

# Mississippi Veterinarian Certified Health Assurance Program (MS-VCHAP)

## Overview:

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Preconditioning calves encompasses procedures performed on the farm prior to sale to prepare the animals for the next phase of their life. The goal of a well-designed program is to add value to calves by enhancing immunity, minimizing health problems, and preventing unnecessary quality assurance problems. Numerous preconditioning programs are present nationally, but none specifically address the needs of the Mississippi producer. To create the best system for our state, we consulted the combined thoughts and expertise of the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Mississippi Cattlemen's Association, Mississippi Veterinary Medical Association Animal Health Committee, Mississippi Extension, and the Mississippi Board of Animal Health.

The Mississippi Veterinarian Certified Health Assurance Program (MS-VCHAP) provides a system for certification and verification of procedures performed to preconditioned feeder calves in the state of Mississippi. Accountability and standardization are necessary components to establish a program that creates a reputation for producing a quality, consistent product. The system addresses management procedures to increase the health and immune status of calves, and beef quality assurance issues.

Calves placed in the program must meet the minimum standards outlined in the program specifics section of this document. Veterinarians and producers are accountable for ensuring that all calves tagged and listed on the travel sheet met the minimum guidelines for program enrollment. Additional preventative health procedures are acceptable and should be noted in the comments section of the travel sheet.

All participants in the program must be Beef Quality Assurance certified. Residue avoidance and Beef Quality Assurance are important topics because they stress the importance the cow/calf producer plays in the production of safe, desirable beef.

The formation of a successful preconditioning program is dependant on creating a solid reputation for calves that complete the program. Accountability will be maintained by using BQA certification numbers for both veterinarians and producers to verify that they have undergone the proper training. Calves enrolled in the program will be individually tagged with a maroon metal clip tag distributed by the veterinarian certifying the calves. Calves will be accompanied at sale by travel sheets including listing of specific procedures performed to the calves. This documentation enables the buyer to avoid duplication of procedures and have increased knowledge about the calves being purchased.

Producers who desire to participate should contact their local veterinarian. Veterinarians wanting to participate can contact Dr. Jim Watson's office for tags and forms for distribution to participating clients.

## **Program Specifics:**

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All participants will undergo BQA training to become certified prior to enrolling animals in the program. All documentation must be completed with the veterinarian and producer BQA certification number to be valid.

After the producer has been certified, tags and documentation forms will be issued by the certifying veterinarian for calves that have completed the requirements. Producers and veterinarians should be certified prior to processing the calves.

At processing, calves should be individually tagged in the left ear with the official program maroon metal clip tag. Immunizations must include a Clostridial, Pasteurella/Mannheimia and 4-way (IBR/BVD/PI3/BRSV) viral vaccine in both rounds. Vaccinating for other diseases is optional. At least one round of vaccinations must include a 4-way modified-live product given in accordance with label directions.

Appropriate paperwork should be completed and accompany calves at sale. The processing travel sheets must include name, address and phone number of producer. The records should also include all treatments administered to each animal, serial number and name of product used, and the date administered. All procedures must be performed in accordance with Beef Quality Assurance guidelines. Both veterinarian and producer need to sign and place their BQA certification number on the travel sheet.

### **MS Veterinarian Certified Health Assurance Program Specifics:**

	<i>Initial Immunizations</i>	<i>Booster Immunizations</i>
Time Frame:	Calves minimum of 5 months old	2-4 weeks after initial vaccinations, minimum 10 days prior to sale
Required Immunizations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clostridial Disease (7-way Blackleg)</li> <li>2. Viruses: IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV Pasteurella multocida &amp; haemolytica (with leukotoxoid)</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clostridial Disease (7-way Blackleg)</li> <li>2. Viruses: IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV -- Minimum of one round Modified-Live, can be given at initial or booster round, both rounds may be MLV if desired</li> </ol>
Optional Immunizations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hemophilus</li> <li>2. Mycoplasma</li> <li>3. Brucellosis (Heifers only)</li> </ol>	Vaccinate in accordance with label
Procedures:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dehorn</li> <li>2. Castration (or banding) of steers</li> </ol>	Must be healed by time of sale
Feeding:	Calves must be bunk broke by sale.	
Weaning:	Calves must be weaned 45 days before offering for sale.	
Parasite Control:	Calves must be treated for internal and external parasites within 45 days of sale with a product labeled to control encysted L3 parasite stages. Optional-Coccidiosis Control	