



CERTIFIED  
**-ORGANIC-**  
& FREE RANGE

# CLEAVER'S CERTIFIED ORGANIC GRASS FED ASSURANCE



BEEF CATTLE STANDARDS



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# GRASS FED ASSURANCE STANDARD

Cleaver's Certified Organic Grass Fed Assurance (CCOGA) Standard has been developed to provide guidelines and integrity to product marketed under the Cleaver's Organic Grass Fed label.

The core objective of the Grass Fed standard is to provide consumers with assurance that the cattle in the Cleaver's supply chain have been fed certified organic pastures their whole life.

Compliance with this Standard is demonstrated through records kept by producers as well as an annual audit carried out by Cleaver's management.

Cattle supplied to the Cleaver's Certified Organic Grass Fed Assurance program (CCOGA) are required to meet the following four components:

1. **Grass Fed** diet that complies with CCOGA standard
2. **Free Range**, never confined to a feedlot
3. **Identification** and Lifetime traceability
4. **Organic Certification** to a minimum Australian Organic standard.

# 1. Grass Fed Diet

CCOGA eligible cattle must meet the following Cleaver's Organic Grass Fed definition.

The feed source consumed for the lifetime of the ruminant animal must be Certified Organic grass and forage. The diet shall be derived from forage consisting of grass (annual and perennial), forbs (such as legumes and Brassica), browse, or cereal grain crops in the vegetative (pre-grain) state. The exception is milk consumed prior to weaning and supplementation used only in exceptional circumstances to ensure the animal's well-being.

Animals must have continuous access to pasture as required under the Australian Organic Standards. Hay, haylage, baleage, silage, crop residue without grain, and other roughage sources may be included as acceptable feed sources. Routine mineral and vitamin supplementation may also be included in the feeding regimen.

The producer is required to fully document any feed supplementation that occurs. This requirement applies equally to inadvertent exposure to non-forage feedstuffs and to supplementation for the purpose of ensuring the animal's well-being at all times during adverse conditions (environmental or physical). The documentation (such as receipts, ingredients, and tear tags) must include evidence of the supplements provided as well as the quantity and frequency of supplementation.

## 1.1 Supplements

A feed ingredient is considered a supplement when it is fed to counteract a deficiency in the regular diet. It should be used to complement pasture that for unforeseen circumstances, such as drought, has led to a shortage in quality and quantity.

Supplementary feeding is allowable under the CCOGA program as long as it does not exceed a 5% Dry Matter (DM) intake threshold. This is calculated over the twelve month audit period and is based on feed records as required for auditing purposes.

It should be noted that supplementary products are to be used for maintenance and not for production purposes and only in exceptional circumstances, such as drought, to ensure highest animal welfare outcomes.

## 1.2 Cereal grain fodder crops

Cereal crops in the pre-grain or post-harvest stages are allowed to be grazed under the CCOGA program. The definition for pre-grain stage is taken from Zadoks Decimal Code for growth stages in cereals (appendix 4). Up to and including stage 69 is considered pre-grain stage.

Post-harvest conditions are acceptable if the average vegetative growth over the paddock is over 21cm when the cattle first grazed.

Records of when cattle have grazed cereal crops must be kept, including photographs that demonstrate the crop was in the pre-grain stage or the regrowth post-harvest was sufficiently high.

## 1.3 Minerals and vitamins

Where required, mineral and vitamin supplements are allowed under the CCOGA standards. These products must be used to ensure the health and well-being of the animal and not for production purposes. It should be stressed that these products need to meet the Australian Organic standards.

## 1.4 Weaner Cattle

All supplementary feed given to weaners must be consistent with the Eligible Diet or identified as an approved supplement.

## **2. Free Range, never confined to a feedlot**

Cattle must have access to range or pasture their entire lives, unless they are being mustered and yarded for husbandry or marketing purposes. These times of confinement must not exceed 21 days in total over a twelve month period.

During weaning calves may be yard-weaned, however the same rule of not more than 21 days of confinement over a 12 month period applies.

Livestock management records are audited to verify the length of time that cattle are confined for throughout the 12 month period.

## **3. Identification and Lifetime Traceability**

CCOGA eligible cattle are required to be individually identified and traceable throughout their entire lifetime. Producers will comply with the use of an ear tag system and/or NLIS tags, as required under the Australian organic standard.

If cattle in the CCOGA program are intentionally or inadvertently exposed to excessive amounts of grain, they are required to notify the Cleaver's livestock department. This will ensure the exposed cattle will not enter the Cleaver's Organic Grass Fed supply chain.

## **4. Organic Certification**

CCOGA eligible cattle must be at a minimum, Certified Australian Organic under a registered Australian Organic certifying body. Producers must have a current organic certificate accompanying their cattle when they are processed, thereby ensuring that their registration is current. It is strongly suggested that producers additionally carry out US National Organic Program (NOP) certification as this is required for Organic recognition in the United States of America.

## **5. References**

- American Grassfed Association. Grassfed & Grass Pastured Ruminant Standards, Feb 2015
- AWA Grassfed Standards 2015 072715
- Pasturefed Cattle Assurance System (PCAS) Standard Sept 2015

## Appendix 1. Definitions

**CCOGA:** Cleaver's Certified Organic Grass Fed Assurance Program.

**Grass Fed:** The feed source consumed for the lifetime of the ruminant animal must be grass and forage. The diet shall be derived from forage consisting of grass (annual and perennial), forbs (such as legumes and Brassica), browse, or cereal grain crops in the vegetative (pre-grain) state. The exception is milk consumed prior to weaning and supplementation used only in exceptional circumstances to ensure the animal's well-being.

Animals must have continuous access to pasture. Hay, haylage, baleage, silage, crop residue without grain, and other roughage sources may be included as acceptable feed sources. Routine mineral and vitamin supplementation may also be included in the feeding regimen.

The producer is required to fully document any feed supplementation that occurs. This requirement applies equally to inadvertent exposure to non-forage feedstuffs and to supplementation for ensuring the animal's well-being at all times during adverse conditions (environmental or physical). The documentation (such as receipts, ingredients, and tear tags) must include evidence of the supplements provided as well as the quantity and frequency of supplementation.

**Eligible Diet:** Forage consisting only of; grass (annual and perennial), forbs (legumes, brassicas), browse and cereal grain crops in an acceptable state.

**Forage:** Forage is defined as any edible herbaceous plant material that can be grazed or harvesting for feeding, with the exception of grain.

**Cereal Grain:** seed from cereal plants, caryopsis. Corn, wheat, rye, oats, rice, millet, sorghum, barley, triticale.

**Pre-Grain State:** Crops prior to having reached the end of the flowering stage as defined in Zadoks Decimal Code for growth stages in Cereals as up to and including decimal code 69. Refer to Appendix 3.

**Separated Grain:** Grain that is detached from cereal crop plants.

**Grain by-products:** Feed products that have been derived from grain ie: dried distillers grain, wheat shorts etc.

**Crop Residue:** Otherwise referred to a stubble – plant material that remains post-harvest.

**Vitamin:** Organic substances that are essential in minute quantities to the nutrition of most animals and some plants that act especially as coenzymes and precursors of coenzymes in the regulation of metabolic processes.

**Mineral:** Any of the various naturally occurring homogeneous substances obtained usually from the ground. Mineral supplements may be required where deficiencies exist in soil.

**Roughage:** Fodder that is high in fibre relative to its total digestible nutrients. I.e. Soybean hulls.

**Supplementary Feeding:** The Practise of supplying feed where regular pasture nutrients are deficient. Supplementary feeding is undertaken in order to maintain the wellbeing of the animal and is normally deemed necessary due to drought or other adverse seasonal or environmental conditions. It should be noted that supplementing is generally undertaken in small amounts, in contrast to the practice of substitute feeding.

**Weaner:** A calf that has recently been separated from its mother. This can be a period of high stress due to changes in feed intake (no milk) and changes in social hierarchy.

## Appendix 2. Zadoks Decimal code

0	<b>SOWING</b>		<b>HEADING STAGES</b>
3	Germination, seed swollen	50	First spikelet of spike just visible
5	Radicle emerged from seed	52	20% of spike visible, early heading
7	Coleoptile emerged from seed	55	50% of spike visible, mid heading
10	EMERGENCE	58	80% of spike visible, late heading
	<b>LEAVES ON MAIN SHOOT</b>	60	Full heading but not flowering
11	1st leaf more than half visible		<b>FLOWERING</b>
12	2nd leaf more than half visible	62	20% of spikes are flowering
13	3rd leaf more than half visible	65	50% of spikes are flowering
14	4th leaf more than half visible	68	80% of spikes are flowering
15	5th leaf more than half visible		<b>KERNEL EXTENDING</b>
16	6th leaf more than half visible		
17	7th leaf more than half visible	70.2	kernels near middle of spike extended 20%
18	8 or more leaves visible and stem not elongating	70.5	kernels extended 50%
		71	kernels watery ripe, clear liquid
	<b>TILLERING</b>		<b>MILK DEVELOPMENT</b>
21	Main shoot and 1 tiller	73	early milk, liquid off-white
22	Main shoot and 2 tillers	75	mid milk, increase in solids
23	Main shoot and 3 tillers	77	late milk, increase in solids
24	Main shoot and 4 tillers	79	very late milk, half solid/half liquid
25	Main shoot and 5 tillers		<b>DOUGH DEVELOPMENT</b>
26	Main shoot and 6 tillers		
27	Main shoot and 7 tillers	81	Very early dough – mostly solids when kernels crushed, doughy
28	Main shoot and 8 tillers		
29	Main shoot and 9 or more tillers	83	Early dough – kernels soft and almost dry
	<b>STEM ELONGATION</b>	85	Soft dough – kernels firm but finger nail impression not held
30	Stem starts to elongate	87	Hard dough – finger nail impression held
31	1st node detectable		<b>RIPENING</b>
32	2nd node detectable		
33	3rd node detectable	90	kernels hard – difficult to divide by thumb nail
34	4th node detectable	92	harvest ripe – can no longer be dented by thumb nail
	<b>BOOTING STAGES</b>	93	kernels loosening in daytime
37	Flag leaf visible	94	over-ripe – straw dead and collapsing
39	Flag leaf collar just visible		
41	Early-boot stage		
43	Mid-boot stage		
45	Late-boot stage		
47	Flag leaf sheath opening		
49	First awns visible		



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