

NEW ZEALAND FARM ASSURANCE PROGRAMME (NZFAP)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is the NZFAP being developed?

The NZ Farm Assurance Programme (NZFAP) is the foundation upon which the collective red meat industry can deliver an authentic and independently verified best-practice animal raising and production assurance standard to our customers and consumers.

2. What's wrong with the existing system?

Many processors have had their own individual farm assurance programmes for a number of years. It has meant multiple audits for farmers who supply to more than one processor so this is a way of making sure the baseline standard is robust and farmers only need to complete one audit.

3. What are the benefits to farmers?

If you supply stock to several meat processors, instead of having multiple audits, you will simply have to complete one which will mean less time required.

4. How many farms will be involved in NZFAP?

All commercial farms that currently have an audit through one of the participating meat processors will be transitioned on to NZFAP over time. The aspiration is that one day, all commercial farms in NZ will become part of NZFAP.

5. How does NZ rate internationally in terms of on-farm QA?

The NZFAP is recognised by JAS-ANZ, a group set up by the NZ and AUS governments to oversee international standards. NZFAP is sitting beside the best programmes in the world in terms of scope, extent and coverage.

6. How does New Zealand rank internationally in terms of Animal Welfare?

International animal welfare organisation World Animal Protection released an Animal Protection Index which ranks the animal welfare policies and legislation of 50 countries based on 15 indicators. Of the 50 countries only 4 received the highest 'A' rating; New Zealand, UK, Switzerland and Austria.

7. How much will each audit cost a farmer?

It will not cost farmers anything to become NZFAP accredited. All associated costs will be covered by participating meat processors.

8. Why are all meat processors not participating? If you don't have all companies involved, isn't this a waste of money?

NZFAP has only recently launched (Early 2017) and most meat processing companies are looking to implement the NZFAP Standard. We are encouraging all meat processing companies to adopt this standard and are confident that, over time, they will put NZFAP in place for their farmers. By the close of 2017 we anticipate NZFAP will cover about 64% of the stock being processed in New Zealand.

9. How can I find out more about the certification process and audit requirements?

If you are part of a current Farm Assurance Programme with one or more meat processors you will already be familiar with the general audit requirements. NZFAP has been developed by the partner companies, with input from other stakeholders, based on their own existing programmes so there should be no real surprises in the content of the NZFAP audit. All NZFAP requirements are laid out in the NZFAP Standard, and the NZFAP Farmer Handbook provides valuable guidance on how to meet these requirements and where to find further information. There is also a detailed section on the audit process and how to deal with Corrective Action Requests.

10. Is it mandatory?

At this point in time the NZFAP is not mandatory although some processors may have NZFAP as a requirement in their terms and conditions of supply.

11. What happens if I fail an audit?

The NZFAP Standard contains the full list of requirements which your farm will be measured against during your audit. Should your farm not meet all of these requirements you will receive a Corrective Action Request (CAR) form, which will detail any Corrective Actions that must be carried out and will give you a timeline to complete these actions. Should you not complete the actions within the specified timeframe your farm will be suspended from the programme until all CARs are actioned.

12. Are there penalties?

If you were issued Corrective Actions and they have not been closed within the specified timeframe, your farm will be suspended from NZFAP. This will mean your stock cannot be sold as Farm Assured. As soon as the CARs are all closed your farm can be reinstated and Farm Assured status regained.

13. How do I book an audit?

If you supply one of the participating meat processors your first NZFAP audit will replace your next farm assurance audit whenever the due date falls. Please note all initial audits will be completed by an AsureQuality auditor, even if you are only due for an interim 18 month audit which would normally be completed by a meat processors livestock representative.

14. How long will an audit take?

An audit will take approximately 2 hours. There will be information and documentation that you are required to have ready for the auditor when they turn up on-farm. The better prepared you are, the quicker the audit will be. There is a pre-audit checklist located on page 6 of your NZFAP Farmer Handbook, this lists the information you must have ready for the audit and details a pre-audit check you should conduct which covers off some of the key points of the audit to check conformance.

15. How often will I need an audit?

Generally you will be required to complete a full NZFAP audit every 3 years. Your processor may require more frequent audits to meet their specific customer programmes.

16. Who will conduct the audit?

AsureQuality auditors will complete your audits at this time.

17. What training do auditors undergo?

All AsureQuality auditors are trained to recognised standards and have the necessary rural background and experience to conduct farm audits. All auditors must attend an annual calibration and training course.

18. What will the auditors be looking at?

Auditors will be looking at all aspects of your farms operations. The NZFAP Standard contains the full list of requirements which our audit is based upon. The NZFAP Farmer Handbook has more detailed information around these requirements and provides guidance and resources specific to each section of the Standard.

19. What paperwork or documentation do I need?

All farmers must have a copy of the NZFAP Standard and Farmer Handbook so that they can familiarise themselves with the audit requirements. Refer to the Pre-Audit Checklist on page 6 your NZFAP Farmer Handbook. This details all the documentation you should have ready prior to your audit. Further documentation may be requested during the course of your audit.

20. How different/more difficult is the audit to the one I already have with my meat processor?

Most of the audit content will be very familiar to you as our programme is based upon existing processor assurance programmes. For the full list of requirements refer to your NZFAP Standard.

21. Does the NZFAP cover environmental considerations?

Yes, Section 5 of the NZFAP Standard details requirements around Environment and Sustainability. Beef + Lamb New Zealand have a comprehensive Land and Environment Plan (LEP) process for sheep and beef farmers. The NZFAP sits alongside the LEP process, it is not 'instead' of having an LEP. A Land and Environment Plan is a tool that guides farmers through a recorded assessment of their farm's environmental risks as well as land management opportunities.

It involves a stock-take of land, soil and water resources, and results in the development of a personalised written plan identifying potential actions to be undertaken, where they might being targeted, and when they will be implemented.