cut.
- 3) When multiple animals are stunned in succession, bleeding takes place in the order in which animals were stunned.



4.11.41 Following stunning, animals are bled within fifteen (15) seconds of head-only electrical stunning.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When head-only electrical stunning is used, the point of stun through to bleeding the animal is timed and the average period does not exceed 15 seconds.

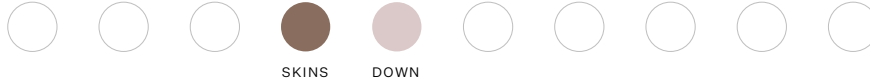


4.11.42 Following stunning, animals are bled within sixty (60) seconds of head/heart electrical stunning, captive bolt stunning, or shooting with a firearm.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When head/heart electrical stunning, captive bolt stunning, or shooting with a firearm are used, the point of stun or shot through to bleeding the animal is timed, and the average period does not exceed 60 seconds.



4.11.43 The bleed wound severs the major blood vessels in the neck and allows rapid blood loss, such that unconsciousness is maintained until the point of death.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For mammalian species, bleeding is carried out by an incision made with a sharp knife in the jugular furrow at the base of the neck, the knife being directed towards the entrance of the chest to sever all the major blood vessels arising from the heart or by an incision made close to the head of the animal using a blade at least 120 mm long to make a cut across the neck that severs both carotid arteries and both jugular veins.
- 2) Blood is seen gushing from the wound.
- 3) At no time are any signs of consciousness seen before the animal is confirmed as being dead.



4.11.44 Death is confirmed prior to further processing, through observing the following:

Major

- a. Fixed dilated pupils;
- b. Lack of corneal response;
- c. No jaw or tongue tone; and
- d. Lack of respiration.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) All the listed signs are checked and confirmed before the animal is moved.
- 2) If there is any doubt that the animal is dead, the stunning/killing method is repeated, and the animal is again monitored to confirm the signs of death.



4.11.45 Animals are not slaughtered in sight of other animals.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When observing slaughter during the audit, it can be seen that slaughtering/bleeding takes place out of sight of other animals (e.g. behind a curtain or around a corner, away from the pens where live animals are held).



Principle 5 – Processing Facility

The organization responsible for the initial processing of *certified materials* within its facilities adopts an environmental management system. This system encompasses proper chemical usage, waste management, water utilization, handling wastewater and *effluents*, air emissions, and energy consumption. Processing facilities are required to enhance resource management through efficiency and continuous improvement.

5.1 Environmental Management System

5.1.1

Major

The organization has an environmental management system (EMS) in place, which includes:

- A designated management level staff person who is responsible for its implementation;
- A procedure for updating the EMS to remain in compliance with applicable legal requirements;
- A procedure for documenting, measuring, and tracking the relevant environmental indicators (e.g. energy use, water use, wastewater/effluent, emissions to air, waste management);
- A plan to develop/review targets annually, and reach meaningful environmental improvements across all indicators (energy use, water use, emissions to air, waste management);
- Procedures and records for training of relevant workers in environmental issues; and
- Updated permits, as required/applicable.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- The environmental management system is appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations.



5.2 Chemical Management and Restrictions

Theme 5.2 addresses the management and use of chemicals by the organization in the manufacturing of certified materials. Even if produced in conformance with the Standard, certified materials may carry traces of residues. Hence, it is the responsibility of the final sellers of certified products to consumers to ensure that the final products being sold meet their own or nominated restricted substance list (RSL), or any legal requirements in the country of sale.

To address the issue of chemicals that might be present in the reclaimed materials that are used as initial inputs in the production chain for recycling, refer to criterion 5.2.15 which focuses on monitoring and testing recycled outputs (*pellets, flakes, filaments, and fibers*) for restricted substances.

5.2.1

Major

The organization has a chemical management system (CMS) in place, which includes the following:

- A mechanism to monitor and meet all the relevant legal requirements related to chemical management;
- Procedures for training of relevant workers in chemical management and, where necessary, training to properly manage the CMS;
- Complete information on all input suppliers, including street address and key contacts; and
- Accurate lists of all chemical inputs used in all materials.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) It is not required that an entire position be dedicated to managing the use of chemicals at the facility, but instead that someone has been assigned the role as part of his/her job responsibilities.



5.2.2

Minor

Each input has a complete and current safety data sheet (SDS), available in English and in any other language(s) used by workers in the facility, which meets the guidelines found in criterion 5.2.5.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The safety data sheets are up to date.
- 2) The chemical supplier should be responsible for the English translations of the safety data sheets.



5.2.3

Minor

In addition to the CMS, the organization maintains the following:

- a. Accurate lists of all chemical inputs used in the certified materials, and
- b. Documentation for each input that demonstrates they are accepted for use in the certified materials.



5.2.4

Major

The organization has and implements a procedure for assessing all the chemicals used in certified materials against the criteria in this theme of the Standard (Chemical Management and Restrictions).



5.2.5

Minor

The organization maintains safety data sheets (SDS), for each substance or *mixture* used in production, which are not more than five (5) years old, and meet at least one of the following:

- a. ANSI Z400.1-2004, which identifies information that must be included to comply with the U.S. OSHA Hazard Communication Standard;
- b. Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (REACH), as adapted to consider the rules for SDS of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), and the implementation of other elements of the GHS into EU legislation that were introduced by Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 (CLP); or
- c. Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Any SDS prepared by country-specific norms that are aligned with GHS, or have implemented GHS, is considered compliant to GHS.



5.2.6



Major

Any chemicals used in processing of certified materials do not contain substances of very high concern (SVHC), as referred to in Article 57 of European Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the registration, evaluation, authorization and restriction of chemicals (REACH), and included in Annex XIV of the Regulation.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Substances still under review by REACH, and not yet listed on the SVHC list, may be used in certified products.
- 2) Exemption to the non-use of SVHC listed chemicals, may depend upon specific end purposes of the product such as high performance or athletic wear, etc.



5.2.7



Recomm

The organization does not use substances or mixtures classified with any of the hazard codes and/or risk phrases listed below:

This list is in accordance with the codification system of the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) as published by the United Nations.

- H300 Fatal if swallowed
- H310 Fatal in contact with skin
- H330 Fatal if inhaled
- H340 May cause genetic defects
- H341 Suspected of causing genetic defects
- H350 May cause cancer
- H351 Suspected of causing cancer
- H360 May damage fertility or the unborn child
- H361 Suspected of damaging fertility or the unborn child
- H370 Causes damage to organs
- H371 May cause damage to organs
- H372 Causes damage to organs through prolonged or repeated exposure
- H400 Very toxic to aquatic life
- H410 Very toxic to aquatic life with long-lasting effects
- H411 Toxic to aquatic life with long-lasting effects
- H413 May cause long-lasting harmful effects to aquatic life
- H420 Harms public health and the environment by destroying ozone in the upper atmosphere
- H433 Harmful to terrestrial vertebrates

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) "Mixtures" refers to chemical formulations sold by chemical manufacturers, having a recognized SDS for the formulation, not to the mixtures made internally during production by facilities.
- 2) This criterion is applicable to commercial chemical formulations used during material manufacturing, e.g. cleaners, detergents, inks, dyes, pigments, spinning additives, flame retardants and anti-static agents.



5.2.16



Recomm

Prior to scouring, the sum totals provided in the list below are not exceeded for wool ectoparasiticide concentrations on raw wool/fibers:

- a. γ -hexachlorocyclohexane (lindane), α -hexachlorocyclohexane, β -hexachlorocyclohexane, δ -hexachlorocyclohexane, aldrin, dieldrin, endrin, p,p'-DDT, p,p'-DDD — 0.5 ppm;
- b. Cypermethrin, deltamethrin, fenvalerate, cyhalothrin, flumethrin — 0.5 ppm;
- c. Diazinon, propetamphos, chlorfenvinphos, dichlofenthion, chlorpyriphos, fenchlorphos — 2 ppm; and
- d. Diflubenzuron, triflumuron, dicyclanil — 2 ppm.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is not applicable if the organization has documentary evidence that establishes:
 - The identity of the farmers producing at least 75% of the wool/fibers in question;
 - That the substances listed in the criterion have not been applied to the animals or the fields where they had been raised, based on independent on-site verification.
- 2) Wool scourers that, through incineration, break down the aforementioned ectoparasiticides that may be present in the scouring residues and sludge, are derogated from the requirement for wool testing, but must comply with at least one of the following measures:
 - Recovery for sale as a chemical feedstock;
 - The production of compost or liquid fertilizer;
 - The manufacturing of products such as building materials; or
 - Treatment and energy recovery by anaerobic digestion or incineration.

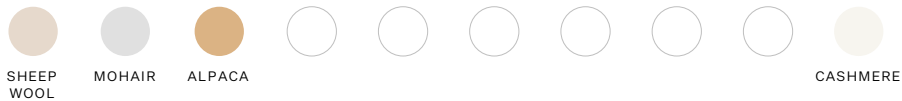


5.2.17



Minor

In the scouring process, the organization uses the optimum amounts of alkali and other chemicals, in accordance with the technical specifications for those products.



5.3 Waste Management

Except where the criterion refers explicitly to reutilization of reclaimed textile material, the criteria in theme 5.3 apply to the management, handling, and disposal of non-fiber related waste generated at the facility.

5.3.1



Minor

The organization has a waste management plan in place to minimize pollution and health risks from organic and other production-related waste.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) “Production-related waste” may include organic, chemical, hazardous, and packaging materials.
- 2) The waste management plan shall include baseline measures, continuous improvement targets, as well as maintaining records of disposal sites.



5.3.2

Procedures for waste inventory, management, storage, and transportation, are in place for all waste streams, which include measures to minimize workers’ health risks, and how to improve environmental safety.

Major



5.3.3

Workers are trained on the proper handling and segregation of waste.

Major



5.3.4

An internal waste inspection is performed annually to establish a baseline measurement and inform the development of continuous improvement targets for the waste management plan.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization’s inspection includes an assessment of a selection of on-site waste disposal and recycling sites and bins, to evaluate the correct implementation of the waste management plan, as well as help guide improvements of processes and training of workers for its implementation.
- 2) The baseline measurement is appropriate to the scale and nature of the operation.



5.3.5

Landfill/incineration avoidance targets are met by five (5) years from initial certification.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Avoidance targets may be based on minimum percentage reductions per waste category and tracked in the waste management plan.



5.3.7

The organization measures and maintains records of the amount of waste produced on a monthly basis.

Major



5.3.8

The organization sets targets for a meaningful reduction in waste production and improvements in waste management and reviews its progress annually.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is that the organization demonstrates its good faith effort to reduce waste. Publicly available targets are not required.
- 2) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic.



5.3.9

The organization routinely looks for and implements ways to increase material reuse and/or recycling.

Recomm



5.3.13

All waste materials are collected, segregated, and treated properly.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall demonstrate its efforts towards the conservation of resources and environmental protection through the planning of waste disposal for all types of waste generated on-site, by implementing a hierarchy of waste management through its waste management plan.
- 2) “Treated properly” means implementing the best available method (depending upon the scale and intensity of the operation) for waste management, such as waste handling, storage, and disposal, each designed to address the distinct types of waste and minimize their potential risks.



5.3.14

Waste collection and recycling programs are used when available.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization makes use of waste collection services and participates in recycling initiatives if such programs are accessible and offered in the area or region.
- 2) Qualifying voluntary programs may include those organized by the municipality, community extension offices, or private collection schemes.



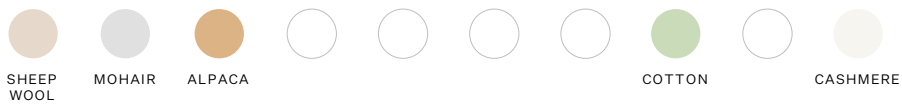
5.3.15

Organic waste may only be burned if necessary to control weeds, pests, and diseases, as indicated by local regulations, or for recognized sustainability purposes. Incinerators or other methods designed for the specific type of waste are used.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization may only burn organic waste and crop residues when in accordance with legal guidelines.
- 2) The sites where these disposal methods take place must follow proper environmental, health, and safety protocols, be indicated in the waste management plan, and be observed during the audit.
- 3) Burning may be recognized as part of a sustainability practice, if used for energy production.



5.3.16

The organization obtains necessary permits/licenses and stays updated on changes to relevant legal requirements and regulations, to ensure ongoing waste management compliance.

Major



5.3.17

Waste contractors have all the required permits.

Major



5.3.18

Hazardous waste is segregated from non-hazardous waste.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) "Hazardous waste," as defined per the categories stipulated by local regulations; or has one or more of the following characteristics: Ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity.
- 2) "Hazardous waste," as defined by CPA, Guidance on Waste Definitions: "The substance or object that does not fulfil all relevant product, environmental and health protection requirements for the specific use, and will lead to overall adverse environmental or human health impacts."



5.4 Water Use and Discharge

5.4.1 The organization sets targets for meaningful improvements in water usage and reviews its progress annually.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is that the organization demonstrates its good faith effort to reduce its water use. Publicly available targets are not required.
- 2) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is, and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic.



5.4.2 The organization measures and maintains a record of its monthly water usage.

Major



5.4.3 The organization monitors its compliance with relevant legal requirements related to its water usage.

Major



5.4.4 The organization monitors and maintains records of its compliance with the relevant legal requirements related to wastewater/effluent.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Off-site treatment: The common effluent treatment plant (CETP) is legally operating by providing the existence of a permit, agreement, or contract with the certified site or with any other system participant, such as the local pollution control board.



5.4.5 The organization has a drainage plan in place, which includes wastewater flow direction and discharge points.

Minor



5.4.6

Major

If an organization elects to treat wastewater on-site, the organization meets requirements in accordance with the Foundational, Progressive and Aspirational Levels for (Heavy Metals, Conventional and Anions) parameters of the latest version of the ZDHC’s Wastewater Guidelines (WWG), or national and local requirements where these are more stringent, before discharging it to the environment.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The timelines to achieve different levels are set in the latest version of the “ZDHC Wastewater Guidelines Industry Standard Implementation Approach”.
- 2) Wool scourers shall meet the following chemical oxygen demand (COD) values for the final discharge of effluent from wool scouring:
 - Coarse wool: 25 g COD/kg of greasy wool; and
 - Fine wool: 45 g COD/kg of greasy wool.
- 3) MMCF manufacturers shall follow the “Wastewater” chapter of the latest version of the “ZDHC MMCF Guidelines.”
- 4) The latest version of the ZDHC WWG under its scope does not cover effluent discharge from polymer manufacturing, dissolving pulp, and raw wool scouring, but whenever ZDHC releases a version with dedicated guidance around those, the organization shall follow it.
- 5) For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.



5.4.7

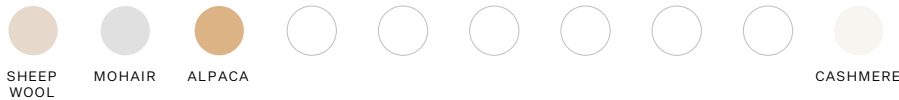
Recomm

Scourers for wool and other animal fibers with on-site treatment for effluent discharge have at least one of the following measures to recover value from either oxidized grease, fiber, suint, or sludge arising from the scouring:

- a. Recovery for sale as a chemical feedstock;
- b. The production of compost or liquid fertilizer;
- c. The manufacturing of products such as building materials; or
- d. Treatment and energy recovery by anaerobic digestion or incineration.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Scourers for wool and other animal fibers who implement this criterion shall be exempted from testing of ectoparasiticides on raw wool prior to scouring (ref. criterion 5.2.16).



5.4.8

Major

Wastewater testing is conducted at least every six (6) months by trained people (staff, or external service providers) and using equipment as directed by the ZDHC’s approved wastewater testing laboratories.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for organizations with an on-site treatment facility.
- 2) The organization shall provide evidence of training and equipment used.



5.4.9

Where an organization chooses to treat wastewater offsite, it ensures that the treatment facility has adequate capacity for the volume of wastewater to be received.

Minor



5.4.10

Sludge from the water treatment system is properly treated and disposed of.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For organizations with on-site treatment: The organization shall provide a copy of the valid contract between the site and the sludge disposal contractor.
- 2) For organizations with off-site treatment: Sludge generated by the CETP meets local legal parameters.



5.4.11

Reverse osmosis water treatment is used on wastewater after it is discharged from the processing system.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.4.12

An automatic control system is in place to provide water for the scouring process.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.4.13

The organization has a system in place to reuse water before it is discharged to maximize the resource and reduce overall water use.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.5 Air Emissions

5.5.1 The organization has a plan in place to monitor, measure, and reduce air pollutants and greenhouse gases (GHG) generated by the processing facility.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).
- 2) The organization should have a documented plan in place which details the monitoring and measurement approach for air pollutants and GHG emissions (including the specific air pollutants). This covers the method followed for monitoring and measurement, including the time over which monitoring, and measurement takes place. The method should also document the scope of the operations included.
- 3) In addition to or contained within the documented monitoring and measurement plan, the organization should have a documented approach in place that demonstrates actions being taken to reduce air pollutants and GHG emissions.



5.5.2 The organization sets targets for meaningful reduction of air emissions and reviews its progress annually.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).
- 2) “Air emissions” can include air pollutants and GHG.
- 3) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is, and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic and whether material air emissions are included within the target scope.
- 4) The auditor should check that the targets set are SMART targets for air emissions.
- 5) The auditor should check that annual progress against targets is documented.



5.5.3 The organization meets all relevant legal requirements related to air emissions and maintains monitoring records.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.5.4 The organization maintains up-to-date permits, as required/applicable.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.5.5 The organization maintains an inventory of main point source emissions to the air.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).
- 2) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines “point source pollution” as “any single identifiable source of pollution from which pollutants are discharged, such as a pipe, ditch, or factory smokestack.”



5.5.6 The potential for fugitive emissions is regularly assessed and addressed, as necessary.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.5.7 Equipment containing Ozone-depleting substances (ODS), or any other potential air pollutants, undergoes regular maintenance to prevent and detect fugitive emissions.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The list of ODS under the Montreal Protocol can be found at [this website](#).



5.6 Energy Use

5.6.1 The organization has a written energy management plan in place to track and monitor the use of all energy inputs for the purposes of improving energy efficiency and reducing fossil-fuel based energy sources over time.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Energy inputs monitored at the facility level include fuel use for machinery and electricity consumption (kWh) onsite.



5.6.2

The organization meets all the relevant legal requirements related to energy use and maintains monitoring records.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization is aware of all current local, regional, and national laws and regulations related to energy use, and regularly reviews the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements to ensure compliance. This may include laws related to energy efficiency, emissions, renewable energy, and other energy-related matters.



5.6.3

The organization measures and maintains records of its energy usage on a monthly basis.

Major



5.6.4

The organization sets targets for meaningful improvements in energy usage and reviews its progress annually.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is, and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic.



5.6.5

The organization employs the use of any available renewable energies (e.g. biofuels, biogas, solar, or wind energy), produced on site or procured, for some or all of its energy needs.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The use of renewable energies is recorded in the energy management plan and used to yield a percentage of total energy utilization as renewable.



5.6.6

The organization is moving towards renewable energy as its main source of electricity.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) "Renewable energy" can mean solar, wind, hydro/water, biogas, geothermal and any other non-fossil-fuel sources.



5.6.7

The organization is moving towards energy-efficient equipment by replacing old, inefficient equipment to help reduce energy use.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The following are characteristics for preferred equipment for scouring and slaughter:
 - For the scouring process: an automatic system to control the temperature of water is in place; energy sources like solar or geothermal are used; coal fired boilers are not used or eliminated over time.
 - For the slaughter process: energy sources like solar or geothermal are used; coal fired boilers are not used or eliminated over time.
- 2) The following are characteristics for preferred equipment for cotton processing:
 - The motor of the seed cotton conveyor (used for the preparation and feeding stage of the cotton gin process) has an energy efficiency of at least IE3 (International Efficiency, class 3).
 - An automatic and complete set of equipment is used in the seed cotton conveyor, with interlocking control between each piece of equipment.
 - In the drying stage of the ginning process: a moisture monitoring system is installed to help control the hot air and heat exchanger efficiently; the temperature of hot air and the contact time between hot air and seed cotton is controlled automatically; high efficiency heat exchange equipment is used for heat blower and heat exchanger; all heat media distribution pipes are well-insulated; the surface temperature of surface of these pipes should be lower than 50°C (122°F); heat and water from the steam-condensate is recovered; use of the pneumatic system is avoided; low efficiency heat fans and heat exchangers are eliminated; coal-fueled boilers are not used or eliminated over time.
 - In the ginning process: energy sources like solar or geothermal are used; the power consumption per bale of lint (500 lb or less) is no more than 35 kWh; an automatic set of equipment for the sawtooth gin is adopted, with an interlocking control system.
 - In the fleece stripping stage of the ginning process, the sawtooth fleece stripping machine uses an energy efficient motor (higher than IE3).
 - In the processing and stripping stage of the ginning process, the sawtooth stripping machine adopts an automatic set of equipment, with an interlocking control system.
 - In the moistening stage of the ginning process, high precision cotton moisture testing equipment is used.
 - In the cotton humidification stage of the ginning process: the pumps are Variable Speed and Flow (VSF) model; the humidification control system has an automatic control and display system. The key process parameters can be displayed in real time and can be automatically adjusted.
 - In the lint humidification stage of the ginning process: the temperature of the wet air and the contact time of the lint can be controlled automatically; high-efficiency heat exchange equipment is used.



Principle 6 – Chain of Custody

The organization demonstrates credible chain of custody for the tracking and handling of certified materials by maintaining the identity of these materials as well as necessary records, including those used for establishing initial volumes of certified materials originating in tier 4. Systems cover annual volume reconciliation, sales of certified materials including eligible claims, and, when applicable, the optional use of approved logos and claims.

6.1 Material Handling

6.1.1



Major

The organization keeps the certified material properly identified and physically separated from any non-certified material.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If all material on site is certified under the Standard, then this criterion is optional.
- 2) “Properly identified” is up to each organization to define; as long as the system is internally clear to all workers (i.e. to avoid confusion of materials by any staff and/or contractors), it could be a color identification, number codes, any chosen legend, signal, etc.



6.1.2

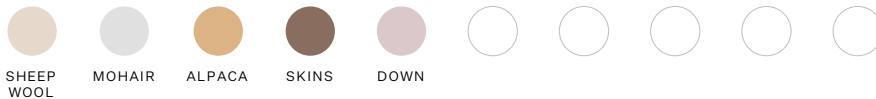


Major

If the organization has storage facilities, the organization has procedures in place to prevent commingling or substitution of the certified material with other materials.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion emphasizes the necessity of a clear and effective system for identifying certified materials within a storage facility. The intent is not to mandate a physically distant segregation of certified and non-certified sections within the warehouse. Rather, the focus lies on implementing a robust identification mechanism to distinguish certified materials throughout the storage space, considering distinct units and the characteristics of the material. In some cases, it may be necessary for the certified materials to be labelled directly, while in others, it will be sufficient for storage containers or areas to use clear signage. It may also be possible that no identification is needed, as in the example of an organization’s storage facility that operates only with certified material under the Standard.



6.1.3



Major

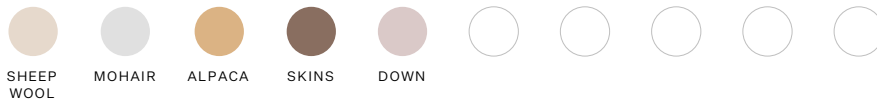
If the organization outsources storage services to a subcontractor, the organization is acting as a contracting organization and the following requirements are met:

- a. The subcontractor does not have common ownership with the contracting organization;
- b. The organization maintains full responsibility for the subcontractor’s conformity with the Standard;
- c. The organization receives approval from its certification body and an updated scope certificate prior to outsourcing to a new subcontractor;
- d. The organization classifies each subcontractor as either:
 - i. An associated subcontractor who is not independently certified to the Standard, and who is audited as needed under the organization’s scope certificate; or
 - ii. An independently certified subcontractor who holds its own scope certificate to the Standard;

- e. The organization maintains a list of all subcontractors who may be used to store certified materials, including the subcontractor’s name, address, contact details, and a description of the outsourced storage activities; and
- f. For independently certified subcontractors, the organization’s records include the subcontractor’s certification body, TE-ID, and the scope certificate expiration date.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) By definition, a subcontractor does not have common ownership with the contracting organization.



6.1.4


Major

If the organization outsources storage services to a non-certified subcontractor, the organization has a valid contract with each associated subcontractor which identifies the work to be outsourced and requires that the subcontractor:

- a. Meets all applicable certification criteria of the Standard;
- b. Maintains physical separation of the certified material from all other materials present at the subcontractor’s site;
- c. Agrees to allow the organization’s certification body to conduct audits of the subcontractor in accordance with the Standard;
- d. Does not make any claims related to the Standard, including claims of the subcontractor being certified to the Standard or any use of the Standard’s logo; and
- e. Does not further outsource any storage of the certified material.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Associated subcontractors are audited by the contracting organization’s certification body, on a risk basis, and are not permitted to further outsource any storage of the certified material.



6.1.5


Major

If the organization outsources storage services to an independently certified subcontractor, the organization has a valid contract with each subcontractor which identifies the work to be outsourced and requires that the subcontractor:

- a. Meets all the applicable certification criteria of the Standard under its own certified system;
- b. Informs the organization within seven (7) calendar days of any changes in its certification status, including suspension, withdrawal, expiry, or recertification; and
- c. Provides the organization with an updated scope certificate upon recertification.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A subcontractor may choose to hold an individual scope certificate (i.e. an independently certified subcontractor) but is not required to. Independently certified subcontractors are not subject to an additional audit as part of the contracting organization’s audit/certification. Independently certified subcontractors are permitted to further outsource any storage of the certified material, subject to the requirements of the Standard.



6.2 Volume Reconciliation

6.2.1 The organization maintains records of the following:

Major

- a. Volumes of material produced or collected;
- b. Volumes of material sold as certified under each applicable scope certificate;
- c. Volumes of material sold as non-certified under each applicable scope certificate; and
- d. Volumes of material (certified and non-certified) in stock.



6.2.2 The organization calculates, and retains a record of, the capacity of the individual farm in terms of quantity of material (i.e. yield) which can be produced each year.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The farm's operational capacity aligns with the projected annual production volume. The organization undertakes robust calculations, providing justifications that lead to a credible assessment of the farm capacity.
- 2) This is needed to measure the organization's potential, and as a prerequisite to conduct volume reconciliation. Describing an organization's capacity includes land area and usage, number of animals, yield per animal, and other relevant factors.
- 3) The determination of animal fibers involves assessing the count of animals and the yield from each individual animal. For down production, the organization considers the frequency of animal cycles within a year.
- 4) Farm capacity is calculated per farm. For group certification the group manager may assist with this task.



6.2.3 The organization conducts an annual volume reconciliation which demonstrates that the volume of material sold as certified is credible based on the balance of materials produced, sold (with or without certification claims), and any existing inventory.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The objective of volume reconciliation is to ensure that the certified output volume is credible based on the farm capacity.
- 2) For group certification, the volume reconciliation may be done by the group manager instead of by each group member.
- 3) A suggested template will be provided for optional use by the organization.



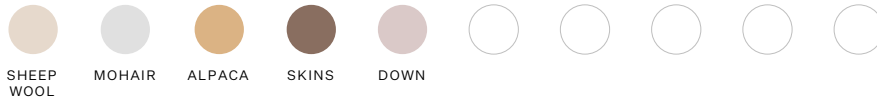
6.3 Sale of Certified Materials

6.3.1 The organization holds a valid Materials Matter scope certificate whenever the material is shipped or sold with certification claims. Otherwise, the material shall not be considered to be certified.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The seller organization is always required to hold a valid scope certificate in order to sell materials as certified. Any material which is processed, shipped, and sold by the applicant before a scope certificate is issued, or after a scope certificate expires, shall not be considered as certified, and is not eligible for a *transaction certificate*.



6.3.2



Major

The material is *eligible* to be sold as certified by a recently certified organization if it first becomes certified no later than one (1) year after the time the animals were shorn, providing the following points are met:

- a. No critical non-conformities were found at the initial audit;
- b. The shorn material is traceable to the certified farm(s); and
- c. For sheep wool only, the farm has never mulesed or has achieved “*ceased mulesing status*” at least one (1) year prior to the certification audit.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The seller is always required to hold a valid scope certificate in order to sell materials as certified. Any material which is processed, shipped, or sold by the applicant before a scope certificate is issued, or after a scope certificate expires, shall not be considered as certified, and is not eligible for a *transaction certificate*.



6.3.3

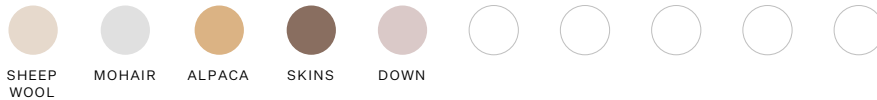


Major

The organization applies for a transaction certificate (TC) from its certification body when it sells materials with a certification claim to another Materials Matter certified buyer.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If the organization is selling materials from a certified source, but the organization does not want or need to make certification claims to its buyer, there is no need to request a transaction certificate to cover the shipment. However, in that case, the buyer is unable to make certification claims on those materials, regardless of if the buyer holds a scope certificate or not.
- 2) For group certification, the group manager requests transaction certificates from its certification body for each sale of certified material on behalf of its group members. A farm group member may request transaction certificates from the certification body, provided that prior notice to the group manager has been given and the group manager has granted permission to do so to the farm group member.



6.3.4



Major

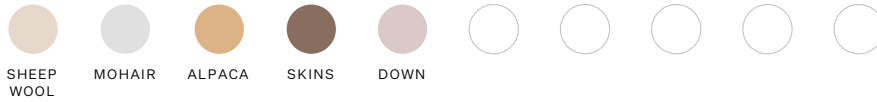
The transaction certificate application includes documented proof of the sale of certified material. The organization provides the information requested by the certification body, which may include but is not limited to:

- a. Invoices, purchase orders, financial records, third party material quality test reports, and shipping documents (e.g. government transportation documents) that show the outgoing materials have been sold to the named buyer of the materials; and
- b. The identity of the certified materials, quality, and quantities.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) It is important to apply for a transaction certificate as soon as possible after the order is shipped. Transaction certificate applications received by the certification body more than 90 days after the shipment date or after a change in certification

bodies might not be eligible for a transaction certificate. For exact transaction certificate application timelines, please refer to the Policy for Transaction Certificates.



6.4 Logo Use and Claims

6.4.1 The Materials Matter trademarks and/or claims are only used by certified organizations with a valid scope certificate, in accordance with the Materials Matter Claims & Labeling Policy.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The Materials Matter trademarks include the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label.



6.4.2 The Materials Matter Certified label and/or claims are only used with reference to certified materials that have a valid transaction certificate, and are eligible for labeling, in accordance with the Materials Matter Claims & Labeling Policy.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The Materials Matter trademarks include the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label.



6.4.3 Approval is obtained in accordance with the Materials Matter Claims & Labeling Policy prior to use of any public facing Materials Matter trademarks and/or claims.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The Materials Matter trademarks include the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label.



Principle 7 – Group Certification

The organization implementing a group certification model designates a group manager responsible for creating and implementing a *group management system* to guide the work of the group members (i.e. individual producers) towards the efficient use of technical and financial resources.

7.1 Group Configuration

7.1.1

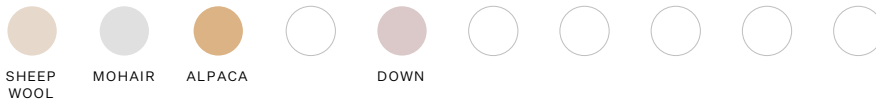


Critical

The group is managed by a legal entity which represents the entirety of the group members and is considered to be the applicant or certified organization on behalf of its members.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) “Legal entity” in this context can be a legally established organization (e.g. a commercial enterprise, an association, a cooperative, a non-governmental organization, etc.) or an individual person having the necessary legal authorization to operate in the materials’ producing country.
- 2) The legal entity acting as the applicant or certified organization can either act as the group manager or hire another party to play the group manager’s role on behalf of the certified organization.
- 3) A legal entity can manage more than one certified group, provided it has sufficient capacity and resources to manage more than one scope certificate, and that each certified group is managed by a different group manager.
- 4) Group members can be either farm owners or communal farmers (as defined in criterion 7.1.3 below).
- 5) The group members understand that either the legal entity or the group manager is the applicant or certified organization that is acting on their behalf as group members.



7.1.2



Major

The organization, the group manager, and all group members are all located within a single country or within Europe.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Under this context, Europe is defined as the countries which belong to the European Union, plus the United Kingdom, Norway, and Switzerland.
- 2) For communal farmer groups (including producers of mammal animals and waterfowl): any given farm member shall be located within a straight-line distance of 500 km from its group manager’s headquarters.



7.1.3



Major

If the group is made of communal farmers, the group manager maintains evidence that each member meets the following qualifying criteria:

- a. The farmer faces significant economic constraints, such as a lack of capital assets and low access to finance (i.e. lack of economies of scale); and
- b. The farmer faces significant information constraints, including a lack of technical knowledge and low access to market information.
- c. The farmer shall also meet at least two of the following criteria:
 - i. The farmer has little or no land security;
 - ii. The farmer is independent and not affiliated with a company for which he/she produces fibers;
 - iii. The farm relies on the farmer’s family work;
 - iv. Animal fibers are the farmer’s primary source of income;

- v. The farm uses relatively low levels of agricultural inputs and has comparatively low yields relative to the range of yields for the given commodity and context; and/or
- vi. The farm has a relatively small land footprint.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for communal farmer group certificates.
- 2) A farmer does not necessarily have to share land with other farmers in order to qualify for communal farmer group certification.



7.2 Group Management System

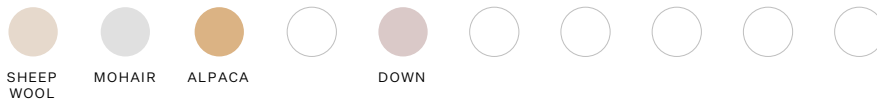
7.2.1 The organization has a group management system in place.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group management system is a system developed by the group manager with input from all its group members, consisting of documented procedures, templates, and non-verbal instructions, which helps the group to effectively organize and achieve its objectives (i.e. all responsibilities are clearly assigned). The group management system provides the necessary framework and processes for managing the group, supporting, and monitoring the group members, and it allocates resources to implement the activities required to ensure conformance with the applicable criteria of the Standard.



7.2.2 The organization appoints a group manager, who is responsible for leading the group management system and for ensuring conformity to the relevant Standard requirements by all group members.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Ideally, the group manager should be part of the same organization representing the group members (i.e. the legal entity); however, the group manager could also be a different entity delegated by the organization (e.g. a contracted person, or a consulting firm hired for that specific purpose).



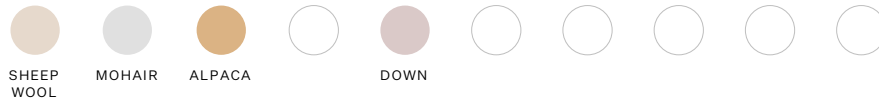
7.2.3 The group manager assigns responsibilities among the different roles in the group (e.g. management employees, members, contractors, etc.), depending on who is better equipped to deliver results demonstrating the group meets the relevant criteria of the Standard.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager is free to assign responsibilities to the different roles in the group, as long as all relevant requirements are adequately covered by knowledgeable and capable persons, and conformance is demonstrated by each member of the group.


7.2.4


Critical

The group management system incorporates documented procedures detailing how the group certificate is managed, including procedures for at least the following elements:

- a. Approving and sanctioning of group members;
- b. Maintaining records;
- c. Training of group members and management employees (e.g. officers, assistants, internal inspectors);
- d. Mechanisms to address members' grievances;
- e. Conducting internal inspections of group members to assess their conformance with the Standard;
- f. Follow-up on corrective actions raised to group members; and
- g. Monitoring logo use and claims by the group and group members for conformity.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager has written procedures covering all the required elements to an appropriate level of detail and can demonstrate that they are being followed.
- 2) For accepting and adding new communal farmer group members, the group manager records the assessment of their eligibility.
- 3) Group members' grievances may include the right to appeal any sanctions imposed by the group manager, issues related to membership rights/payments, and volume reconciliation, among others.


7.2.5


Major

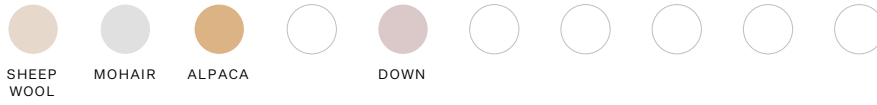
The group manager maintains the following records:

- a. A documented management structure of the system (i.e. an organizational chart);
- b. A complete and updated list of group members;
- c. A signed membership agreement for each member which specifies the member is part of a scope certificate, and the rights and obligations of group members including to receive periodic inspections by the group manager and to be audited by its certification body;
- d. A completed version of the farm questionnaire for each farm;
- e. Polygon data (i.e. GIS shapefiles), for each farm, showing the location and extent of farmland;
- f. Records of internal inspections for all members, showing the site's conformity or non-conformity with all applicable criteria;
- g. Records of any group members who are also part of another scope certificate, including the name of the certified organization and type of certification (e.g. individual or group); and
- h. For communal farmer groups only: copies of the group level records and plans.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager shall provide written records that cover all requirements in the criterion.
- 2) If the group is made of communal farmers 7.2.5.g. is not applicable. Members of communal farmer groups may only be part of the single scope certificate applicable to the communal farmer group.
- 3) 7.2.5.h. only applies to communal farmer groups. In other farm groups, each individual member is expected to have its specific own records and plans, unless otherwise indicated.
- 4) Regarding conformity levels:
 - If the group manager partially meets each requirement; for example, it has details for all but one member, the level of conformity shall be minor.
 - If the group manager has details for most members, but not all, the level of conformity shall be major.

- If the group manager has no details at all for one or more of the requirements of the criteria, the level of conformity shall be critical.



7.2.6

The group manager supports its group members to meet all the relevant criteria listed in the applicable principles of the Standard.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager ensures all group members comply with all the applicable criteria of the Standard (i.e. other principles of the Standard), depending on their specific scope and circumstances for the material(s) they produce.



7.3 Group Member Requirements

7.3.1

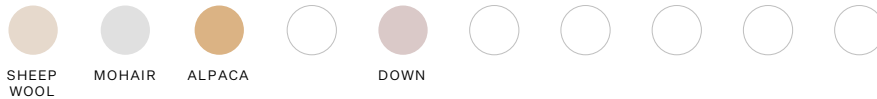
Group members have access to, and understand the relevant criteria of the Standard, and are aware of consequences of non-conformity.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager ensures that all group members understand what needs to be done to meet the criteria of the Standard, and that they are aware of what happens and what they need to do should there be non-conformity. This includes understanding the differences between the levels of conformity that apply.



7.3.2

Group members and group management employees (including internal inspectors), are provided with training regarding the Standard, which is sufficient to ensure they understand how to meet their responsibilities.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization has records to show that group members and group management employees have received training.
- 2) Through interviews, the auditor can verify that they understand how to meet their responsibilities and are equipped to do so.



7.4 Inspection of Members

7.4.1

Major

The group manager documents and implements an inspection protocol to ensure that all the relevant standard criteria are met by all group members, including:

- a. A process for addressing non-conformities by any member (e.g. identification, grading, follow-up until closure or suspension), and for keeping records of non-conformities issued and closed, with explanation of the corrective actions taken;
- b. If needed, the group manager designates inspectors to carry out the internal inspections;
- c. The group manager ensures on-site inspections for each of the group members take place. These will either be conducted annually by internal inspectors or at intervals according to risk level by the certification body following specific guidelines defined in the Certification Procedures;
- d. A written inspection report is prepared after each inspection, identifying findings and all non-conformities; and
- e. The group manager ensures group members are aware that they may be selected for annual sample audits according to the risk assessment done by the certification body and must be prepared for possible additional visits by the certification body without notice.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager can provide a copy of its inspection protocol, which includes all points listed in the criterion.
- 2) The internal inspectors cannot conduct inspections to immediate family members or to their own operations.
- 3) The internal inspectors collect and keep means of verification (e.g. pictures or other records) of key findings, especially when issuing non-conformities.
- 4) The group manager can provide copies of written internal inspection reports conducted to its members, upon request by its certification body and by Textile Exchange.



7.5 Adding and Removing Members

7.5.1

Major

The group manager ensures that new members are added to the group only after all the following conditions are met:

- a. The group manager receives a signed membership agreement by each member;
- b. The group manager receives a completed version of the farm questionnaire for each farm;
- c. The group manager receives the polygon data (i.e. GIS shapefiles), for each farm, showing the location and amount of farmland;
- d. The internal inspector has completed an inspection of the site; or its certification body has conducted an audit of the site in case the group manager has declined to conduct internal inspections;
- e. All critical and major non-conformities for the site have been closed; and
- f. The group manager receives approval from its certification body for the addition of the new member.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager shall demonstrate that new members are only added to the group once all the elements of the criterion have been met.
- 2) Unless a farmer is member of a communal farmer group, a group member may be part of more than one scope certificate, including individual certificate or another group certificate. Different scope certificates may be for the same or for different materials.

3) When a new member joins a communal farmer group, the group manager reviews the group level plans with the new member and makes any amendments to ensure these plans continue to reflect the group situation.



7.5.2

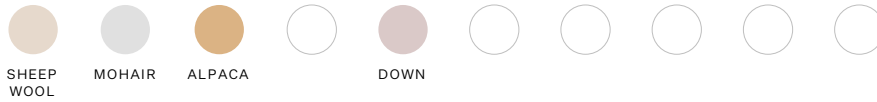


Critical

The group manager is responsible for removing members from the group when necessary to ensure that the group certificate continues to meet the Standard.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Possible reasons for removal of a group member include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Voluntary withdrawal by the member;
 - Non-payment of agreed fees to the group manager by the member;
 - Inability to close an open non-conformity; and/or
 - Repetitive non-conformities; among others the group manager may define.



7.5.3

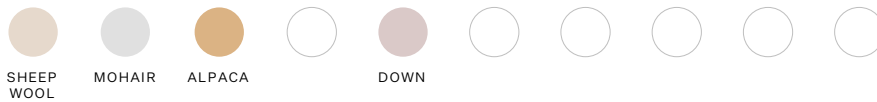


Critical

When a member is removed from the group, the group manager notifies both the affected group member and its certification body of the removal and reason for removal in writing within two (2) weeks of the date of the formal decision.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Possible reasons for removal of a group member include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Voluntary withdrawal by the member;
 - Non-payment of agreed fees to the group manager by the member;
 - Inability to close an open non-conformity; and/or
 - Repetitive non-conformities; among others the group manager may define.



Appendix A: Acronyms

| | |
|-------|---|
| AFi | Accountability Framework initiative |
| AI | Artificial insemination |
| ANSI | American National Standards Institute |
| BCS | Body condition score |
| BMP | Biodiversity management plan |
| BREFs | Best available techniques reference documents |
| CB | Certification body |
| CBA | Collective bargaining agreement |
| CETP | Common effluent treatment plant |
| CMR | Carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic |
| CMS | Chemical management system |
| COD | Chemical oxygen demand |
| CPA | Circular Plastics Alliance |
| DG | Dissolving grade |
| EC | European Commission |
| EMS | Environmental management system |
| FPIC | Free, prior, and informed consent |
| GHG | Greenhouse gas |
| GHS | Globally Harmonized System of classification and labelling of chemicals |
| GIS | Geographic information system |
| GM | Genetically modified |
| GMO | Genetically modified organisms |
| IHRB | Institute for Human Rights and Business |
| IP/LC | Indigenous Peoples/Local Communities |
| IPM | Integrated pest management |
| KBA | Key biodiversity areas |
| MEL | Monitoring, evaluation, and learning |

| | |
|-------|---|
| MMCF | Manmade cellulosic fibers |
| ODS | Ozone-depleting substances |
| OSHA | Occupational Safety and Health Administration |
| PAN | Pesticide Action Network |
| POP | Persistent organic pollutants |
| PPE | Personal protective equipment |
| RAF | Responsible animal fibers |
| REACH | Registration, evaluation, authorization, and restriction of chemicals |
| RSL | Restricted substance list |
| RTRS | Round Table on Responsible Soy |
| SDS | Safety data sheet |
| SVHC | Substances of very high concern |
| TC | Transaction certificate |
| WWG | Wastewater Guidelines |
| ZDHC | Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals |

Appendix B: Terms and Definitions

Agroecology:

An integrated approach that applies ecological concepts and principles for the design and management of agricultural systems to optimize interactions among plants, animals, humans, and the environment.

Agroforestry:

Agroforestry involves the deliberate growing of trees and shrubs with crops and/or animals in interacting combination for a variety of objectives.

Auditor:

Person with the competence to conduct an audit. Referred to the certification body's representative on site, auditing an organization to confirm conformance with the Standard.

Biodegradable:

Capable of decomposing rapidly by microorganisms under natural conditions (aerobic and/or anaerobic). Most organic materials, such as food scraps and paper are biodegradable.

Biodiversity:

The total variety of all Earth's species (above and below ground), their genetic variation, and the ecosystems they form.

Biodiversity hotspots:

Regions that contain a high level of species diversity, many endemic species, and/or a significant number of threatened or endangered species.

Biosynthetics:

Synthetic fibers that are wholly or partially derived from biobased resources (i.e. biomaterials). Biosynthetics can be made from a variety of biomass feedstocks. The main feedstocks currently used for biosynthetics are high sugar or starch-containing agricultural crops such as corn, sugar beet, sugarcane, and — to a minor extent — also wheat and cassava, as well as oil crops such as castor.

Body condition score:

System of measuring the fat and muscle cover of an animal — and therefore how good its nutrition and health has been — by reference to a standardized scale, normally from 1.0 (very thin) to 5.0 (obese).

Buffer zones:

Areas of land that are maintained next to, or around, sensitive and/or natural ecosystems, to protect them against harmful impacts (include buffer strips and areas).

Captive bolt gun:

Device used to stun animals prior to slaughter or euthanasia. The gun has a retractable steel bolt that, when operated correctly, hits the head of the animal with sufficient force so as to render it instantly unconscious. Captive bolts may be penetrating or non-penetrating.

Carding:

A mechanical process that disentangles, cleans, and intermixes fibers to produce a continuous web or sliver suitable for subsequent processing.

Carrying capacity:

The average number of animals that can be placed on a pasture for a year without harming it. It is a measure of the pasture's ability to produce enough forage to meet the requirements of grazing animals. Carrying capacity may change from year to year, depending on climate and other factors.

Ceased mulesing:

Wool from sheep where mulesing has ceased on the property. No lambs born on the property in the last 12 months have been mulesed. No sheep purchased in the last 12 months and/or following certification are mulesed.

Certified material:

Formerly referred as "Claimed Material" for any material produced under the rules of a certification system, indicating that adequate confidence is provided that the material is in conformity with the Materials Matter Standard, for instance.

Child labor:

Work that is performed by a child which is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful to children and/or interferes with their schooling. Child labor is addressed in the ILO Conventions on child labor. Age of work and general protections against child labor are covered in Convention No. 138 and Recommendation No. 146. The "worst forms of child labor" are addressed in further detail in ILO Convention No. 182 and Recommendation No.190.

Collective bargaining:

A means by which employers and their organizations and trade unions agree and establish wages and working conditions and ensure equal opportunities for different genders and groups. The right to organize and collective bargaining is rooted in the ILO Constitution and the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. It is found in ILO convention No. 98, which "provides that workers shall enjoy adequate protection against acts of anti-union discrimination, including requirements that a worker not join a union or relinquish trade union membership for employment, or dismissal of a worker because of union membership or participation in union activities."

Collective bargaining agreement:

Formalized agreement established through the process of collective bargaining, whereby workers and employer bargain to agree on wages and working conditions.

Colostrum:

Milk produced by female mammals in the first day after giving birth. This milk has a higher fat content than normal milk and is particularly rich in proteins and antibodies. A young animal needs to receive sufficient colostrum so that it can acquire immunity.

Comber noil:

Comber noil is a by-product of the cotton yarn spinning industry produced when cotton is combed to remove short fibers. Due to being a low-trash product, it has varied uses in security paper, medical industry and also as a blend for good quality cotton in open end spinning.

Communal farmer:

The farmer who meets the following three conditions:

- 1) The farmer faces significant economic constraints, such as a lack of capital assets and low access to finance (i.e. lack of economies of scale);
- 2) The farmer faces significant information constraints, including a lack of technical knowledge and low access to market information; and
- 3) The farmer shall also meet at least two of the following:
 - The farmer has little or no land security;
 - The farmer is independent and not affiliated with a company for which he/she produces fibers;
 - The farm relies on the farmer's family work;
 - Animal fibers are the farmer's primary source of income;
 - The farm uses relatively low levels of agricultural inputs and has comparatively low yields relative to the range of yields for the given commodity and context; and/or
 - The farm has a relatively small land footprint.

Competent person:

Someone who has acquired the knowledge to safely and humanely carry out a specific task or operation.

Contractor:

A contractor may be:

- Any legal entity (individual or company) that is hired to perform work for another individual or organization on a contract basis. This encompasses individuals hired for specific tasks, often due to their specialized expertise or skills, such as shearing, tail docking, or applying fertilizers; or
- Third-party (hiring) agency that offers labor recruitment to carry out an activity to deliver a product or service.

Conversion:

The change of a natural ecosystem to another land use or profound change in a natural ecosystem's species composition, structure, or function. Conversion includes severe degradation, or the introduction of management practices that result in substantial and sustained change in the ecosystem's former species composition, structure, or function.

Cotton lint:

The fibrous coat that covers the cotton seed.

Deforestation:

The loss of natural forest as a result of conversion to agriculture or other non-forest land use. It also includes the conversion of natural forest to a tree plantation or severe and sustained degradation.

Dissolved grade (DG) pulp/Dissolving pulp:

Dissolving pulp, also called dissolving grade pulp, is bleached wood pulp or cotton linters that has a high cellulose content (>90%). Dissolving pulp is so named because it is not made into paper but dissolved either in a solvent or by derivatization into a homogeneous solution, which can be spun into textile fibers.

Down:

The fine plumage on a waterfowl that sits under the outer feathers. For simplicity, the term "down" in the Standard refers to all plumage including feathers and down. All standard requirements for down are applied to the production of both down and feathers from waterfowl.

Dyed fiber:

The dyeing takes place at the fiber stage before fibers are spun into yarn.

Effluent:

The wastewater discharge from industrial facilities.

Electric prodder:

Handheld object also known as "electric prod" or "hotshot" used to administer an electric shock when an animal is touched with it.

Electric stunning:

Passing a current through the brain of an animal to render it instantly insensible. Stunning through the head can be followed by stunning the heart which causes death.

Eligible material:

Formerly referred as "Claimed Material" for any pre-consumer or post-consumer materials used as feedstocks for the production of Materials Matter certified products. Under the recognition program, a certified (under a certification program different than the Materials Matter) feedstock can become an eligible material to be used for the production of Materials Matter certified products.

Emasculator:

A tool for castrating a male animal. There are different types of emasculators. Some contain a blade/scalpel to completely remove the testes, and others work by clamping the spermatic cords with no blade or cutting. Those that use a blade are treated in the same way as a scalpel in this standard.

Employee:

A person who is employed to do physical or mental work for wages in order to earn a living, as in a trade, industry, business, office, or on a farm, ranch, etc.

Employer Pays Principle:

No worker should pay for a job — the costs of recruitment should be borne not by the worker but by the employer. IHRB mentions that migrant workers frequently pay fees to agencies and brokers for recruitment and placement in jobs abroad.

Euthanasia:

The act of killing a terminally ill or hopelessly injured animal by using a humane, painless method for reasons of mercy.

Facility:

A place or building where a particular activity happens within a site, often through the use of specialized equipment.

Farm:

Any site where crops or livestock are raised for the production of food and/or textiles. Non-adjacent fields may be considered part of the same farm, provided they are under the same management (i.e. same farmer).

Farmer:

A person raising livestock on a farm where there is a fixed base of operations (i.e. using the same land areas), and where the land available is largely the same from year to year. Animals may be moved away from the base site, but the farmer does not usually stay overnight with those animals.

Feedlot:

A lot or building, or combination of lots and buildings intended for the confined feeding, breeding, raising, or holding of animals and specifically designed as a confinement area in which manure may accumulate, or where the concentration of animals is such that a vegetative cover cannot be maintained within the enclosure.

Fetotomy:

Also known as embryotomy. Dismemberment of an already dead fetus when natural birth is not possible.

Filament:

A type of man-made (synthetic or cellulosic) fiber made by extruding a polymer through a spinneret to form long continuous filaments.

First processing stage:

The first level of processing (still part of tier 4), whereby raw materials collected or harvested from plants and/or animals are converted into human manufactured materials to be used in the textile industry.

Flake:

Plastic that has been shredded and washed into small fragments.

Force-feeding:

Any form of feeding that forces the waterfowl to eat more than it wants/needs. In particular, this refers to manual intervention using mechanical equipment (i.e. tubes), to increase the fat content, often for the production of “foie gras”.

Forced labor:

Work that is performed by any person which is involuntary and/or whereby the person is coerced to work through violence, intimidation, threats, fear of punishment or any other form of manipulation. Extreme and subtle forms of forced labor (e.g. debt bondage, retention of papers, manipulation, or use of legal status), are covered in the ILO Forced Labor Convention (No. 29 and No. 105).

Free, Prior, and Informed Consent:

A legal condition whereby a person or community can be said to have given consent to an action prior to its commencement, based upon a clear appreciation and understanding of the facts, implications and future consequences of that action, and the possession of all relevant facts at the time when consent is given. Free, prior, and informed consent includes the right to grant, modify, withhold, or withdraw approval.

Freedom of association (including relevant international conventions):

A fundamental human right identified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 25 (1948) which proclaims that non-state actors shall be allowed effective participation in economic and social policy. This right is described in ILO convention No. 87, which “sets forth the right for workers and employers to establish and join organizations of their own choosing without previous authorization. Workers’ and employers’ organizations shall organize freely and not be liable to be dissolved or suspended by administrative authority, and they shall have the right to establish and join federations and confederations, which may in turn affiliate with international organizations of workers and employers.” It is further detailed in conventions No. 135 and No 141.

Gin notes:

Small, broken, or immature cotton seeds with attached fibers.

Greasy animal fiber:

Animal fiber as it is shorn from the animal before any processing (e.g. greasy wool).

Grievance mechanisms:

A formal, transparent complaint process that allows users to voice their concerns safely and easily, without fear of retaliation. The UN Guiding Principles’ Effectiveness Criteria for Non-Judicial Grievance Mechanisms provide criteria for an effective grievance mechanism (including GP 25 and others).

Group certificate:

A scope certificate which includes multiple, separately owned, sites whose general conformity with the Standard falls under the responsibility of another separately owned legal entity managing the group system. The entity which manages the group is considered “the organization.” Group eligibility requirements are defined in the Standard.

Group management system:

A system developed by the group manager with inputs from all its group members, consisting of documented procedures, templates, and non-verbal instructions, which helps the group to effectively organize and achieve its objectives (i.e. all responsibilities are clearly assigned). The group management system provides the necessary framework and processes for managing the group, supporting, and monitoring the group members, and it allocates resources to implement the activities required to ensure conformance with the applicable criteria of the Standard.

Group member:

A site which is part of a group certification. The word “member” may be used to refer to a group member. A group member usually owns his/her farm, but a group member could also be a communal farmer with little or no land security.

Hatchery:

Any site where waterfowl eggs are mechanically, or naturally hatched to produce waterfowl.

Hazard:

A dangerous phenomenon, substance, human activity, or condition.

Hazardous waste:

The substance or object that does not fulfil all relevant product, environmental and health protection requirements for the specific use, and will lead to overall adverse environmental or human health impacts.

Indigenous Peoples:

People and groups of people that can be identified or characterized as follows:

- The key characteristic or criterion is self-identification as Indigenous Peoples at the individual level, and acceptance by the community as their member;
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies;
- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources;
- Distinct social, economic or political systems;
- Distinct language, culture and beliefs;
- Form non-dominant groups of society; and
- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

Integrated Pest Management:

IPM is an ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests or their damage through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties. Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates they are needed according to established guidelines, and treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism. Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment.

Intensity:

A measure of the force, severity or strength of a management activity or other occurrence affecting the nature of the activity's impacts.

Invasive species:

An invasive species is a species:

- That is non-native (or alien), to the ecosystem under consideration; and
- Whose introduction causes, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health.

Irrigation:

To water crops by bringing in water from pipes, canals, sprinklers, or other manufactured means, rather than relying on rainfall alone.

Knowledgeable:

Having information, understanding, or skills that come from experience or education.

Live plucking:

Any form of removing down and feather from living waterfowl, including any form of molt harvesting.

Local communities:

Communities of any size that are in or adjacent to the farm, and also those that are close enough to have a significant impact on the economy or the environmental values of the farm; or to have their economies, rights or environments significantly affected by the management activities or the biophysical aspects of the farm.

Local living wage benchmark:

The threshold at which a person's wage is considered to be sufficient to afford him/her and his/her family at least a basic, decent standard of living in the locality where he/she works. A living wage benchmark is generally agreed as acceptable by global actors when it has met certain criteria of credibility.

Mixtures:

Mixtures refers to chemical formulations sold by chemical manufacturers, having a recognized SDS for the formulation, not to the mixtures made internally during production by facilities.

Mortality rate:

Percentage or proportion of a flock or herd that die or are euthanized.

Mulesing:

By any method, the removal of wool-bearing strips of skin from between the hind legs of sheep (i.e. the “breach” area), and/or from the tail or tail stump that remains after tail docking, in an effort to avoid problems of fly strike.

Notching:

Cutting the ears of animals to permanently identify them. Notching is usually done in a pattern particular to the farm or ranch.

Oligomer:

A low molecular weight polymer comprising of a small number of repeat units whose physical properties are significantly dependent on the length of the chain.

Organic waste:

Any material that comes from a plant or animal, and which is biodegradable.

Organization:

A legal entity which is certified, or in the process of becoming certified. A scope certificate is held by an organization, and an organization has one or more sites. The organization is responsible for decisions, policies, and management activities related to the farm or site. The organization is also responsible for demonstrating that other persons or entities that are permitted or subcontracted by the organization to operate in, or for the benefit of the farm or site, comply with the requirements of the standard criteria. Accordingly, the organization is required to take corrective actions in the event of such persons or entities not following the standard requirements.

Overgrazing:

Overgrazing occurs when plants are exposed to intensive grazing for extended periods of time, or without sufficient recovery periods.

Oxidized grease:

The reaction of grease with oxygen.

Pain relief:

The administration of analgesic and/or local anesthetic drugs given to animals with the aim of providing them significant alleviation of pain.

Parent farm:

Any farm where waterfowl are kept for producing eggs. Any time certified down is collected from a parent farm, the entire farm is subject to certification.

Pasture:

Land covered with vegetation suitable for grazing or foraging by animals.

Pellet:

Plastic that has undergone at least one previous processing method such as molding or extrusion, and ground into chips.

Permaculture:

An approach to agricultural design that focuses on whole systems thinking, as well as using or simulating patterns from nature.

Pest:

Pests are organisms that damage or interfere with desirable plants in the fields and orchards, landscapes, or wildlands, or damage homes or other structures. Pests also include organisms that impact human or animal health. Pests may transmit disease or may be just a nuisance. For purposes of the Standard, a pest can be a plant (weed), invertebrate (insect, tick, mite, or snail), nematode, pathogen (bacteria, virus, or fungus), that causes disease, or other unwanted organism that may harm water quality, animal life, or other parts of the ecosystem.

Pesticides:

Substances used for destroying insects or other organisms which are harmful to cultivated plants or to animals. Pesticides include bactericides, baits, fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, rodenticides, and repellents.

Pithing:

Destruction of the brain by insertion of a metal rod. Carried out after the use of penetrating captive bolt gun.

Predator:

Animal that hunts, kills, and eats other animals in order to survive.

Processor:

Organization engaged in the processing of materials into a refined material or a product.

Raw material production:

Farming animals or cultivating plants to collect or harvest materials from them, for use as primary feedstocks in the textile industry. Also known as tier 4.

Recyclable:

Being recyclable means an object can be collected and remanufactured into new products. This should not be confused with being recycled, which means an object has already been collected and remanufactured into a new product.

Remediation plan:

A series of steps designed to eliminate an identified risk or fix an existing problem.

Rightsholder:

Person or person(s) whose human rights are potentially at risk or threatened — by an organization's operations, products, or services — and/or who requires particular attention or action to help protect their rights.

Risk assessment:

An evaluation of risks, potential risks, the key factors leading to or increasing those risks, and the condition(s) that could materialize if those risks are not remediated.

Scale:

A measure of the extent to which a management activity or event affects an environmental value or a management unit (site), in time or space. An activity with a small or low spatial scale affects only a small proportion of the site each year, an activity with a small or low temporal scale occurs only at long intervals.

Scope:

The scope of a certificate defines the organization's sites, materials, and activities that are included in the evaluation by a licensed certification body, together with the certification standard(s) against which these have been audited.

Scope certificate:

A document issued by the certification body, which certifies that an organization is compliant with a specified scope of the Standard, and as a result the organization is able to produce and sell certified materials.

Scouring:

The process of cleaning wool that makes it free from grease, suint, dead skin, dirt, and vegetable matter present as impurities in the wool.

Shelter:

Something that provides animals with protection from natural events (e.g. rain, wind, sunlight, snow, etc.), either via natural features such as trees, or artificial structures like buildings or shades.

Site:

Any geographically distinct unit within a certificate scope, which could be a production farm or an industrial/manufacturing facility. Locations which are geographically distinct or have different civic addresses are considered to be separate sites (see exception for farms). Subcontractors are not considered to be sites.

Slaughter:

The planned act of killing animals whenever they reach the age or weight for which they were raised, to obtain meat and/or skins.

Slaughterhouse / Slaughter plant:

A formal facility designed and built for slaughter of animals to harvest their meat for human consumption.

Slaughter site:

A location where slaughter of animals takes place. In some rural areas it might be a multi-purpose shed or even an open-air area.

Sliver:

Loose, soft, untwisted rope like strand of textile fiber having a roughly uniform thickness. It is produced by the carding process, which separates raw fibers to prepare them for spinning.

Solvent:

A substance that dissolves a solute, resulting in a solution.

Stakeholder:

A person, group or organization with a vested interest, or stake, in the decision-making and activities of a business, organization or project. Stakeholders can be members of the organization they have a stake in, or they can have no official affiliation. Stakeholders can have a direct or indirect influence on the activities or projects of an organization. Their support is often required for business and project success.

Steining:

Removal of wool-bearing skin in the breech area by application of liquid nitrogen. This is a form of mulesing.

Stocking density:

Number of animals kept in a particular space (e.g. in a house or on a transport vehicle).

Stocking rate:

Number of animals kept on a particular area of land for a specified time.

Stunning:

The action of rendering an animal insensible and unconscious.

Subcontractor:

Any legal entity (individual or company) that is hired by the organization to perform services (e.g. storage, processing), on certified material. Subcontractors take physical possession, but not legal ownership of certified materials.

Suint:

A natural greasy substance in sheep's wool.

Suitable (pain relief):

A product that has a pain-relieving effect for the type and method of husbandry procedure that is undertaken.

Tail docking:

Complete removal of all or part of an animal's tail.

Thermocautery:

Use of a heated blade that cauterizes the wound and prevents bleeding. Used for tail docking sheep.

Threshold:

The level or point at which something starts to be experienced, or at which something starts to happen, such as when a pest becomes active and triggers the need for intervention.

Transaction Certificate:

A document issued by a certification body which verifies that materials being sold or shipped from one organization to another conform to the Standard and may be treated as certified materials by the receiver.

Undergrazing:

Grazing at a level where there is evidence of an increase in scrub or coarse vegetation, and such changes are detrimental to the environmental health of the site.

Waste:

Any substance or object which the holder discards or is required to discard.

Waste picker:

An individual who, formally or informally, salvages materials that are thrown away by others as a waste. This includes collecting recyclable materials to sell to recycling facilities, such as facilities that upcycle for textiles.

Waterfowl:

Domestically raised ducks and geese.

Well-ventilated:

Being kept within good air quality parameters, free from pollutants and high heat, through either or both natural and artificial means.

Wildlife corridors:

Natural or manmade connections across the landscape (e.g. wildlife bridges or underpasses), that link up areas of habitat.

Worker:

A person who is hired (not necessarily employed) to do physical or mental work for wages in order to earn a living, as in a trade, industry, business, office, or on a farm, ranch, etc. Family members may be workers on a farm, even if not for daily wages.

Year-round tasks:

Work tasks which are performed throughout the majority of a calendar year.