



MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR GRAIN FED BEEF - REVISED

Previous Reference(s) Advices 31/92, 07/93, 01/17	Date of Issue 06 August 2018	Date of Effect 01 September 2018
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PURPOSE

The Feedlot Industry Advisory Committee (FLIAC) has confirmed the following changes to the *Minimum Standards for Grain Fed Beef*, which are the result of a review undertaken by the Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA). Specifically, the *Minimum Standards for Grain Fed Beef* have been expanded to include an additional standard called **Grain Fed Finished** (GFF) – refer attached Fact Sheet.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR GRAIN FED BEEF

The revised *Minimum Standards for Grain Fed Beef* are as follows:

GRAIN FED: GF	
Number of days on feed	100 days
Age of animal (dentition)	6 permanent incisor teeth (maximum); 7 and 8 permanent incisor teeth where ossification is less than or equal to 280 OM
P8 Fat depth (mm)	7mm minimum
Meat Colour Score*	1ABC – 3
Fat Colour Score	0-3
Feed Ration (NFAS Accredited Feedlot)	<i>Cattle must have been fed in a feedlot for not less than 100 days, and for not less than 80 days of that, on a nutritionally balanced ration of a recognised high energy feed of which grain is the highest single component. Rations must have an average metabolisable energy (ME) content greater than 10 megajoules (MJ) per kilogram of dry matter.</i>

GRAIN FED YOUNG BEEF: GFYG	
Number of days on feed	70 days Females not less than 60 days
Age of animal (dentition)	0 - 2 permanent incisor teeth (maximum);
P8 Fat depth (mm)	5mm minimum
Meat Colour Score*	1ABC – 3
Fat Colour Score	0-3
Feed Ration (NFAS Accredited Feedlot)	<i>Cattle must have been fed in a feedlot for not less than 70 days, and (females for not less than 60 days) and not less than 50 days of that, on a nutritionally balanced ration of a recognised high energy feed of which grain is the highest single component. Rations must have average metabolisable energy (ME) content greater than 10 megajoules (MJ) per kilogram of dry matter.</i>

* NOTE:

Where meat colour score exceeds MC 3, product is eligible to be labelled as GF / GFYG where:

- Feeding requirements and other GF / GFYG quality attributes are met;
- Carcases meet all Meat Standards Australia (MSA) requirements and are labelled accordingly prior to boning; and
- No portion of the carcass is destined for the EU GF-HQB quota or any other markets with regulations that include meat colour criteria.

GRAIN FED FINISHED: GFF	
Number of days on feed	35 days (males* and females) *Castrate males (Steers) only
MSA	Meet all Meat Standards Australia (MSA) grading requirements at production and meat processing to be eligible as GFF product.
Feed Ration (NFAS Accredited Feedlot)	<i>Cattle must have been fed in a feedlot for not less than 35 days, and for not less than 28 days of that, on a nutritionally balanced ration of a recognised high energy feed of which grain is the highest single component. Rations must have average metabolisable energy (ME) content greater than 10 megajoules (MJ) per kilogram of dry matter.</i>

CERTIFICATION

All cattle slaughtered and processed as Grain Fed Finished (GFF) Beef **must be accompanied** by an NFAS Delivery Docket (**Issue 7, August 2018**) at the time of slaughter. On plant administration must have systems in place to verify the currency of delivery documentation and to confirm the accreditation status. Full details of delivery documentation is available in the [NFAS Rules and Standards of Accreditation](#).

NOTE: On plant administration of the NFAS delivery documentation is the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR).

LABELLING

Chiller Assessment Attribute Statements (CAAS) can be included in the Trade Description after Chiller Assessment has been performed. When used in the Trade Description, the following symbols are applicable when declaring a Chiller Assessment Attribute Statement:

Symbol	Labelling Format
MB	Marbling - can be shown as individual scores or ranges; or a minimum score only can be shown e.g. MB: 2up, MB: 9+
MC	Beef Meat Colour – can be shown as individual scores or ranges
VC	Veal Meat Colour - can be shown as individual scores or ranges
FC	Fat Colour - can be shown as individual scores or ranges

Labelling Combinations – Optional:

CAAS incorporated into Trade Descriptions may also be used in conjunction with other Product Specification information. Any combination of the Chiller Assessment attributes can be shown.

Days On Feed Statements:

Where the number of days on feed is stated, a CAAS is optional and may include any combination of Chiller Assessment attributes.

Assessment Sites:


If showing a CAAS which includes a Marbling assessment (MB) taken outside of the standard ribbing sites (e.g. between 5th and 6th rib), then the assessment site must also be stated. NOTE: The standard ribbing sites for Chiller Assessment are from 10th – 13th rib.

Publication Updates:

The *Australian Meat Industry Classification System* and the *NFAS Rules and Standards of Accreditation* have been updated. Both publications can be purchased from AUS-MEAT.

Exemption Application – Export Product

An application for exemption is required for all export of GFF Meat or Meat Products. The process for this is detailed on the attached DAWR document.


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6 August 2018

Dear valued Industry stakeholder,

Re: Introduction of Grain Fed Finished (GFF) Standard from 1 September 2018

The Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) is proud to announce the release of a new Grain Fed Finished Standard (or GFF) from 1 September 2018.

This additional minimum standard requires cattle to be produced within the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) production system, be raised on a specific high-energy ration for a minimum 35 days-on-feed and successfully grade Meat Standards Australia (MSA) when processed.

The introduction of the GFF Standard is the result of reviewsⁱ conducted into both the NFAS and the AUS-MEAT Beef Language. Furthermore, ALFA engaged in broad consultation with feedlot operators, beef processors, retailers, brand owners and Industry representative bodies to refine and obtain support for the technical specifications of the GFF Standard.

The GFF Standard, with its minimum number of days and MSA overlay, enables brand owners and feedlot operators increased flexibility around producing Grain Fed beef whilst continuing to ensure product integrity and eating quality. Adoption of the new standard is voluntary.

ALFA recognises the importance of existing Grain Fed standards, being the Grain Fed (GF) and Grain Fed Young Beef (GFYG) standards, and their widespread use in describing and trading Grain Fed beef. It is important to note that the existing standards will not change, with GFF providing an additional feeding option for NFAS Accredited feedlot operators.

Please find attached a Fact Sheet that provides further information on the standard and how you can commence producing Grain Fed Finished beef. Specific advice from AUS-MEAT and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) accompanies this information and should also be referred to.

We look forward to continuing to deliver positive outcomes for our growing and vital Grain Fed beef industry.

Yours sincerely,

Tess Herbert
President
Australian Lot Feeders' Association

ⁱ National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) Review, 2014-15
Australian Beef Language Review White Paper, 2016



Grain Fed Finished Standard

A NEW GRAIN FED BEEF STANDARD CALLED GRAIN FED FINISHED OR GFF BECOMES OPERATIONAL FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2018.

The Grain Fed Finished Standard increases flexibility around producing Grain Fed beef whilst continuing to ensure product integrity and eating quality.

What is the Grain Fed Finished Standard?

The **Grain Fed Finished (or GFF)** Standard is a new certified Grain Fed beef Standard being introduced within the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) and the AUS-MEAT Language.

The Standard requires cattle to be produced within the NFAS production system by an NFAS accredited feedlot, be raised on a high-energy ration for a minimum 35 Days on Feed and successfully meet Meat Standards Australia (MSA) grading requirements when processed.

Why has the Grain Fed Finished Standard been developed?

The GFF Standard is a result of a review of the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) conducted in 2014-15 and a review of the AUS-MEAT beef language completed in 2016. Both these studies concluded that the Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) should initiate a review of the current AUS-MEAT Minimum Standards for Grain Fed Beef. The new Standard, with its minimum number of days and MSA overlay, will enable brand owners and feedlot operators increased flexibility around producing Grain Fed beef whilst also continuing to ensure product integrity and eating quality.

Who developed the Grain Fed Finished standard?

ALFA in consultation with feedlot operators, processors, retailers and brand owners. ALFA also worked closely with Industry representative bodies via the *Australian Meat Industry Language and Standards Committee* to develop the GFF Standard.

What consultation has taken place?

During 2016 ALFA developed proposed technical specifications for an additional third grain fed standard based on utilising the NFAS, a high energy ration for a minimum number of Days on Feed (DOF) and MSA grading eligibility.

ALFA consulted with feedlot operators, processors, retailers and brand owners to refine the proposal before consulting formally with Industry representative bodies via the *Australian Meat Industry Language and Standards Committee* throughout 2017 before it was endorsed.

When will the 'Grain Fed Finished' Standard be introduced?

The GFF Standard is being introduced from **1 September 2018.**

Adoption of the new Standard is voluntary and a commercial decision between brand owners, meat processors, non-packer exporters and NFAS accredited feedlot operators who supply them.

What are the technical Specification of the 'Grain Fed Finished' Standard?

The technical specifications for the GFF Standard that are required to be met are:

- ▶ Eligible cattle must be produced in an NFAS accredited feedlot in accordance with the NFAS Rules & Standards.
- ▶ Number of days on feed: Minimum 35 days (same for Males* and Females).
- ▶ Feed Ration: The cattle must have been fed in an Accredited Feedlot for not less than 35 days, and for not less than 28 days of that, on a nutritionally balanced ration of a recognised high energy feed of which grain is the highest single component. Rations must have an average metabolisable energy (ME) content greater than 10 megajoules (MJ) per kg of dry matter.
- ▶ Meet all Meat Standards Australia (MSA) grading requirements at production and meat processing to be eligible as GFF product.

*Castrate Males (steers) only.

Why was 35 days on feed chosen as the minimum number of days on feed?

A minimum 35 days on feed has been selected for several reasons. Firstly, as a minimum number it provides added flexibility to brand owners who want to market Grain Fed beef. Secondly it is the approximate time that the prescribed Fat Colour attribute associated with Grain Fed beef occurs based on science.



Why was 35 days on feed chosen as the minimum number of days on feed? cont.

It is also compliant with the MSA on-farm production requirements for the number of days cattle must reside on a property to be MSA eligible. Finally, the minimum number of days will enable feedlot managers and brand owners to manage the cost of gain; which is especially important in times of high grain price.

What about the existing Grain Fed Standards?

The GFF Standard is additional to the two existing grain fed standards, being the **Grain Fed (GF)** and **Grain Fed Young Beef (GFYG)** standards. Importantly these existing standards will not change. ALFA recognises the importance of GF and GFYG in the current AUS-MEAT Language and their widespread use in describing and trading Grain Fed beef, and therefore did not wish to alter these or cause any disadvantage to anyone currently using these ciphers.

Won't the 'Grain Fed Finished' Standard impact the existing Grain Fed Standards?

The commercial value chain recognises the importance of the existing Grain Fed Standards (GF) and (GFYG) have in describing and trading Grain Fed beef. This created the preference for ALFA not to change the current *Minimum Standards for Grain Fed Beef*, nor cause any disadvantage to anyone currently using these ciphers. This included recognition that the access to some markets, such as the EU High Quality Beef Quota depend on these standards. These existing standards will not change because of the introduction of the GFF Standard.

How will the new 'Grain Fed Finished' Standard be introduced?

The GFF Standard has been included within the revised NFAS Rules & Standards (1 September 2018) which will enable NFAS accredited feedlots to produce GFF eligible cattle.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) are making the necessary changes to the *Export Control Act 1982* and relevant *Export Meat Orders* to include the GFF cipher alongside the existing grain fed standards and export trade description requirements. These changes will enable brand owners and processors to describe beef that meets the GFF Standard and ensure the integrity of grain fed beef trade description is maintained. Interim measures will be in place from 1 September to facilitate this.

All NFAS accredited feedlots and all AUS-MEAT Beef processors and non-packer exporters are being provided information regarding the GFF Standard and what needs to be done to produce GFF beef. Adoption of the new standard is voluntary and a commercial decision between brand owners, meat processors, non-packer exporters and their NFAS accredited suppliers.

What will feedlot owners need to do?

Adoption of the GFF Standard from 1 September 2018 is voluntary. Its introduction into commerce is based on the commercial arrangements between brand owners, meat processors, non-packer exporters and NFAS accredited feedlot operators who supply them and compliance with the requirements of the standard.

Feedlot operators who choose to produce cattle eligible to meet the Grain Fed Finished (GFF) Standard must meet the requirements outlined in the formal **NFAS Advice 01/2018** notice issued by AUS-MEAT on 6 August 2018.

In summary Feedlot operators:

1. Should first discuss arrangements and demand for GFF beef with the brand owner, meat processors or non-packer exporter that they supply cattle to;
2. Must obtain the latest copy of the NFAS Rules and Standards;
3. Must be accredited under the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS);
4. Must be accredited under Meat Standards Australia (MSA);
5. Must produce cattle in accordance with the GFF Standard and the NFAS Rules and Standards;
6. Must obtain from AUS-MEAT the revised NFAS Delivery Document (Issue 7, August 2018) which references the GFF Standard; and declare eligible cattle as GFF when consigning cattle to your beef processor;
7. Need to be prepared to be audited on the GFF Standard during the annual NFAS audit by AUS-MEAT.

Before committing to produce GFF eligible cattle, feedlot operators are advised to first check with the brand owner, meat processors or non-packer exporter you supply cattle to.

What documentation is required by NFAS accredited feedlot operators when producing GFF eligible cattle?

NFAS accredited feedlots must obtain the latest copy of the NFAS Rules & Standards and purchase a copy of the revised NFAS Delivery Document (Issue 7, August 2018) from AUS-MEAT.

NFAS Feedlots can order new Delivery Dockets by completing an Order Form and submitting it to NFAS Administration via email: nfas@ausmeat.com.au, or by phoning (07) 3361 9200 or Toll Free 1800 621 903 to purchase the latest Delivery Docket.

NOTE: Previous versions of the NFAS Delivery Docket cannot be used for GFF eligible livestock.

Are there additional auditing requirements for NFAS accredited feedlot operators?

NFAS accredited feedlots undergo an annual audit to ensure compliance with the NFAS Rules & Standards. Auditing of the GFF Standard will be conducted as part of the normal annual NFAS audit process conducted by AUS-MEAT. There is no additional cost however the auditor will cover compliance and documentation of the GFF Standard if the feedlot is producing GFF eligible cattle.

What will brand owners, beef processors and non-packer exporters need to do?

Adoption of the GFF Standard from 1 September 2018 is voluntary. Its introduction into commerce is based on the commercial arrangements between brand owners, meat processors, non-packer exporters and NFAS accredited feedlot operators who supply them.

Meat processors and non-packer exporters who choose to produce GFF beef must meet the GFF Standard requirements in the relevant **AUS-MEAT Advice 02/2018** notice issued by AUS-MEAT on 6 August 2018.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) are making the necessary changes to the *Export Control Act 1982* and relevant *Export Meat Orders* to include the GFF cipher alongside the existing grain fed standards and export trade description requirements.

These changes will enable brand owners and processors to describe beef that meets the GFF Standard and ensure the integrity of grain fed beef trade description is maintained.

DAWR have in place interim measures from 1 September 2018 to enable the GFF trade description to be used. Meat processors and non-packer exporters who choose to produce GFF beef are advised to follow the interim **DAWR Exemption Application** process for the GFF Standard until otherwise advised.

What changes will be made to the Export Meat Orders?

DAWR are making the necessary changes to the *Export Control Act 1982* and relevant *Export Meat Orders* to include the GFF Standard alongside the existing grain fed standards and trade description requirements. These changes will ensure the integrity of grain fed beef trade description is maintained.

What does the new GFF Standard mean for the grain fed transaction levy?

Like existing grain-fed standards, cattle produced under the new GFF Standard will be subject to the grain fed transaction levy. It is your responsibility as a levy and charge payer to remain aware of your obligations under legislation. Please continue to ensure that your grain-fed cattle are categorised correctly on the cattle transaction levy return form.

Please contact DAWR on 1800 020 619 if you require further assistance on transaction levies. More information about the grain-fed transaction levy, including definitions, levy rates and exemptions, is available at the [DAWR website](http://www.dawr.gov.au).

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE GRAIN FED FINISHED STANDARD?

Contact the Australian Lot Feeders' Association



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🌐 www.feedlots.com.au

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NATIONAL FEEDLOT ACCREDITATION SCHEME?

Contact AUS-MEAT



📞 1800 621 903
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🌐 www.ausmeat.com.au

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MEAT STANDARDS AUSTRALIA?

Contact MSA



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Exemption Application for “Grain Fed Finished” Standard

Under Division IV, Part 2 of the *Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Orders 2005* (**the Orders**) the Secretary may specify that certain or all provisions of the orders do not apply to particular meat and/or meat products for export under the various circumstances.

The department has indicated that it would consider applications for exemptions for the export of beef meeting the ‘Grain Fed Finished (GFF)’ standard, once it is published in the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme Standards. Applications for an exemption to the current Grain Fed definition as permitted under the Orders will be considered until the legislative amendment to include GFF has been implemented to include a reference to the new standard.

Please note applications for exemptions can only be made by licensed exporters or occupiers of establishments and must:-

- Be given to the Secretary at least 10 working days before the proposed date of export or preparation of the meat or meat products concerned
- Specify the provisions within the Orders from which the exemption is sought
- Set out the reasons for seeking an exception for the product
- Contain all relevant information for the Secretary to make a decision on the exemption.

The department has provided some guidance below on the exemption process and has advised that each application for an exemption will be assessed individually and the delegate will determine if an exemption will be issued.

The department has also advised that it can only commence processing applications for exemptions once all required documentation has been supplied and that formal applications must be made under company letter head at least 10 working days prior to export and submitted to exemptions.exportmeat@agriculture.gov.au addressing the following:

1. Circumstance the exemption is requested for.

All GFF exemptions should be requested as “special commercial circumstance”.

2. Provide the clauses from the Australian export legislation not to be applied for the products intended for export.

The export legislation not to be applied is sub-clause 5.1, Schedule 7 of the *Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Orders 2005* (description of “Grain Fed”).

3. Set out the reasons for seeking the exemption.

The GFF standard has been endorsed by the Australian Meat Industry Language and Standards Committee (AMILSC). The description has been entered in the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme Standards, however the amendment to the *Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Orders 2005* remains pending.

4. Provide information on the products proposed for export, including the full details of the goods i.e. details of meat type and/or meat product name, date meat was prepared.



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture
and Water Resources

The exemption is for Australian GFF beef as described in the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme Standards.

5. Provide details of the export registered establishment/s (slaughter/further processing/packing/cold storage) providing the goods for export including registration number/s

Provide names of the export registered establishment/s and registration numbers where the production of GFF beef will occur (domestic establishments may not be used in this case). Provide production dates if known, or state production will be done “to order”.

6. The name and address in Australia of the exporter/exporting company who intends to export the products and evidence to show the exporter holds a current export meat license.

Provide the name and address of exporter/establishment occupier who is applying for this exemption and evidence of a current export meat licence.

7. Intended import countries/destinations

Provide the name of all countries where the GFF beef is intended to be exported to. If consignee details are not known, please state “to order”.

8. Intended port of loading and/or intended date/s of export of the products

Provide the name of port/s where the product will be consigned from along with the date/s of export if known.