

Meat Institute

AR# 2530-II

AR Title: Veal Quality Assurance

AR Purpose and Description:

Today more than ever, interest in food goes beyond taste, nutrition, convenience and price. Today's consumers desire to know how and where their food is produced and who is producing it. The Power of Meat study published by the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and the Meat Institute indicates 58% of shoppers think it would be helpful to have some kind of animal welfare ratings or certifications for the meat they buy.¹ Furthermore, 63% of consumers would like to know where the food comes from and how it's raised. The Veal Quality Assurance (VQA) program helps address that desire.

VQA also helps ensure the welfare needs of the animals raised are met as assessed through a framework and certification process validated by a veterinarian.

The goal of the VQA is to provide a foundation and framework of high standards to ensure formula-fed veal calves raised in the U.S. receive excellent animal care and that those raising calves, in collaboration with licensed veterinarians and animal nutritionists, follow science-based best practices and regulatory requirements to prioritize animal welfare throughout the production system resulting in consistent, safe, quality veal.

As consumer perceptions and demand for animal-based proteins evolve and new husbandry practices are researched, the formula-fed veal industry must continue to demonstrate they are holding itself accountable to the highest standards of animal care. The VQA program provides both industry and the consuming public with those standards.

Participation in the VQA program is estimated at more than 95% of all formula-fed veal comes from VQA-certified farms. The VQA program historically is rated as one of the most valuable programs to the industry as measured annually through the Veal Industry Summit.

No other organization has a program to serve and support the unique aspects of the veal industry in the U.S. with a quality assurance program. The VQA program has been ongoing since its inception in 1990. It is funded through Beef Checkoff investments made by veal farmers each time a calf is sold.

The Veal Industry Information Authorization Request (AR) for Veal Quality Assurance (VQA) continues to align with the Beef Industry Long Range Plan and it also supports the veal industry's long-range plan. The Veal Promotion AR focuses on increasing the discovery of and access to veal in the marketplace, and VQA specifically reinforces consumer confidence in veal as a protein choice.

What is VQA?

Developed with input from farmers, veterinarians, feed and nutrition consultants, academia and other animal health care experts, the VQA program provides a framework of educational resources and best management practices necessary to ensure that those who care for veal calves meet their ethical obligation to the health and well-being of the animals through responsible, ethical practices and protocols.

To be VQA certified, each farm and its owner/farm manager producing formula-fed veal is expected to:

1. Maintain a Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship
2. Meet the Expected Outcomes outlined in each section of the VQA manual.
3. Have a licensed veterinarian (preferably the one identified in their VCPR) assess and provide documentation confirming that best management practices are being followed and “Expected Outcomes” are achieved.

Licensed veterinarians who maintain a Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship (VCPR) serve a critical role in the VQA certification process to assess that best management practices are followed and desired outcomes are achieved on farms raising formula-fed veal. Certification is required at least once every three years.

Background About Veal

Uniquely positioned between both the dairy and beef industries, veal is a meat derived primarily from young Holstein bull calves. Bull calves are typically sold shortly after birth through local auction markets or purchased directly by others who will raise them for beef or veal. Most Holstein bull calves are raised for beef and a small percentage are raised for veal.

Veal is primarily raised in the Northeast including the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and Indiana.

While the industry’s story about production practices is shared through consumer and channel marketing efforts deployed in the Veal Promotion AR, this AR for Veal Quality Assurance enables a credible and meaningful story to be communicated.

Citations:

¹Anne-Marie Roerink, *Principal, 210 Analytics LLC, The Power of Meat 2024: An In-Depth Look at Meat Through the Shopper’s Eyes, Report sponsored by Sealed Air Food Care Division/Cryovac®*

CBB Budget Category: Industry Information

Start Date: 10/1/2024

End Date: 9/30/2025

FY25 CBB/BPOC Funding Request		
Direct Costs	Implementation	Total
\$54,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$60,000.00

Beef Industry Long Range Plan (LRP) Core Strategies Addressed by this AR:

- Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production

Tactic A | 2530-II
Veal Quality Assurance

TACTIC DESCRIPTION:

Veal Quality Assurance (VQA) is the program that certifies and verifies production practices for raising formula-fed veal. The program provides the framework for this certification supported by educational resources to convey best management practices and desired outcomes to ensure calves receive optimal care for their health and well-being.

The FY24 VQA AR focused on producing educational materials for the updated VQA program and communication outreach to industry stakeholders and farmers of these new resources.

The focus of the FY25 VQA AR will be program management to ensure all independent and company-owned formula-fed veal calves are raised on farms with farmers/managers who are VQA certified using the new resources. This includes communication outreach to veal farmers, veterinarians, calf procurement managers and veal packer/processors involved in veal production as well as dairy industry partners who supply calves to veal growers/farmers. This AR includes activities to support, verify and record certification initiatives and updates that are necessary for the integrity of the program.

Measurable Objectives:

Measurable Objective #1

Provide ongoing program management to ensure more than 95% of all domestically produced U.S formula-fed veal calves are derived from VQA-certified farms as confirmed by licensed veterinarians. (Ongoing)

Measurable Objective #2

Provide a program and industry update on VQA to veal farmers and industry professionals through a minimum of one communication piece to approximately 225 farmer and industry stakeholders such as veterinarians, calf procurement managers and veal packer/processors who help extend program reach to an additional 200 veal farmers. (Q1 or Q2)

Measurable Objective #3

Develop and host (Q2) the Veal Industry Summit reaching a minimum of 25 stakeholders and veal farmers with program updates and discussions to gather input on future veal programs. These stakeholders include veterinarians, calf procurement managers and veal packer/processors as well as state beef council representatives.

Performance Efficiency Measures:

General Target Audience

- Veal Farmers/Growers Reach Goal: 400
- Veal Farmers/Growers Engagement Goal: 200

Key Opinion Leaders

- Industry Stakeholders Reach Goal: 45
- Industry Stakeholders Engagement Goal: 25

LRP Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic:

Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production

- Align and collaborate with traditional and nontraditional partners to tell the positive story of beef cattle production
- Intensify efforts in educating consumers as well as supply chain decision makers about the benefits of animal care programs like BQA and their impacts on animal well-being

Checkoff Program Committee(s): Consumer Trust

Supplemental Information for This AR

1. Please explain significant changes from the FY24 approved AR.

Rolling out the new VQA program materials was the focus in FY24. The FY25 AR will focus on program support and certification efforts. In addition, A Veal Industry Summit will be hosted to provide program updates and gather input for future veal programs.

2. List any proposed vendors/agencies that will be used to complete the work in this AR.

Look East has multi-years of managing VQA as well as experience and relationships in the veal industry to ensure participation and certification.

3. Will all work with vendors/agencies be competitively bid? If no, please provide a brief description as to why.

Look East staff has knowledge and experience (multiple years) in managing the VQA program and collaborating with industry stakeholders. Knowledge and production experience within the formula-fed veal industry are not easily found with other agencies. Their expertise and experience will deliver meaningful results for the beef/veal industry.

4. Has this AR built upon past work or projects that have been previously funded by the BPOC? If yes, please provide a detailed list and background information on the project and contractor(s) involved.

This AR is a continuation of past Veal ARs funded by the BPOC. The new VQA program materials were introduced in FY24. The focus in FY25 will be program and certification support to farmers and industry stakeholders. Additionally, the “veal formula” provides guidance for the checkoff dollars specifically contributed by veal producers through the sale of veal calves.

5. If applicable, explain how this AR can be extended by state beef councils or other contractors.

Due to the size and unique aspects of the milk-fed veal industry, there is no direct role for State Beef Councils in implementing the VQA program. Veal farmers historically work directly with a feed supplier and oftentimes are fully integrated with that feed company and/or a packer/processor for harvesting their animals. VQA works directly with these industry stakeholders including feed company representatives, procurement managers and veterinarians to ensure VQA resources are available, and certification is accountable to the expectations of the VQA program.

State Beef Councils can play a role in consumer awareness and help extend the on-farm veal production story including VQA through their communication and education efforts.

Detailed Budget Summary

The tables in the following three sections report program budget information from the following funding sources:

- Cattlemen's Beef Board/Beef Promotion Operating Committee (CBB/BPOC) Funding
- Other Funding sources such as:
 - Federation of State Beef Councils (FSBC) Funds
 - Individual Qualified State Beef Council (QSBC) Funds
 - Government Funds (e.g., Market Access Program, Foreign Market Development)
 - Grain/Oilseed Funds (e.g., National Corn Growers Association, American Soybean Association) Corporate Funds (e.g., tech and pharma companies)
- Other

Section 1 – FY25 Funding Requested by Tactic

FY25 CBB/BPOC Funding Requested by Tactic

The following table outlines the amount of CBB/BPOC funding that is being requested for each tactic within this AR, and the committee(s) that has been selected to score each tactic.

FY25 CBB/BPOC Funding Requested by Tactic					
Committee Name	Tactic	Tactic Name	Direct Costs	Implementation	Total
Consumer Trust	Tactic A	Veal Quality Assurance	\$54,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$60,000.00
		Total	\$54,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$60,000.00

FY25 Other Funding Sources Requested by Tactic

The following table reports the amount of proposed and/or anticipated Other Funding sources that would be applied to this AR's tactics. The funding information in this table is for informational purposes only and demonstrates external collaboration as delineated in the 2021-2025 Beef Industry Long Range Plan.

FY25 Other Funding Sources Requested by Tactic <i>(Informational Only)</i>			
Funding Source	Tactic	Tactic Name	Total
Other: N/A	Tactic A	Veal Quality Assurance	
		Other Funding Total	

Use the space below if you wish to provide additional comments/information on the FY25 CBB/BPOC or Other Funding amounts that are being requested for this AR's tactic(s).

N/A

Section 2 – Summary of FY24 AR Budgets and Expenses

Classification:

This AR is a continuation of, or builds upon, program work from last year. CBB will report information in the "FY24 CBB/BPOC Funding" table and the contractor will provide information for the "FY24 Other Funding Sources" table.

FY24 CBB/BPOC Funding

This table reports the amount of awarded and expended CBB/BPOC funding for this Authorization Request in FY24.

FY24 CBB/BPOC Funding			
<i>Note: The Cattlemen's Beef Board completed the fields in this table.</i>			
	AR# 2430-II		
	Direct Costs	Implementation	Total
Funds Awarded	\$49,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$55,000.00
Actual Expenses <i>(October 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)</i>	\$26,145.00	\$3,670.00	\$29,815.00

FY24 Other Funding Sources

The following table reports the amount of committed and expended "Other Funding Sources" for this AR in FY24. The funding information in this table is for informational purposes only and demonstrates external collaboration as delineated in the 2021-2025 Beef Industry Long Range Plan.

FY24 Other Funding Sources <i>(Informational Only)</i>		
	AR# 2430-II	
	Other Funding Source	Funds Expended <i>(October 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)</i>
A	Other: N/A	

Use the space below if you wish to provide additional comments/information on the FY24 CBB/BPOC or Other Funding amounts that are being requested for this AR's tactic(s).

N/A

Section 3 – Historical Summary of AR Budgets and Expenses

Classification: This AR is a continuation of, or builds upon, program work from the last two years or more. CBB will report information in the "CBB/BPOC Historical Summary" table and the contractor will provide information for the "Other Funding Sources Historical Summary" table.

CBB/BPOC Funding – Historical Summary

The following table reports the amount of awarded and expended CBB/BPOC funding for this AR in FY21, FY22, and FY23.

CBB/BPOC Funding - Historical Summary				
Note: The Cattlemen's Beef Board completed the fields in this table.				
		FY23 AR# 2330-II	FY22 AR# 2230-II	FY21 AR# 2130-II
AR Period ¹	Start Date:	Oct. 1, 2022	Oct. 1, 2021	Oct. 1, 2020
	End Date:	Sep. 30, 2023	Dec. 31, 2022	Sep. 30, 2021
Funds Awarded		\$60,000.00	\$74,210.00	\$99,407.00
Actual Expenses ²		\$59,015.00	\$60,374.00	\$95,225.00

¹For multiyear ARs, the "End Date" reflects the date that the AR is scheduled to be completed.

²If the AR "End Date" has not occurred, actual expenses will be reflective of the following time period:
AR Start Date - June 30, 2024.

Other Funding - Historical Summary

The following table reports the amount of "Other Funding Source" expenditures for this AR in FY21, FY22, and FY23. The funding information in this table is for informational purposes only and demonstrates external collaboration as delineated in the 2021-2025 Beef Industry Long Range Plan.

Other Funding Sources – Historical Summary (Informational Only)						
	FY23 AR# 2330-II		FY22 AR# 2230-II		FY21 AR# 2130-II	
	Other Funding Source	Total Expenditures	Other Funding Source	Total Expenditures	Other Funding Source	Total Expenditures
A	Other: N/A		Other: N/A		Other: N/A	

Use the space below if you wish to provide additional comments/information on the historical CBB/BPOC or Other Funding budget and expense summaries.

N/A