



Certification Standards For Ruminant Livestock

February 2016

1 Contents

1	Contents	2
2	Pasture for Life – a distinct livestock production system	5
2.1	Distinct quality	5
2.2	Environmental benefits	6
2.3	Animal welfare benefits	6
2.4	Extensive production.....	6
3	Understanding the Certification Mark and Production Standards.....	7
3.1	Understanding the Certification Standards.....	7
3.2	Overarching objectives and expectations	7
3.3	The Pasture for Life Certification Mark	8
3.4	Certified Farms, Certified Butchers and Certified Creameries	8
3.5	The application process.....	8
3.6	The inspection process and its objectives	9
3.7	Records and record keeping.....	10
3.8	Exceptional and transitional measures	11
3.9	Animal Welfare Standards.....	12
3.10	Inspection fees and levies	13
4	Livestock and Feed.....	14
4.1	Source of livestock and identification	14
4.2	Grazing	15
4.3	Grazing brassica crops.....	17
4.4	Wholecrop cereals	18
4.5	Other sources of feed and nutrition	19
5	Pasture Lamb and Sheep Production.....	22
5.1	Identification.....	22
5.2	Planning production cycles.....	22
5.3	Provision for supplementary feeding of ewes at lambing.....	23
6	Pasture Dairy Production	25
6.1	Permitted feed.....	25
6.2	Calf management and feeding.....	26

6.3	Non-Dairy replacement calves.....	26
6.4	Animal welfare indicators.....	27
6.5	Antibiotic use	27
6.6	Hormone use	28
6.7	Replacement milking and breeding stock	28
6.8	Culled animals.....	29
6.9	The Application process	29
6.10	Conversion planning.....	29
6.11	Conversion periods for bought in stock	30
7	Sustainable Grassland Management	31
7.1	Conservation grazing of grassland and semi-natural habitats	31
7.2	Diversity within grassland and pasture	32
8	Biodiversity and the Wider Environment.....	34
8.1	Statutory requirements and other management considerations.....	34
8.2	Field margins and strips.....	35
8.3	Hay and silage making.....	36
8.4	Nesting habitat	36
8.5	Wetland and riparian areas	37
9	Certified Butchers and Creameries.....	38
9.1	Separation of Certified and non-Certified produce	38
9.2	Statutory requirements.....	38
9.3	Traceability	38
9.4	TRACKS identification.....	39
9.5	Meat hanging requirements.....	40
9.6	Point of sale requirements	40
10	Records and Record Keeping.....	41
10.1	Certified Farms.....	41
10.2	Animal Welfare	43
10.3	Certified Butchers	44
10.4	Certified Creameries	44
11	Use of the Certification Mark - Conditions and Guidelines.....	45

11.1	Ownership	45
11.2	Permitted users.....	45
11.3	Application of the Certification Mark.....	46
11.4	Supervision of the Certification Mark	48
11.5	Suspension and termination of certification	49
11.6	The appeals process	50
12	Appendix 1: Recommended Stocking Rates.....	51
12.1	Livestock Unit Values for a range of animals.....	52
13	Appendix 2: Membership Fees.....	53
13.1	Membership fees	53
13.2	Inspection fees.....	53
13.3	Sales levy	53
13.4	Animal transfers.....	53
14	Appendix 3: Definition of terms	54

2 Pasture for Life – a distinct livestock production system

The natural diet for ruminant livestock is grazed plants; principally grass and the accompanying herbs and legumes found in diverse pastures. However, the majority of livestock production in today's farming is based upon the inclusion of grains and other forms of concentrate feed (such as Soya) to boost production.

The inclusion of concentrate feed in a ruminant animal's diet brings a number of costs in terms of the quality of the produce, the environmental impact and also the standard of animal welfare.

Pasture for Life represents a distinct method of farming where the raising of ruminant livestock is based exclusively upon pasture. The produce from this system of farming is also distinct and is typically associated with particular health and other benefits. The Pasture for Life Certification Mark (referred to as the **Certification Mark**) provides a trusted means of clearly identifying this produce and its integrity at the point of sale.

The details of this particular form of livestock production are set out in the Pasture for Life Production Standards (hereafter referred to as the **Certification Standards**), and these are published both online and in printed form by the Pasture-Fed Livestock Association c.i.c. (PFLA). The standards are reviewed regularly to ensure they deliver the overarching objectives of pasture-based livestock production and the PFLA.

2.1 Distinct quality

The following are amongst the benefits that have been identified by independent, peer-reviewed and published research papers as being associated with produce derived from livestock raised solely upon a pasture-based diet:

- Higher in total omega-3 fatty acids (good fats)
- A healthier ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids
- Higher in conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), a potential cancer fighter
- Higher in vaccenic acid (which can be turned into CLA)
- Higher in vitamin E
- Higher in B vitamins
- Higher in beta-carotene
- Higher in the minerals calcium, magnesium and potassium
- Meat is lower in total fat

2.2 Environmental benefits

The Certification Standards encourage the use of legumes such as white and red clover to enhance production and provide important sources of protein in livestock diets and in doing so significantly reduce the use of chemical fertilisers. Clovers and other legume crops such as vetches and trefoil together with herbs such as Chicory also provide important sources of feed for insects and other animals, whilst also avoiding the use of finite resources used in the production of synthetic fertilisers.

Grazing animals return nutrients and organic matter back to the ground as they pass by and deposit their dung. This natural process ensures the soil remains healthy and fertile.

On a complete life-cycle analysis, the carbon footprint of grass farms is characteristically lower than that of farms where cereal crops are grown to feed the animals. Pasture plays an important role in carbon capture and storage through both photosynthesis and by building organic matter throughout the soil profile.

The Certification Standards specifically prohibit the use of Soya, the production of which is often associated with land use change and the resulting environmental damage.

2.3 Animal welfare benefits

The Certification Standards place important conditions that ensure livestock are free to graze naturally at all times when soil and climatic conditions allow. The pasture-based diet effectively determines the stocking rates, allowing animals to follow a natural pattern of grazing behaviour. The combination of these mean that livestock on Certified Pasture for Life Farms (referred to as **Certified Farms**) often experience significantly less stress and associated health problems, than their counterparts raised within more intensive production systems.

2.4 Extensive production

The productivity of grassland and the ability of soils to carry livestock varies throughout the country. However, on all Certified Farms, factors such as the productivity of the grass and the measures taken to deliver the wider environmental benefits mean that the numbers of cows in a herd or sheep in a flock reflect traditional, mixed farming practice as distinct from specialist, intensive production.

Specialist management techniques such as “mob grazing”, which mimic the natural pattern of herds moving from one area of fresh pasture to another are often practiced on Certified Farms. This provided benefits both in terms of the productivity of the pasture, the biodiversity and the resilience of the leys. Further detail on the importance of grazing management and biodiversity is covered within the standards.

Guidance is also provided on typical stocking rates as an average per unit area over a year, however the overarching objective is to ensure there is sufficient area for animals to graze freely and for the farm to be self-sufficient in forage throughout the different seasons.

3 Understanding the Certification Mark and Production Standards

3.1 Understanding the Certification Standards

In certain key areas, specific attention has been drawn to make a distinction between the standards that are **required** and those that are **recommended**.

Required Standards say that something must or must not be done or that something is prohibited. The requirements of these standards must be met before approval to use the Certification Mark can be granted

Recommended Standards say that something 'should' be done. These standards are a reflection of good practice that the PFLA wishes to encourage, but are not mandatory in order for approval to use the Certification Mark be granted.

In many cases, these are likely to become "required" as the Pasture for Life market develops and both producers and butchers receive the necessary support to adopt these practices.

3.2 Overarching objectives and expectations

Text boxes are included in some sections of the standards. These explain the overarching objectives that lie behind the Certification Standard or section within the Standards and are provided in order to avoid the risk of any misinterpretation and help to explain why a particular regulation is considered to be important.

3.2.1

The PFLA requires all Certified Farms and Certified Butchers (also referred to as licensees) who use the Certification Mark, to abide by both the letter and spirit of the Standards. Reference to the overarching objectives will help ensure the integrity of certified pasture-based systems and should also provide an answer for any particular details that may not be specifically addressed within the Standards.

3.2.2

The **PFLA Directors** reserve the right to withdraw membership and therefore Certification where there is deemed to be a clear conflict in objectives between enterprises that are covered by Certification and related business activities which are not. Cases where such a right may be exercised are likely to include instances of animal cruelty, fraudulent practice, or deception.

3.3 The Pasture for Life Certification Mark

The Certification Mark is a trusted symbol that represents the complete range of benefits of pasture-based livestock production, both in terms of the method of farming and the quality of the produce.

3.4 Certified Farms, Certified Butchers and Certified Creameries

Livestock and produce can only carry the Certification Mark if there is an unbroken chain of Certified, compliant practice from the field to the point of production of the finished product, ready for sale.

A Certified Farm is defined, for the purposes of these Standards, as the person or business that is responsible for all aspects of rearing an animal and any associated production.

A Certified Butcher or Certified Creamery is defined, for the purposes of these Standards, as the person or business that is responsible for overseeing any processing up to the point where produce is packaged and labelled. These may be provided by contracted services but the certified business bears responsibility for the quality of the services provided and for the integrity of produce throughout.

3.4.1

Anyone who wishes to use or apply to use the Certification Mark must be a member of the PFLA. Membership is open to anyone, but is governed by conditions that are published on the PFLA website (www.pastureforlife.org). These are also available upon request.

3.4.2

All other stages in the chain from the farm to the customer, including processing and retailing are subject to the same regulations governing the use of the Certification Mark.

3.5 The application process

3.5.1

The application process to become a PFLA member or a Certified Farm, Certified Butcher or Certified Creamery is available online through the PFLA website.

3.5.2

It is important to ensure that the details recorded by the potential licensee in the 'Business Profile' section are accurate and an honest reflection of the business

3.5.3

Applicants are encouraged to read the Certification Standards carefully and consider any potential changes they need to make to their existing business before proceeding with the application process.

Note: Dairy farmers should refer to the application details in section 6.9

3.5.4

Before any licence can be granted or renewed, the applicant must complete and return any requested agreements concerning actions that are to be taken to comply with the Certification Standards, along with any other information requested.

3.6 The inspection process and its objectives

3.6.1

The audit and inspection process takes a risk-based approach. It begins with a self-assessment declaration made by the producer or retailer, in which they are able to declare compliance or otherwise with the Certification Standards.

The next step is the on-site inspection. The purpose of the inspection process is to provide an independent verification that the actual practice on the Farm, Butchery or Creamery reflects that declared on the self-assessment form. This gives due recognition to those producers and retailers who take a conscientious and responsible approach to their business.

3.6.2

The Certification Mark is underpinned by an audited **Certification Scheme**, which is inspected by an **Independent Inspection Body**. Certification covers a 12-month period from the point of approval and may thereafter be renewed on an annual basis. A list of Certified Farms is published on the PFLA website. The website also contains a list of Certified Butchers and Certified Creameries which are often, but not exclusively, retail outlets.

3.6.3

The independent inspection of Certified Farms, Butchers and Creameries is necessary to maintain the integrity of the Certification Mark and to provide the necessary reassurances to customers who support it through the purchase of produce. The audit process also provides an opportunity for the PFLA to monitor the effectiveness of the Certification Standards in delivering the desired objectives.

3.6.4

Those seeking to become a Certified Farm, Butcher or Creamery agree to a minimum of one visit a year from an approved certification body, with the possibility of additional visits if deemed necessary. The PFLA may require additional inspections when:

- There is a significant change in the enterprise covered by the licence
- The licensee moves to new premises
- A complaint is received regarding the licensee's business
- The licensee is selected as part of the spot-inspection programme
- Re-inspection is required to make sure the licensee has corrected any non-compliances
- The risk assessment of the licensee's operations suggests the need for further inspection

3.6.5

The PFLA or an approved certification body will arrange to visit and audit the applicant's farm. Wherever possible, inspections will be combined with existing farm inspections, such as those for farm assurance (e.g. Red Tractor), RSPCA Assured or Organic certification.

3.6.6

The PFLA and its contracted inspection service reserve the right to carry out unannounced inspections where it is deemed to be necessary and appropriate.

(Note: The PFLA reserves the right to recoup any expenses incurred in conducting additional inspections.)

3.6.7

In cases of minor non-compliance, any previously granted certification would remain valid provided a PFLA-approved action plan is implemented within an agreed time span.

3.6.8

In cases of major non-compliance or manifest infringement there will be an immediate suspension of the certification and use of the Certification Mark on any produce.

3.6.9

Certified businesses will be contacted by the PFLA or their contracted certification service before the expiry of their licence. If they wish to renew their licence they must complete a new (online) self-assessment form, which will be followed by an inspection by an approved certification body.

3.7 Records and record keeping

Certified Farms, Butchers and Creameries must maintain accurate records to demonstrate that Pasture for Life Standards are being adhered to. Records are also required to demonstrate that acceptable standards of animal welfare and farm assurance are being maintained.

3.7.1

Farmers must have management procedures covering record-keeping, health plans and contingency measures. A detailed list of the required records is set out in **Section 9.6.1: Records and Record Keeping**.

For further guidance, templates for the necessary records and protocols that need to be maintained are published on the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme website:

<http://assurance.redtractor.org.uk/rtassurance/schemes/resources/Templates2014>

3.7.2

The Certification Standards seek to avoid duplication of good management practice covered by existing farm assurance and animal welfare schemes that farmers may already have in place.

Consequently, current membership of a recognised farm assurance scheme will be deemed sufficient evidence to satisfy the requirements of records and record keeping. Acceptable assurance schemes for this requirement include, but are not restricted to:

- Red Tractor
- RSPCA Assured
- Animal Welfare Approved
- Organic certification

3.8 Exceptional and transitional measures

In exceptional circumstances and where there is sufficient justification, derogation may be granted to producers that permit specific variations from the Certification Standards. This is particularly useful to those who are in a process of transition towards certified pasture production. The nature of the derogation and the justification are both recorded for future reference and may be published. Derogations cannot be granted retrospectively.

Overarching Objective

A coordinated inspection process aims to minimise any overlap or duplication between Pasture for Life Certification and any other existing farm certification or environmental stewardship schemes.

Information required for audit purposes should also be used, wherever possible, to add to the value of produce bearing the Certification Mark

3.9 Animal Welfare Standards

3.9.1

Certified Farms must be able to demonstrate high standards of animal welfare. Indicators of animal welfare include:

- Maintenance of animals in good body condition, supported by body condition scoring.
- Animals fed according to their age and stage of production as evidenced by a Nutrition Plan and supported by feed and forage analyses
- Maintenance of animal health beyond absence of disease to promotion of good health
- For Dairy producers health management must include:
 - Minimisation of mastitis and the use of antibiotic treatments
 - Lameness and lameness scoring
 - Fertility recording
 - Calving records
- Absence of signs of stress or discomfort
- Absence of signs of injury
- Appropriate techniques for management tasks such as castration, disbudding etc.
- Ability for animals to perform their natural behaviours
- Appropriate facilities for handling and treating animals
- Protocols for the disposal of fallen stock
- Provision of isolation facilities

3.9.2

Current membership of a relevant assurance scheme or schemes will be deemed sufficient evidence to satisfy the requirements of this aspect of livestock production. Please note that Red Tractor farm assurance does not, in itself, meet the minimum requirements set out above.

Schemes approved by the PFLA include:

- RSPCA Assured
- Organic certification
- Animal Welfare Approved

The PFLA Certification Committee and the inspection team are able to provide further guidance on these requirements for producers who are not currently in any farm assurance scheme.

Overarching Objective

A high standard of animal welfare increase the productivity and profitability of farming and consistently ranks among the most important ethical considerations when buying decisions are made.

Certified ruminant livestock systems ensure that production is matched to an animal's natural metabolism, and as such minimises the psychological and physiological stress that can so often compromise animal welfare.

3.10 Inspection fees and levies

3.10.1

Inspection fees and annual licence fees are set by the PFLA and cover the cost of the audit process and any costs associated with maintaining the certification process as a whole.

3.10.2

The PFLA reserves the right to apply a levy fee on the sale of any livestock or produce that is traded under the Certification mark.

The levy fee, where applied, is published by the PFLA and will be clearly stated at the initial application stage of the Certification process and thereafter at the renewal stage.

This levy contributes towards the promotion and marketing of Pasture for Life produce and will allow future growth of the network of producers and retailers. Depending upon the volume of sales, levy fees may be collected annually in arrears or more frequently where appropriate.

3.10.3

A list of the current fee structure is published on the PFLA website:

www.pastureforlife.org

Overarching Objective

The Inspection process should represent a worthwhile investment in terms of underpinning the integrity of certified produce at the point of sale, confidence in the methods of production and transparency throughout the food chain.

4 Livestock and Feed

The Certification Standards should be seen by farmers as a framework that defines an efficient, productive and sustainable system of farming rather than a series of constraints.

The Certification Standards relating to production have been developed by farmers who have successfully refined their own pasture-based farming systems. As such they reflect practical measures based upon principles of good farming husbandry, as well as an efficient use of natural resources.

PFLA members may find that becoming a Certified Farm will require a degree of change in their farming and livestock production methods. It is important to remember that it is a voluntary decision that should only be taken when the producer is confident in their ability to manage any such change.

4.1 Source of livestock and identification

4.1.1

All animals in the herd or flock relating to the certified enterprise on the farm must be managed to the Certification Standards.

4.1.2

Certification for a herd or flock kept on an individual holding must cover all animals of that species.

Note: The Certification Standards do not permit 'parallel production' whereby Certified and non-Certified animals within the same farming enterprise are raised under different management regimes.

Additional note for Dairy: Pasture Dairy and Pasture Beef are regarded as two completely separate enterprises and although they comprise animals of the same species, it is possible for one to be certified and the other not, provided there is an appropriate distinction between the two enterprises and in the produce being sold.

4.1.3

Animals that are prepared for shows, demonstrations or competitions cannot be treated as an exception and must be managed to the same Certification Standards.

4.1.4

Livestock that are marketed under the Certification Mark must be managed to these Standards from birth to the point of final processing

4.1.5

Any purchased store animals or youngstock that are to be raised for meat production must be sourced from other Certified Farms.

4.1.6

Dairy cows must be kept to Pasture for Life standards throughout their lactation and any dry periods.

4.1.7 **Recommended**

Dairy cows should be kept to Pasture for Life standards throughout their entire lives.

4.1.8

Animals intended solely for breeding, including Bulls and Rams, whose produce (e.g. meat or milk) will not be sold under the Pasture for Life Certification Mark, are not bound by Standards 4.1.4 and 4.1.5.

However, once they have been brought onto a Certified Farm, breeding stock must be kept to the same Certification Standards as production animals. (See section 4.2 etc.)

4.1.9 **Recommended**

Breeding stock should be sourced from Certified Farms whenever possible.

4.1.10

Breeding stock must be of suitable type to fit the farming system and the farm environment.

4.1.11

Records of purchase and sale of **Certified Animals** must be kept (see also section 11.4.5)

4.1.12

Production stock must be identified in accordance with current legislation (e.g. ear tags) to enable complete traceability and integrity of the Certification Mark.

4.1.13

When livestock are temporarily removed from the Certified Farm, but remain in the ownership of the **Certified Business** they must be kept in accordance to the Certification Standards.

Note: Examples of acceptable reasons for temporary removal of livestock from the Certified Farm may include:

- Shows
- Demonstrations
- Movement for breeding

4.2 Grazing

The number of livestock should be properly matched to the capacity of the grassland and the soil conditions. The PFLA recognises that in practice, the sustainable stocking rate is as diverse as the grassland and as such the figures set out in Appendix 1 are for guidance purposes only.

Farms should be able to demonstrate that the number of livestock on the holding doesn't compromise the soil condition, the productivity of the grassland or the welfare of the animals.

4.2.1

All livestock operations must be based primarily upon providing access to pasture or other forage areas where animals can graze. A zero grazing system, where fresh forage is harvested during the growing season and fed to confined animals, is prohibited.

4.2.2 **Recommended**

Certified Farms should produce the feed for their Certified Animals from their own farms or land under their own management.

4.2.3

Grass and forage must be the feed source consumed for the lifetime of the animal, with the exception of milk consumed by young stock prior to weaning.

Note: Grass and forage includes grass (annual and perennial), legumes (eg clover, trefoil, vetches), Brassicas (eg stubble turnips) and herbs within pasture leys. Also permitted are forbs, browsing of shrubby growth, and cereal grain crops in the vegetative (pre-grain) state.

4.2.4

Root crops must be from the brassica family or fodder beet. The use of sugar beet, or products derived from it, are prohibited as a feed source.

4.2.5

Where root crops are used within the diet, they must be grown on the Certified Farm or land under the licensee's management. They cannot be bought in as feed from other farms.

4.2.6

Animals must not be fed grain or any other form of feed concentrate.

4.2.7

At all times when conditions allow, Certified Animals must be maintained on rotational grass leys, permanent pasture, fields of forage crops with at least 90% forage cover, or on unbroken ground. (See also standard 4.5.3).

4.2.8 **Recommended**

Producers should take steps to reduce reliance on any bought-in dried feed with a high external resource footprint.

Note: Grass and lucerne pellets are permitted as a supplementary feed source. However, these are costly to buy and also use significant resources during harvest, transportation, drying and processing. Home-grown feeds represent a more efficient and profitable alternative.

Additional note for dairy producers: There are few permitted forms of concentrate feed that are suitable for in-parlour feeding, however many successful Pasture Dairy systems do not use any form of feed while cows are being milked. Dried forage such as Lucerne pellets may be used, but this is not always a cost-effective solution and the environmental footprint of this sort of feed should be carefully considered.

4.3 Grazing brassica crops

Brassica crops can play an important role in sustainable, rotational livestock farming systems.

Towards the end of summer, a brassica crop such as stubble turnips or kale sown into post-harvest stubble fields can provide useful supplementary fodder at a time when the nutritional value of grass declines. Livestock will spread manure onto these fields as they graze, adding valuable fertility to the following crop planted.

4.3.1 **Recommended**

Animals should be introduced onto a brassica crop slowly to allow the rumen micro-flora to adapt to the higher quality diet.

Note: This process may take seven to ten days. Initially, access should be restricted to one or two hours per day.

4.3.2

In order to avoid taints in meat, animals destined for slaughter must be removed from grazing brassica crops at least ten days before to slaughter.

4.3.3

The risk of taints in milk from feeding brassicas is particularly important and must be monitored closely.

4.3.4

Feed from brassicas must not exceed 10% of the animal's total annual or lifetime dry matter intake – whichever is the shorter.

4.3.5

Animals fed brassicas must be supplemented with additional forage to counter the low fibre content of brassica crops.

4.3.6

Animals grazed on brassicas must have access to a place to lie down that is not muddy, waterlogged or otherwise unsuitable.

4.4 Wholecrop cereals

Wholecrop cereals are often used as a source of conserved forage in livestock production systems. They normally comprise a mix of cereals, such as barley and oats and are often accompanied by legumes such as peas or vetch.

However, despite the resulting feed generally being considered as forage, there is an important consideration in terms of land use that must be taken into account: Grain and pulses are not permitted as feed within the Certification Standards. One of the reasons for this is because the conversion of these arable crops into ruminant livestock feed represents an inefficient process, and reduces the land available to grow crops for direct human consumption.

Because wholecrop is normally harvested fairly late in the growing season, there is insufficient time to establish a following crop within the same harvest year. In terms of land use, and the wider benefits of Pasture-based production, the distinction between the cereal crop being harvested at the vegetative stage, or at the grain stage, is largely academic.

4.4.1 **Recommended**

Wholecrop, unless undersown, should not be used as a source of ruminant livestock feed for Certified Animals if it precludes a grain crop from being harvested on the same land in the same cropping year.

4.4.2

Wholecrop seed mixes must have a minimum of 30% non-cereal seed by weight. Wholecrop that consists solely of cereals is not permitted as a source of ruminant livestock feed.

4.4.3

Wholecrop that has cereal in the mix must be harvested at or before the cereal reaches growth stage 85 (the soft dough/cheese stage).

4.4.4

Where wholecrop is used within the diet, it must be grown on the Certified Farm or on land under the licensee's control and management. Wholecrop cannot be bought in as feed from other farms.

4.4.5

Where grass leys are established in a rotation following a cereal or legume crop, it is possible that volunteer plants from the previous crop will be present in the new ley. Where such volunteer crops are used, they must be grazed or harvested before the cereal crop reaches the flowering stage.

4.5 Other sources of feed and nutrition

4.5.1

Animals must be provided with grass and forages that provide suitable nutrition for their age and stage of production.

4.5.2

Animals must have free access to clean, fresh water at all times.

4.5.3

Certified Animals may only be removed from pasture and fed fresh or conserved forages under the following circumstances:

- Over-wintering periods when grazed crops are not growing
- Finishing periods for market animals
- Conditions likely to lead to soil damage
- Conditions that lead to a clear risk to animal welfare
- Community or National requirements relating to specific animal health problems

4.5.4

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) or derivatives of GM are specifically prohibited.

4.5.5 **Recommended**

When Certified Animals are housed for an over-wintering period, they should be given access to pasture whenever conditions allow.

4.5.6

When Certified Animals are off pasture the stocking density in housing must at least meet the requirements of animal welfare as outlined in standard 3.9.1 3.9.2 and be consistent with the requirements set out in 3.9.1

Note: where cubicle systems are used for dairy cows, these are governed by the requirements set out in the guidelines administered by the assurance schemes that we accept (see 3.9.2)

4.5.7

Certified Animals may be supplemented with hay, haylage, baleage, silage, crop residue (straw) without grain, and other natural sources of roughage while on pasture.

4.5.8

Grazing cereal crop residues after harvest for grain is prohibited.

Note: Consumption of seeds naturally attached to herbage, forage and browse is considered incidental and acceptable. Grazing vegetative re-growth of harvested grain fields is permitted if 75% of the field is covered by vegetative re-growth and the average height of the re-growth is at least 100mm high.

4.5.9

Approved mineral and vitamin supplements may be provided to balance the animal's nutrient intake and to correct identified deficiencies in their total diet.

Note: Mineral and vitamin supplements must not include any feed ingredients listed under standard 4.5.10

4.5.10

The following sources of feed specifically prohibited under the Certification Standards:

- Grains
- Dry harvested grain legumes (e.g. peas, beans, lupins)
- Maize and maize silage
- Soya
- Sunflower and safflower
- Oilseed and expeller products
- Grain residue or by-products including brewer's grains
- Any bought-in root crop products, including sugar beet and derived products
- Any by-products from food processing or animal feed processing industries
- Stock feed potatoes, vegetables or fruit
- Waste food products such as bread

4.5.11

A list of ingredients or specification for any feed or supplement made available to a group of certified animals must be retained and be made available at inspection.

4.5.12

A lack of a specific prohibition for any feed or supplement within the Certification Standards does not imply that their use is permitted. Feeding of any non-forage supplements or feedstuffs is prohibited and the PFLA should be contacted in the case of any doubt.

4.5.13

The only exception to 4.5.10 and 4.5.12 is in extreme circumstances, when animal welfare would otherwise be affected. This exception can only be used with **prior** consent of the PFLA.

Note: See section 5.3 for provision of feeding breeding ewes pre-lambing

4.5.14

If inadvertent exposure to non-forage foodstuffs occurs, the incident must be recorded and the PFLA notified of the incident within seven days.

4.5.15

Records must be maintained with ear tag numbers, or other forms of animal identification for any animals that consume non-forage supplements and these must not be sold under the Certification Mark or otherwise implied that they are covered by the Certification Mark.

Overarching Objective

The Certification Mark must represent an honest description of the feeding system and meet the expectations of consumers and the wider public.

Forage crops grown on arable fields should be part of a rotation and their inclusion should not adversely affect the potential for growing crops for direct human consumption

It is important that the use of brassicas as a forage crop must be managed responsibly and that its value as a feed crop should be to complement, not replace feed from pasture.

5 Pasture Lamb and Sheep Production

Whilst the Certification Standards for all ruminant livestock share the same overarching objectives, the PFLA recognises that each sector has specific characteristics that require their own regulations and guidance.

This section of the regulations deals with particular considerations for sheep and lamb production. These include the individual identification of animals, the welfare of breeding ewes carrying multiple offspring, and the maturity of animals that are to be sent for meat.

The following Certification Standards are structured around a clear distinction between breeding stock and production stock:

Breeding Stock includes ewes and ewe lambs (female lambs destined to be used for future breeding stock).

Production Stock refers to Lamb, Hogget and other sheep managed to the Certification Standards and destined for meat production.

5.1 Identification

5.1.1

Individual tags should be applied to lambs prior to weaning.

5.1.2 **Recommended**

In addition to the statutory identification tag, a suitable secondary tagging system should be used which enables easy distinction between breeding and production stock.

5.2 Planning production cycles

Successful production systems will be based upon careful selection of breeds to match the system, and a production cycle that is matched to the growing conditions and availability of fodder.

5.2.1 **Recommended**

Lambing times should be planned to ensure that ewes and lambs can be introduced to high quality pastures and kept on them up to the point of weaning.

5.2.2 **Recommended**

Lamb for meat production should have at least four months of grazing pasture before being sent for slaughter.

5.3 Provision for supplementary feeding of ewes at lambing

The objective of **Certified Production** is that all Certified Animals derive their feed solely from pasture and forage. However, the PFLA recognises the potential welfare challenges presented by this for some breeding animals. Certified Farms are encouraged to select breeds, time lambing and manage grazing to eliminate the need for supplementary feeding. The experience and innovations shared between farmers and other PFLA Members can help towards this.

5.3.1

Supplementary feeding is permitted for breeding animals only, but only when the welfare of these animals would be at risk.

Note: This could include ewes carrying multiple lambs, or in-lamb ewes in poor body condition at the time of lambing. In the case of poor body condition, the PFLA would expect to see pro-active measures in place to ensure such cases were isolated and could not be foreseen given the management steps taken.

This allowance to feed grain or other products to protect ewe welfare should only be seen as a transitional measure while adaptations to breed, timing or grazing management are made.

5.3.2

Ewes must be scanned to confirm multiple births before supplementary feeding is made available for groups of ewes

Note: Individual animals can be provided with supplementary feeding on the basis of a visual assessment.

5.3.3 **Recommended**

Any supplementary feeding should be from home-produced feed.

5.3.4 **Recommended**

Permitted supplementary feeds should be derived from forage (e.g. Lucerne nuts), rather than grain or concentrate feed whenever possible.

5.3.5

Supplementary feed from non-forage sources must not exceed 40% of the ewe's daily intake on a dry matter basis.

5.3.6

Supplementary feeding must be withdrawn as soon as possible after lambing, and in any case before lambs are six weeks old.

5.3.7

Supplementary feeding must not be used at any other point in the breeding cycle (e.g. for flushing prior to conception).

5.3.8

Certified Farms using cereal or concentrate feed for supplementing breeding stock must draw up and demonstrate plans to reduce the use of such feeds.

5.3.9

Produce derived directly from breeding stock given supplementary feed, must not be sold under the Certification Mark.

Note: Products derived directed from breeding stock include meat (mutton) or milk

5.3.10

Breeding stock that has been given supplementary feed must be clearly identified within the flock and must not be sold under the Certification Mark.

6 Pasture Dairy Production

Within the beef and sheep sectors, the change from mainstream production methods to a Pasture for Life system generally involves modest change with few significant challenges: In mainstream farming practice, prohibited feeds such as cereals and concentrates tend to only be used in the finishing stages of livestock production and the impact of removing these from the diet are often less than many farmers might anticipate. With due attention given to the composition of leys, the conservation of crops for winter feed and selection of suitable breeds the transition process should present few significant challenges.

In contrast, the transition from mainstream dairy practice to Pasture for Life Dairy production can represent a far more significant challenge. A typical modern herd averaging 8500L per cow per year will depend upon the bulk of that production being derived from concentrate feed. As such, even relatively minor changes will have an immediate impact upon both milk quantity and quality. Furthermore, many modern breeds of cow will continue to produce milk at the expense of her own health and body condition if the diet is not carefully matched to the demands of milk production.

It is also important that Pasture Dairy and Pasture Beef are entirely compatible systems and that the two enterprises offer an integrated path for non-dairy replacement stock to be used efficiently. Single-purpose dairy breeds can produce animals that are not particularly well suited to beef production, and this can mean that calves that are not kept as dairy replacements are destroyed soon after birth. This is a practice that is unacceptable in a Pasture Dairy system and for this reason Pasture Dairy should either be based upon dual purpose breeds or provide for the compassionate use of non-dairy calves.

To reflect the challenges that the transition to Pasture for Life dairy can represent, the application process to become a certified Pasture for Life Dairy farm will involve careful conversion planning. The PFLA will provide the necessary support to develop this plan, which must be agreed before the Certification process can be completed. The application process will also involve a farm visit as part of the conversion planning.

At present, the Pasture for Live Certification mark only covers dairy production from cows and does not extend to either sheep or goats.

6.1 Permitted feed

As with all livestock covered by these Standards, Grass and forage must be the feed source consumed during the lifetime of the animal, with the exception of milk consumed by young stock prior to weaning. Animals must not be fed grain or any other form of feed concentrate and sections 4.2 to 4.5 of the standards explain in detail the permitted sources of feed.

6.1.1

Any non-certified stock must be raised and maintained in accordance with the standards throughout the entire period covered by the Certification.

Note: also see section 6.10 Conversion Planning and 6.11 Conversion periods for bought-in stock

6.2 Calf management and feeding

6.2.1 **Recommended**

Prior to weaning, calves should be raised by their mother or be adopted onto a surrogate.

6.2.2 **Recommended**

Prior to weaning calves should be fed on whole milk.

6.2.3

Prior to weaning calves must be fed at least 51% fresh, whole milk. The remaining 49% can comprise dried milk, skimmed milk powder or milk replacer.

6.2.4

Calves must be given an adequate amount of good quality colostrum by the time they are 12 hours old.

Note: In newborn calves, intestinal closure starts at around 6 hours and by 12 hours there is relatively little absorption of antibodies. Therefore calves must be given colostrum before 12 hours and it is recommended that the first feeding should be completed before 6 hours.

6.2.5

Calves must not be weaned before they are 12 weeks of age.

6.3 Non-Dairy replacement calves

6.3.1

Farms must have in place a management plan that identifies suitable market(s) for male calves, and any female calves that are not reared as breeding replacements.

6.3.2

Calves must not be euthanized for any reason other than non-recoverable illness or injury.

6.3.3

Calves must not be sold through auction markets until they are at least 12 weeks old.

6.3.4

Calves must not be sold for live export.

6.3.5

Non-dairy calves should be reared to meet Pasture for Life beef/veal standards up to the point of sale or transfer to a separate enterprise.

Overarching Objective

The PFLA promotes a compassionate approach to the issue of male calves from dairy cows. Male calves, and any female calves that are unsuitable as breeding replacements, do not have to be raised as Pasture for Life beef or veal but a suitable outlet for these animals must be found.

6.4 Animal welfare indicators

A detailed summary of the indicators that help assess animal welfare standards is set out within section 3.9 and section 9.6.1 includes guidance on record keeping.

6.5 Antibiotic use

Pasture Dairy systems are associated with production levels that are matched to a cow's natural levels of production and as such, the use of antibiotic treatments is considered to be rare. Nevertheless, in common with sustainable and organic principles and human medicine, the provision for treatment with antibiotics on a case-by-case basis remains a crucial resource in maintaining high standards of animal welfare. See section 9.6.1 for more details on health planning and the requirements to record any treatments

6.5.1 **Dry Cow treatment**

The routine use of dry cow treatment represents prophylactic use of antibiotics and is prohibited
Note: Inert teat sealants such as Orbeseal are permitted.

6.5.2 **Susceptible animals** **Recommended**

The dairy management plan set out in 6.9.1 and 6.10 should include provision for the identification and appropriate action taken for any cows that are susceptible to repeated cases of mastitis.

Note: Management options may include transfer from a dairy herd to a suckler herd or disposal of the animal, but should reflect a compassionate approach towards balancing animal welfare with minimising the use of antibiotics.

Overarching Objective

Appropriate changes in livestock diet and milking frequency are expected to achieve a natural drying off process; sealing off the teat duct without recourse to antibiotic treatments.

6.5.3

When antibiotic treatment is required for individual cows, third and fourth generation cephalosporin antibiotics must be avoided

Note: These antibiotics are important in human medicine and should be used sparingly in animal treatments.

6.5.4

When antibiotic treatment is used for individual cows **twice** the statutory withdrawal time must be observed before milk is sold as Pasture for Life

6.6 Hormone use

6.6.1

In common with UK standards, the use of hormone treatments such as rBST to boost production is prohibited.

6.6.2

Hormone treatments may be used to address fertility or other similar therapeutic issues provided there is clear veterinary advice to do so.

6.7 Replacement milking and breeding stock

Please refer to section 4.1, which must be read in conjunction with this section.

6.7.1 **Recommended**

Pasture Dairy farms should operate as a closed herd.

6.7.2

Pasture Dairy farms must either breed their own replacements or purchase them from other Certified Pasture Dairy farms.

Note: If farms have problems finding suitable certified replacement breeding stock they should contact PFLA for guidance.

6.7.3 **Recommended**

Replacements should account for no more than 15% of the total herd in any 12-month period.

6.7.4 **Flying herds**

The use of “flying herds”, where replacements are made on a herd-wide basis or where stock is routinely raised on a non-certified farm, is not permitted.

6.7.5 **Recommended**

Breeding bulls should be sourced from certified Pasture for Life farms.

6.8 Culled animals

In common with the treatment of non-dairy calves, the PFLA promotes a compassionate approach to the issue of culled animals.

6.8.1 **Recommended**

The sale of non-productive cows through auction markets should be avoided wherever possible.

6.8.2

Body condition must be maintained in non-productive cows up to the point of sale or slaughter.

6.8.3

Transportation of cull cows must avoid stress.

6.9 The Application process

Because of the potential impacts that the conversion to a Pasture Dairy system could involve, the application process for Pasture Dairy farms is more complex than for Beef or Sheep production.

A proportional approach is used, whereby the degree of planning required before an application is accepted by PFL reflects the degree of change in livestock management that is required. Factors that are taken into consideration include:

- Current average milk production
- Breed(s) used
- Current use of concentrate feed (Kg/head/year)
- Current stocking rate
- Grassland management practice
- Available markets for Pasture Milk

6.9.1 **Farm visits**

A farm visit forms an integral part of the application process for Pasture Dairy. This will be conducted by either a member of the PFLA Certification team or the independent inspection body used for certification inspections and will help to inform the agreed conversion plan.

6.10 Conversion planning

The application process to become a certified Pasture for Life Dairy farm will involve the preparation of a detailed conversion plan. This plan must be reviewed as part of the certification renewal process and also when there are any significant changes in the herd management.

6.10.1

The conversion plan must include the following details:

- A feed plan for each group of animals (e.g. youngstock, dry cows, early lactation etc.)
- Livestock Management Plan
- Breeding plan
- Grassland management
- Stocking rates
- Existing or proposed animal welfare certification
- Production profiles and market requirements
- The sale or management of calves that are not required as replacement stock
- The sale or management of culled milking animals

6.10.2

The conversion plan, which will cover the transition period and beyond, must be agreed with PFLA and be in place before the certification process can be completed.

6.11 Conversion periods for bought in stock

Published research shows that changes in diet are very rapidly reflected in milk composition and quality. For this reason the Pasture for Life Dairy standards takes a pragmatic and practical approach towards the sourcing and integration of replacement stock when these are not available from other certified farms and permission has been granted to bring them in from non-Pasture for Life farms.

It is important that any transition in the diet of bought-in stock is carefully managed to ensure minimal stress upon the animal.

As soon as any bought in stock are being offered a diet that is completely compatible with these Standards, the milk from them may be included with batches of certified Pasture Milk with no further withdrawal or conversion period.

6.11.1

Stock bought-in from non-certified farms cannot be marketed as Pasture for Life beef at the end of their productive lives.

7 Sustainable Grassland Management

Livestock play an essential role in maintaining many important habitats, such as species-rich meadows and pasture, wetlands and marshes and wood pasture. However, it is important that appropriate stocking rates and suitable breeds of animal are used.

7.1 Conservation grazing of grassland and semi-natural habitats

Semi-natural grasslands have evolved as a result of decades or even centuries of low-intensity farming, and comprise of native strains of grasses and flowers. These plant communities have a very high conservation value, because they have become incredibly rare and fragmented across the UK, with a decline of at least 95% since 1940. These grasslands are important for rare plants, fungi, and a host of associated insects and other fauna.

7.1.1 **Recommended**

Grazing management plans are recommended for all Certified Farms, particularly those utilising semi-natural habitats.

7.1.2

Semi-natural grasslands, unimproved grasslands and species-rich meadows that are of benefit as wildlife habitats must be managed to maintain or enhance their biodiversity.

Note: The use of manures and artificial fertilisers, re-seeding, drainage and cultivations can all cause damage to semi-natural, unimproved and species-rich grasslands.

7.1.3 **Recommended**

The recommended requirements for livestock stocking rates are provided in Appendix 1.

Note: Over-stocking will reduce the overall efficiency of pasture-based livestock systems.

7.1.4 **Recommended**

Livestock stocking rates should be reviewed in the light of soil conditions (particularly during wet periods) to avoid soil compaction and damage. Due attention should also be given to areas of high traffic, such as gateways or around water troughs.

7.1.5 **Recommended**

Breed selection should take into account the ability of animals to adapt to the farm system and local conditions.

7.1.6

Animals must not be allowed to overgraze, poach or damage valuable habitats.

7.2 Diversity within grassland and pasture

The diversity of plant species within grass leys and pasture is one of the most important elements of Pasture-based production. Leguminous plants, particularly clover, significantly reduce the environmental footprint of livestock production and contribute towards raising the protein levels of forage consumed by animals.

Herbs and other native plants such as Chicory, Burnet, Yarrow, Sanfoin and Ribgrass provide a source of vital trace elements, offering the opportunity for self-medication by livestock. Some plants can also significantly reduce methane emissions in ruminant animals.

The application of artificial fertilisers and herbicide sprays can have a detrimental effect upon the value of grassland and pasture. For instance, synthetic fertilisers can adversely affect soil flora and fauna, reduce earthworm populations, leading to the acidification of soils and causing the oxidation of organic matter.

7.2.1

Stocking rates and pasture management must encourage biodiversity and reflect the importance of herbs and other native species within grass swards (see also section 8).

7.2.2

Pasture and grassland must be managed in a way that minimises the use of artificial fertilisers.

Note: The successful establishment of clover within grass leys can significantly reduce the need for artificial fertilisers. Every 10% of clover within a sward is equivalent to applying 50kg/ha of Nitrogen. A grass ley containing 40% clover will eliminate the need for other sources of Nitrogen. Apart from considerable cost savings, the elimination of artificial sources of nitrogen will reduce harmful emissions of nitrogen oxide gases and the quantity of leached nitrates entering water supplies.

7.2.3

Pasture and grassland must be managed in way that minimises the application of herbicide sprays.

Note: Herbicide sprays can have a detrimental effect on diversity within grass leys and diminish the mineral availability and nutritional value of the grazing. References to published research about the effects of herbicide sprays on soils and pasture can be found on the PFLA website.

7.2.4 **Recommended**

Where sprays or fertilisers are used, they should be included within a grassland management plan that includes strategies for eliminating their use wherever possible.

7.2.5 **Recommended**

Artificial fertiliser and farmyard manures should not be applied before mid-May.

7.2.6 Recommended

Grazing management should allow a variety of vegetation structure – short to tall, sparse to tussocky, to develop.

Note: A variety of vegetation structure benefits a much wider range of wildlife than short swards or those of consistent height.

7.2.7 Recommended

Diverse mixes of plants such as grasses, legumes and herbs should be established and/or maintained in pastures.

7.2.8 Recommended

Pastures should be managed to build and conserve soil nutrients, maintain and preferably increase organic matter, and promote soil microbiological activity.

7.2.9 Recommended

Soil and forage tests should be carried out regularly.

Note: Testing to monitor soil fertility is particularly important in hay and silage fields.

7.2.10

Stocking rates, the use of ‘clean’ and ‘mixed’ grazing and pasture management must be the primary method of controlling internal parasites.

7.2.11

When treatment against parasites is required, Avermectin compounds must be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Note: Avermectin compounds may be necessary where there is resistance to other wormers or when a vet advises their use”

7.2.12 Recommended

Stock that has been recently treated with Avermectin compounds should not be put onto extensively managed grassland.

Note: Overuse of any parasite treatment can lead to a build of resistance. In addition Avermectin parasite treatments can adversely affect both soil flora and fauna. Long-lasting treatments in the form of boluses should also be avoided.

8 Biodiversity and the Wider Environment

Grassland plays a vital part in UK agriculture. Grasses and other forages have been a major resource for UK farmers for hundreds, if not thousands, of years and both farmed animals and native wildlife have adapted to utilise them.

Many UK wildlife species have suffered a massive decline in numbers in the past 50 years. Sustainable livestock production as defined by the Certification Standards includes the principle of ensuring that wildlife habitats are not further destroyed or damaged. Many important and threatened species of native wildlife depend on grazing, so their conservation can be supported through appropriate grassland management

8.1 Statutory requirements and other management considerations

Cross-compliance measures and other EU and National legislation, describe the statutory requirements for environmental management, so do not need to be duplicated within the Certification Standards. However, there are several areas of management that are worth emphasising:

8.1.1

Established wildlife habitats on the Certified Farm must be looked after.

8.1.2 **Recommended**

A Conservation Management Plan should be developed to help identify and manage important wildlife habitats on the farm.

8.1.3

River banks must be managed to keep erosion and soil run-off to a minimum.

8.1.4

When Certified Animals are given supplementary feed or forage on pasture, feeding sites must be moved on a regular basis to prevent poaching.

Note: this requirement does not apply to feeding sites that form part of an overwinter feeding pad, where straw, woodchip or other material forms a dry area for livestock to lie and prevents poaching.

8.1.5

When Certified Animals are given supplementary feed or forage on pasture, feeding areas must be sited away from sensitive vegetation.

8.1.6

Ridge and furrow fields must not be levelled.

8.1.7

Fields containing ancient monuments must not be cultivated.

8.1.8

The Control of Pollution (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) Regulations 1996 must be followed when making and storing silage.

8.1.9

Effluent from silage clamps, bags and big bales must not pollute water courses or groundwater.

Effluent collection tanks must:

- have enough storage for unusually wet silage
- prevent water entering which may cause an overflow

8.2 Field margins and strips

Strips that can be left ungrazed and uncut provide the tussocky grass margins required by nesting birds such as yellowhammers, voles that provide food for barn owls and nest sites for harvest mice.

It is important to avoid applying fertiliser to these strips to encourage a greater variety of plants. Where possible the strips should be managed to provide a diversity of sward height, maturity and density to increase the benefits for birds and insects

8.2.1 **Recommended**

The environmental value of field boundaries should be maximised.

Note: Hedges, ditches and walls are important features for wildlife. Making the most of these features is one of the simplest ways to help wildlife on farmland, with no impact on the farming business.

8.2.2 **Recommended**

Hedge trimming and ditch management should be carried out on a two to three year rotation.

Note: Managing hedges and ditches on a two to three year rotation rather than annually, boosts flowers, fruit and refuges for wildlife. This is most suited to thorn-dominated hedges and ditches where rotational management will not compromise field drainage.

8.2.3 **Recommended**

Hedgerows should be fenced off far enough away from the centre of the hedge to allow a dense hedge base to develop.

Note: Rather than tightly following the curves of the hedge, farmers should consider fencing longer straight runs, requiring less posts and stays, so that some rough grass can develop where the fence is further from the hedge.

8.2.4 **Recommended**

Where appropriate a wide range of new hedgerow trees should be established to maintain or restore former numbers within the landscape.

8.2.5 **Recommended**

Rough grassland at the edges and corners of fields should be created and/or maintained.

Note: Areas of rough grass can help slow down run-off from fields, buffer important features and provide habitat for small mammals and beneficial insects. This is particularly important for farms that do not have unimproved or semi-natural grassland.

8.3 Hay and silage making

The switch from hay to silage has been one of the most significant changes in agriculture over the last century. While helping to ensure the availability of good quality winter forage for livestock, it has allowed changes in grassland management that have reduced wildlife interest. Although traditional hay meadows have the greatest wildlife value, modifications in the management of agriculturally improved meadows can benefit wildlife.

Meadows can provide nesting habitat for a number of birds. Ground-nesting birds that require cover, such as the curlew, skylark, yellow wagtail, whinchat and corn bunting, can nest in meadows.

8.3.1 **Recommended**

At least some fields to be cut for a crop of hay or silage should not be cut before mid-July.

8.3.2 **Recommended**

Where fields are cut for hay or silage awkward field corners or whole margins should be left uncut.

Note: When grasses and flowers have the chance to flower and seed, they provide many benefits to wildlife.

8.4 Nesting habitat

Ground-nesting birds that require cover are attracted to fields shut up for hay or silage. They then need a certain period to complete incubation and for their chicks to be able to be moved out of the field before mowing. The length of time birds require from stock removal to mowing will vary between species and how quickly birds start nesting. For example, skylarks are likely to require at least seven weeks between stock removal and mowing.

8.4.1 Recommended

Where fields have ground-nesting birds, grassland management practices such as harrowing, rolling and topping have the potential to be destructive. Avoid such practices when birds are nesting or have small young yet to fledge.

8.4.2 Recommended

In mown meadows where waders (snipe, lapwings, redshanks, curlews) breed, leave damp hollows/corners uncut as unfledged chicks are most likely to use these areas.

8.5 Wetland and riparian areas**8.5.1 Recommended**

Where required, rushes should be cut between September and November, ideally followed by aftermath cattle grazing.

8.5.2

Wetland areas with conservation value must not be drained.

8.5.3 Recommended

Waterside management should preserve the structure of any banks, protect habitat and maintain aquatic diversity.

9 Certified Butchers and Creameries

The preceding sections have dealt with the production of Certified Animals and careful stewardship of the farmland on which they are raised. For the efforts of the farmer to be reflected at the point of sale, it is important that the rest of the supply chain reflects the same standards of integrity.

In many cases, the quality of certified produce will be complemented by artisan methods of processing. The certification standards provide the flexibility to support such methods.

9.1 Separation of Certified and non-Certified produce

9.1.1

Certified Butchers and Creameries have a duty to ensure that clear protocols are in place to ensure that both Certified and non-certified produce are clearly identified and that there are no means by which any non-certified produce can be inadvertently processed and labelled as being Certified.

9.1.2

These protocols must cover each stage of processing under their control and also include any sub-contracted services.

9.2 Statutory requirements

Certified businesses must be registered with the local Trading Standards and their Environmental Health Authority

9.3 Traceability

Certified Butchers and Creameries must use the online TRACKS system or an agreed offline alternative to ensure that produce being supplied to them is covered by a current, valid certificate.

Note: please also refer to section 11.4.5

9.3.1 Butchers

Prior to processing livestock for meat production, it is important that a Certified Butcher has the necessary checks in place to ensure that the supplying farm is covered by a current, valid certification. If the online system of TRACKS is being used, there is no requirement for the processor to have any other form of record or confirmation that the supplier is fully certified.

9.3.2 Creameries

Prior to processing a batch of milk, it is important that a Certified Creamery has the necessary checks in place to ensure that the supplying farmer has a current, valid certification for Dairy production.

9.4 TRACKS identification

The online TRACKS system generates a unique batch number which relates in the case of beef to the individual animal, in Lamb to a batch of animals and in the case of Milk, to a daily delivery being processed.

If a Certified Butcher or Creamery has an existing system that meets the requirements of the Pasture for Life Certification Standards, this may be used through prior agreement with the PFLA Certification team.

Note: See also section 11.4.5

9.4.1

All produce must contain a reference number that allows the produce to be directly traced through all stages of processing and the following information must be available:

- The date of any processing stages
- The farmer supplying the animals or produce
- Proof that the supplying farmer held a valid Pasture for Life Certificate at the point of sale (n.b. use of the TRACKS recording system fulfils this requirement)
- Details (e.g. ear tag numbers) for the animals supplied.

9.4.2

Certified butchers must record:

- when an animal has been processed
- the date of death
- the deadweight

9.4.3

If the Certified Butcher wishes to use an **alternative system** of batch identification to the TRACKS ID number, this must be agreed in advance with PFLA Certification.

Note: The system of labelling must provide a means of easily tracing both the identity and quantity of produce from point of sale back to the producer.

9.4.4 **Recommended**

Individual cuts of meat or joints should be traceable to the individual animal that produced it.

9.4.5 **Recommended**

Produce that is likely to have come from more than one animal (eg mince or dairy produce) should be traceable to a single holding.

9.5 Meat hanging requirements

9.5.1

Pasture Beef hindquarters must be hung or otherwise dry-aged for a minimum of two weeks prior to sale. The hanging of forequarters is left to the discretion of the butcher to achieve the best quality of meat.

9.5.2

Pasture Lamb must be hung or otherwise dry-aged for a minimum of one week prior to sale.

9.6 Point of sale requirements

9.6.1

The Pasture for Life Certification Mark relates solely to ruminant livestock production. It is important to ensure that it is not implied, either intentionally or otherwise, that any associated monogastric livestock (eg pigs) or poultry systems fall within the scope of Pasture-Fed production.

10 Records and Record Keeping

All records and plans must be in a physical form that can be shown at the time of the PFLA inspection. Verbal plans and records are not acceptable

10.1 Certified Farms

This section lists the records and plans that **must** be maintained on Certified Farms and Certified Butchers.

10.1.1 Bought in stock

Records of the source, date of purchase, and number of animals in the breeding herd

10.1.2 Movement records

Records of the movement of Certified Livestock, both on or off the holding must be kept. Maintaining the online PFLA TRACKS database in the case of Beef and Sheep fulfils this requirement.

10.1.3 Records of a health plan

A health plan emphasizing prevention of illness or injury must be prepared to promote positive health and limit the need for treatment. It must address:

- Avoidance of physical, nutritional or environmental stress.
- Lameness.
- Mastitis (for dairy producers)
- Vaccinations and other methods to cope with prevailing disease challenges.
- Biosecurity measures.
- Nutrition.
- Pasture management to prevent potential animal health problems.
- Control of internal and external parasites
- Emergency Euthanasia.
- Strategies for controlling disease such as Mastitis, BVD and Johne's disease in cattle or Scab in sheep.

10.1.4 Recommended

The health plan should be prepared in consultation with the farm's qualified expert advisor

10.1.5 Transporting animals

A plan must exist to ensure that welfare of the animals is maintained during transport both around the farm and off the farm. The plan should, where applicable, also include actions to be taken in the event of an accident or vehicle breakdown.

10.1.6

Records must be kept of the administration of veterinary medical products.

The information must include:

- Date of purchase.
- Name of product.
- Quantity purchased.
- Identity of the animals treated.
- Reason why animals were treated.
- Number of animals treated.
- Date when treatment started and finished.

10.1.7

Records of an emergency plan

The plan must consider the welfare of the animals during a fire for any stock that are housed over winter. A fire plan must be established with escape routes to the outdoors, available from the interior of the shelter, to allow all animals to be evacuated quickly. A method to extinguish the fire (fire extinguisher, water source) must be readily accessed. Animals must be kept from direct access to electrical wiring and heat sources as a fire prevention measure.

The plan must ensure the welfare of the animals is maintained:

- in any potential climatic extreme such as floods, snow storms, or drought.
- during any potential disruption of services or mechanical breakdown, such as water or electricity supply interruption and breakdown of machinery.
- during transport to include actions to be taken in the event of an accident or vehicle breakdown.

10.1.8

Records of sale or transfer of Certified Pasture for Life animals or produce.

10.1.9

Records of mortality, morbidity and culling

10.1.10

Records of a feeding plan including nutritional regime. Animals must have a feeding plan that will guarantee a varied, well-balanced and wholesome nutritional regime appropriate for their age.

10.1.11

Records of a pasture management plan. A pasture management plan must be in place that addresses the specific farm site. It must ensure that:

- The nutritional requirements of the animals can be adequately met through grazing and appropriate supplementation.
- The composition of the pastures does not create health problems for the animals.
- Ruminants are able to graze fresh, clean pasture that has not become polluted with manure.
- Pasture areas are not subject to erosion by the activities of the animals.
- Pastures are not degraded by overgrazing and other management techniques.
- Appropriate paddock size and grazing frequency is assured.
- The location of water, shelter, and feeding areas is addressed.
- Pasture areas on which animals have been out-wintered or that are otherwise worn out or denuded are restored.

10.2 Animal Welfare

The PFLA provides support for farmers to practice the highest possible standards of animal welfare. The audit process that provides independent verification that Pasture for Life standards are being adhered to, is delivered by as part of the inspection process. Indicators include:

- Mobility
- Body condition
- Cleanliness
- Hair loss, Lesions
- Swellings
- Broken tails
- Response to stockperson
- Cows needing further care
- Mastitis
- Calf/Heifer survivability
- Cull and casualty cows

In preparation for this, and to ensure that best practice is an everyday part of a Certified Farm's management, the PFLA recommends the AssureWel resource, which provides detailed information. It also provides templates to facilitate on-farm assessment, which is an important part of any livestock management plan.

Further details can be found online:

<http://www.assurewel.org>

10.3 Certified Butchers

Section 9.3 sets out the detail of record that must be maintained by Certified Butchers in order to maintain the level of traceability that the Certification Mark represents.

10.3.1

Records of the certified livestock purchased. Maintaining the online PFLA TRACKS records fulfils this requirement.

10.3.2

Records of the certified Pasture for Life produce sold

10.3.3

Sample labels showing use of the Pasture for Life symbol and methods of batch identification. Use of the TRACKS ID number and / or QR code, fulfils this requirement.

10.3.4

Records of Local Environmental Health Authority registration and visits

10.4 Certified Creameries

The following must be maintained:

10.4.1

Records of the volume and source of purchased certified milk.

10.4.2

Records of the certified Pasture for Life produce sold

10.4.3

Sample labels showing use of the Pasture for Life symbol.

10.4.4

Records of batches of further processed product made with certified milk

10.4.5

Records of Local Environmental Health Authority registration and visits

11 Use of the Certification Mark - Conditions and Guidelines

11.1 Ownership

11.1.1

The Pasture for Life identity is a registered Certification Mark and belongs to the PFLA.

11.1.2

Use of the Certification Mark is subject to a licence fee, an agreement to comply with the Certification Standards and the terms and conditions set out in these guidelines.

11.2 Permitted users

11.2.1

The Certification Mark must only be used to identify or promote produce that fully complies with the Certification Standards. Those applying the Certification Mark must be certified by the PFLA as either a Certified Farm, Butcher or Creamery or alternatively do so with the permission of the PFLA as part of a complete supply chain that is fully compliant with PFLA Standards.

11.2.2

When applied to either produce or live animals, the mark must only be used in conjunction with the PFLA **TRACKS** system, which is a fully traceable system of Identity Preservation.

11.2.3

In addition, the Certification Mark may be used by certified businesses on their website, stationery and promotional items, including leaflets and point-of-sale materials. Retailers may use the logo on their own-branded products and promotional materials when sourcing from a Certified Butcher or Creamery, provided the integrity of the produce can be guaranteed.

11.2.4

Other persons or organisations (such as the media) may use the logo, if the use supports the aims of the scheme and where written permission is given by the PFLA. Such use must also strictly adhere to these guidelines.

11.3 Application of the Certification Mark

The Pasture for Life Certification Mark must always appear as illustrated and described:

11.3.1 Font and Colours

Font: Bliss Bold & Bliss Extra Bold
 Colour: Plum
 Pantone: 234
 CMYK: 35c, 100m, 35y, 5k
 RGB: 165r, 31g, 103b

Colour: Light Green
 Pantone: 366
 CMYK: 30c, 0m, 70y, 0k
 RGB: 182r, 221g, 122b

Colour: Dark Green
 Pantone: 361
 CMYK: 80c, 5m, 100y, 0k
 RGB: 62r, 175g, 73b



If it is not possible to reproduce the Certification Mark in colour, it may be used as illustrated (right, above) in black and white format:

11.3.2 Tattoo format

The Certification Mark may be used in tattoo format when used directly on products such as meat, as an aid to identity preservation through the processing stages prior to packaging and labelling. This may be used in black and white, as illustrated (right), or alternatively, other single colours may be used by prior agreement.



11.3.3 Size

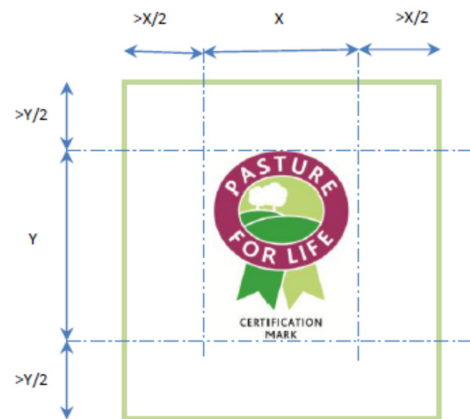
The Certification Mark must be at least 10mm in height, or 15mm where space permits.

11.3.4 Background (keyline)

When printed on a coloured or photographic background, the Certification Mark must appear with a white keyline (outline).

11.3.5 Positioning

The separation of the Certification Mark must be at least half its profile size (for example 8mm in the case of a 15mm wide mark), from any other trade name or mark, unrelated image or text, or the edge (trim-line) of the artwork.



11.3.6 Certification Mark

The words CERTIFICATION MARK should appear beneath the design device, as illustrated, at least once on all communications. On black or dark backgrounds, the wording should be clear and for this purpose a white font may be used.

11.4 Supervision of the Certification Mark

The audit process for Certified Farms and Certified Butchers is necessary to underpin the integrity of the system of farming, and to provide the necessary reassurances to customers who support it through the purchase of produce bearing the Pasture for Life Certification Mark.

The producer group structure that is encouraged within the network of Certified Farms, Butchers and Creameries supports the development of short, transparent food chains.

11.4.1 **Inspection bodies**

The PFLA is responsible for overseeing an inspection process that is delivered by an accredited UKAS provider (United Kingdom Accreditation Service). All inspection bodies used by the PFLA are certified to ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

11.4.2 **Inspection intervals**

Please refer to section 3.6.4

11.4.3 **Unannounced inspections**

Please refer to section 3.6.6

11.4.4 **Non-Compliance measures**

In cases of minor non-compliance, any previously granted Certification remains valid provided a PFLA-approved **Action Plan** is implemented within an agreed time span.

In cases of major non-compliance or manifest infringement there will be an immediate suspension of the Certification and use of the Certification Mark on any produce.

11.4.5 **Pasture TRACKS product ID**

TRACKS is the name of the system by which the PFLA maintains records of the animals and produce being supplied by Certified Farms, Butchers and Creameries. The most efficient version of this is an online database, which is accessible only by Certified Farms and Certified Butchers that hold a current, valid certificate.

Alternative systems that comply with the requirements of TRACKS are from time to time agreed by the PFLA's Certification Committee if that proves to be more convenient, particularly for those processors with existing, proven systems in place.

In order for produce to be labelled with the Certification Mark:

- Livestock must be in an unbroken chain of certification throughout their life
- Any processing (such as in abattoirs in meat production or Creameries in Dairy production) must be carried out through approved facilities
- Responsibility for accurate labelling and the integrity of produce sold under the Certification Mark rests with the Certified Butcher or Creamery

All produce carrying the Certification Mark must also carry a batch reference number, typically the unique Tracks ID number. A further option on labels, is the inclusion of a 'QR' code (2-dimensional barcode) which may be used to directly link to the PFLA website and thereby to details of the producer, the butcher and to the animal (or batch of animals) from which it was derived.

11.5 Suspension and termination of certification

11.5.1 Grounds for suspension or termination

The Certification Committee has the authority to suspend a certified business or terminate their certification in instances that may include the following:

- As a result of any act or omission, the Certified business fails to comply with the Certification Standards.
- The Certified business refuses to allow an inspection by PFLA or their nominated inspectors.
- The person responsible for the Certified business is absent on the agreed day of inspection or cancels an inspection without reasonable cause.
- The person responsible for the Certified Farm fails to demonstrate competence in farm management.
- Any document, application or any information supplied to or inspected by PFLA or their nominated inspectors is found to be inaccurate, incomplete or otherwise misleading.
- The Certified business brings or may bring the PFLA into disrepute or threatens to undermine the integrity of the Certification Mark.

The decision whether to suspend or terminate Certification will be taken by the Certification Committee and will depend on the severity of the issue.

11.6 The appeals process

The Certification Mark is administered by the PFLA Certification Committee. The appeals process is set out in detail under the Terms of Reference of the Certification Committee, which are available to all PFLA members.

If a Certified business disagrees with the result of an inspection, or any decision reached by the Certification Committee concerning the use of the Certification Mark, they can submit an appeal to the **Appeals Panel**, which will be formed to hear the appeal.

The scope of the appeal will be restricted to how the Certification Standards or the processes are being put into practice, and not the substance of the regulation itself. By joining as a Certified Farm, Butcher or Creamery, the applicant agrees to conform to the Certification Standards as they are published.

The Appeals Panel shall provide sufficient balance within the representation for the process to be seen as independent and transparent, and that both the interests of the PFLA and the appellant are fully represented.

11.6.1 Composition of the Appeals Panel

- At least one PFLA director not involved in the initial decision.
- A recognised expert in the relevant sector who is not a PFLA member.
- A certification officer, or otherwise suitably qualified person conversant with the inspection process, who is nominated by the independent inspection body
- The panel will be chaired by a suitably qualified person who is not a member of the PFLA

11.6.2

The appeals process

- The appellant will submit an Appeal Form to the PFLA office
- The appeal must be arranged within 30 days of receipt of the Appeals Form
- The appeal may be conducted in person, in written form or on the telephone
- The appellant may provide at their own cost witnesses or experts or submit reports or other evidence from witnesses or experts to make representations or appear in person

A copy of all relevant correspondence and evidence will be recorded by the Appeals Panel, and this will be made available to anyone upon request. The outcome of the appeals process, together with a recommended course of action will be submitted to the Certification Committee, which has responsibility for implementing them.

12 Appendix 1: Recommended Stocking Rates

	Guideline Average Stocking rate LU / ha / year
Grassland	
Improved Grassland	1.00
Unimproved lowland grassland	0.30 – 0.40
Unimproved upland grassland	0.15 – 0.25
Moorland	
Young heather (<20 cm)	0.20
Intermediate heather (20-40cm)	0.05
Older heather (>40 cm)	0.02
Blanket Bog	0.06
Woodland	
High Fertility	0.15
Moderate Fertility	0.07
Low Fertility	0.03
Mob stocking to enhance regeneration	0.25-0.50
Wetland	
Rush Pasture	0.40
Lowland Raised Bog	0.05
Swamp and Fen	0.03
Coastal	
Coastal Sand Dunes	0.10 – 0.30
Coastal Heath	0.15 – 0.30
Saltmarsh	0.25 – 0.50

Reference: SRUC: Conservation Grazing of Semi-Natural Habitats

http://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/1128/tn586_conservation_grazing_of_semi-natural_habitats

Notes: Stocking rates can vary widely from these averages. Guidelines for unimproved sites under management agreements such as agri-environmental schemes, should take precedence.

12.1 Livestock Unit Values for a range of animals

Livestock Type	Livestock Units (LU)
Sheep	
Lowland ewe and lamb	0.12
Upland ewe & Lamb	0.08
Ram and teg over 6 months	0.15
Ewe follower and/or store lamb	0.08
Beef cattle	
Beef Cattle 6-24 mths	0.6
Beef Cattle >24 mths	0.7
Suckler Cow	1.0
Dairy cattle	
Heifer (6-24 mths)	0.6
Heifer (>24 mths)	0.7
Cow	1.0

Reference: Natural England, Annex 5 of Entry Level Stewardship Handbook 2010

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/30034?category=45001>

13 Appendix 2: Membership Fees

13.1 Membership fees

Use of the Certification Mark is restricted to Certified Farms and Certified Butchers. These suppliers must also concurrently be a Full Member of the PFLA.

A list of current membership fees is available on the PFLA website.

13.2 Inspection fees

Certified Farms are also liable to inspection fees. The level of these fees can vary depending upon whether the inspection is combined with an audit for farm assurance, organic certification or similar assurance schemes.

Certified Farms, Butchers and Creameries are notified of the inspection fees as an integral part of the application process. A full list of inspection fees is also available upon request from the PFLA Certification Team and is also published to members through the PFLA website.

13.3 Sales levy

In addition, a sales levy will be administered on the sale of all produce bearing the Certification Mark. This levy is payable by Certified Butchers and Certified Creameries, which is defined as the final point in the processing chain where the raw ingredients are packaged and labelled.

Certified Butchers and Creameries are notified of the levy fees as an integral part of the application process.

13.4 Animal transfers

No levy is applied to the sale or transfer of live animals at any point in the chain.

14 Appendix 3: Definition of terms

Avermectin: A type of wormer or other anti-parasiticide from a particular chemical class or group of products.

Baled Silage and Haylage: A practice that involves cutting the forage crop with conventional hay harvesting equipment, allowing the forage to wilt to between 30 and 60 percent dry matter, then baling it into tight bales and wrapping them immediately. Bales are wrapped mechanically using equipment that tightly stretches layers of plastic around the crop to exclude oxygen and allow the nutrients to be conserved through the ensiling process.

Boot Stage: The flag leaf is fully expanded, but the awns and grain head are not visible. The grain head can be felt in the flag leaf sheath.

Brassica: A family of annual forage vegetables used for fertility-building and nutrient retention transition within crop rotations or as a supplementary feed source for extending the grazing season when other forages are less productive. The most commonly used in this family of plants includes turnips, rape, and kale.

Browse: Leaf and twig growth of shrubs, woody vines (e.g. Ivy), trees, and other non-herbaceous vegetation available for animal consumption. Hence the term “to browse”, which is the consumption of browse in situ by animals.

Clean grazing: Managing livestock and pastures to avoid/reduce parasite burdens. For example putting animals most susceptible to parasites such as lambs onto pastures that have not been used by sheep in the previous year.

Concentrate: All feed, low in fibre and high in total digestible nutrients, that supplies primary nutrients (protein, carbohydrate, and fat); for example, grains, soya, wheat bran and food by-products.

Crop Residue: The portion of plants remaining after the seed has been harvested. In animal diets, this largely refers to straw from barley, wheat, oats, peas or beans.

Diet: The feed regularly offered to, or consumed by an animal.

Dough Stage: The seed kernel is filled with starch and is well formed. There is no milky fluid, only a rubbery, dough-like substance.

Feedstuff: Any of the constituent nutrients of an animal ration.

Flushing: Increasing nutrition in the run up to breeding to increase the rate of ovulation.

Forb: Any herbaceous broadleaf plant that is not a grass and is not grass-like.

Grain by-products: Feedstuff products derived from grains, including corn gluten pellets, distillers grains, the residues from corn dressing etc.

Hay: Forage crops stored in the dry form for animal feeding.

Haylage: Haylage is the feed produced by storing in an airtight silo or wrapped bale a forage crop which has been dried to a moisture level of about 45-55%.

Herbage: The biomass of herbaceous plants, other than separated grain, generally above ground but including edible roots and tubers. Green plants especially when used or fit for grazing.

Legumes: members of the *Fabaceae* plant family (formerly known as the *Leguminosae* family). Legumes are dicots (produce two seed leaves), produce seed in a pod, have netted leaf venation, and usually have a taproot type of root system. Most legumes have the ability to interact with bacteria of the genus *Rhizobium* to fix nitrogen in nodules on their roots.

Ley: mixture comprising of grasses with the possible addition of legumes (eg clover) and herbs to provide pasture for grazing and conservation.

Meadow: Area covered with grasses and/or legumes, often native to the area.

Pasture: 1) Forages which are harvested by grazing animals. 2) An area of land with 90% forage cover or unbroken land on which livestock may graze at will.

Ration: the total amount of feed (diet) allotted to one animal for a 24-hour period.

Residue: that which remains of any particular substance.

Roughage: Any feed high (over about 20%) in crude fibre and low (under about 60%) in total digestible nutrients, on an air-dry basis.

Silage: The feed resulting from the storage and fermentation of green or wet crops under anaerobic conditions.

Stubble: The basal portion of the stems of herbaceous plants left standing after harvest.

Supplement: A nutritional additive (salt, protein, phosphorus, etc.) intended to improve the nutritional balance and remedy deficiencies of the diet.

Supplementary feeding: The practice of supplying feedstuffs to correct nutritional deficiencies in an animal's "natural" diet.

Sward: term used to describe grass growing, usually in a descriptive sense (eg, a dense sward, a low sward, tussocky sward etc.)

Vegetative: Non-reproductive plant parts, (leaf and stem) in contrast to reproductive plant parts (flower and seed) in developmental stages of plant growth. The non-reproductive stage in plant development.

Vegetative State: Stage prior to the appearance of fruiting structures.

