

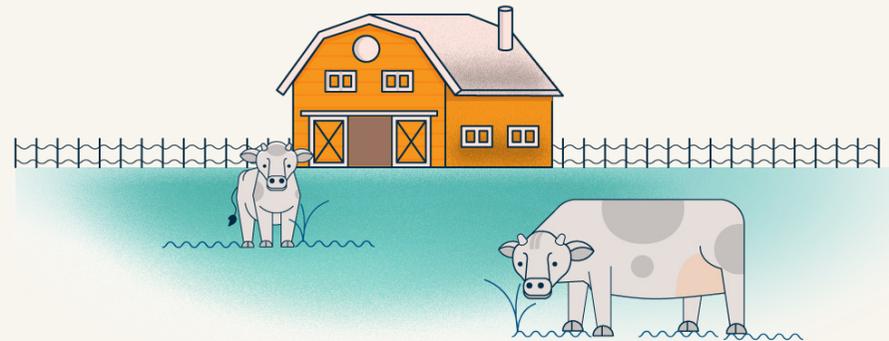
2017 SAN STANDARD

SUSTAINABLE CATTLE PRODUCTION

Helping pastures, producers, and the planet



for the **GREATER**
GOOD OF ALL



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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Sustainable cattle production plays an important role both in global economics and the agricultural sector to contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, benefiting the people wellbeing and environmental conservation.

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Cattle production can pose a risk to the environment when not carefully managed, through greenhouse gas emissions, through damage to aquatic ecosystems and through over grazing which degrades the land.

A sustainable cattle production system that complies with the 2017 SAN Standard requirements allows the producer to:

- Implement mechanisms that allow verification of a certified animal/product origin.
- Assure the health and welfare of animals raised in certified farms.
- Improve productivity in cattle farms.
- Reduce environmental impact and greenhouse gasses emissions.

On SAN certified farms cattle are raised in accordance with

responsible practices that are designed to ensure both pastures and animals stay healthy. Farms keep track of animals and have heard health and nutrition programs that respect SAN prohibited substances. Pastures are selected and managed based on specific agro-ecological parameters, resistance to pests and nutritional value. Farms practice responsible animal husbandry through an animal welfare program, which includes safe transportation, it also ensures that cattle are not mistreated on farms and at their handling facilities. Animals are always provided shelter, food and water in sufficient quantity and quality to ensure good health and productivity.

Certified cattle production systems help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving the animals' diet, by optimizing productivity and by proper managing manure and urine.

In summary, Implementation of this principle's criteria helps farms to raise cattle in a way that does not harm the environment, that supports increased productivity for the farmer and ensures a stress-free life for the animal.

What is included in the 2017 SAN Standard?

In the past, the Sustainable Agriculture Network developed a specific and separate standard for cattle production. From July 2017 cattle production requirements are now an integrated part of the SAN Standard for Sustainable Agriculture. They form Principle 5 of the overall standard.

The Sustainable Cattle Production Principle in the 2017 SAN Standard includes the following topics:

- Traceability
- Optimization of productivity
- Animal health and welfare
- Mitigation of negative environmental impacts



Traceability

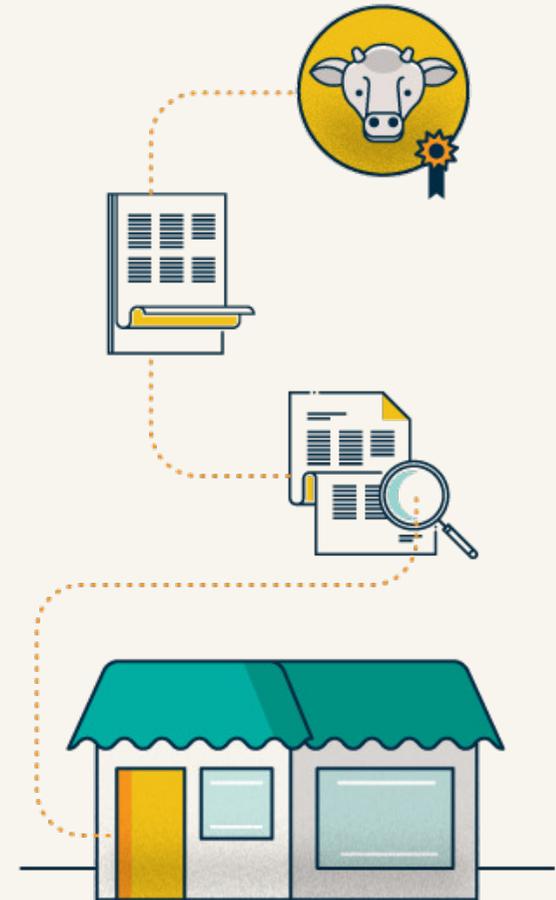
In sustainable cattle production, traceability systems are fundamental tools for farm management and are used for many purposes, including the protection of animal welfare, public health, and food safety.

According to the 2017 SAN Standard criteria, the implementation of a traceability system aims to assure that animals come from farms that do not use forced labor, that have not destroyed forests or natural ecosystems, and that have legitimate rights to land use.

The implementation of an individual identification system for the traceability of cattle is considered a critical criteria in the 2017 SAN Standard, executing this is mandatory for all cattle farms applying for certification.

For producers, the benefits of implementing a traceability system include:

- **Market claims are supported:** such as those stating that meat or dairy products are “deforestation-free”, “Genetically Modified Organisms free”, or that it has been raised under “Animal Welfare practices”.
- **Optimized programs to monitor cattle health:** improves the quality and safety, of meat and dairy products in doing so public health risks are reduced and consumer protection are increased.
- **Reduced response times in emergency situations:** in unforeseen circumstances such as outbreaks of disease or food contamination problems the response times are shorter, thereby reducing the potentially negative economic, environmental and social impacts.



Animal health and welfare

An animal is well-cared for when it is healthy, comfortable, well-fed, safe, can behave naturally and is not subject to unpleasant conditions such as pain, fear, and stress.

Under the SAN Standard, the best practices for animal health and welfare, once implemented, aim to ensure that animals sold as certified come from farms where cattle are properly managed and free of abuse and mistreatment. The SAN standard certified farms provide to the cattle essential and reasonable conditions for optimal development. Cattle production systems which implement the best animal welfare practices also establish programs for disease prevention and veterinary treatment.

According to the requirements of 2017 SAN Standard, animal health and welfare practices include: the sufficient provision of shelter, food and water; the implementation of a health and nutrition program; no mistreatment or abuse, and safe animal transportation.

The mistreatment or abuse of animals within a certified operation is considered a non-conformity against a critical criterion under the 2017 SAN Standard.

The implementation of production systems that assure animal welfare generates added value for cattle farms, from both an ethical and technical-production perspective:

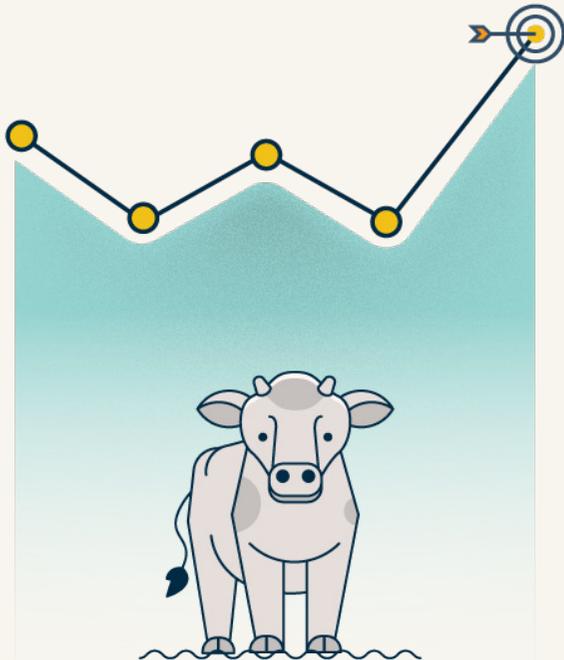
•**Performance:** There is scientific evidence indicating that animals under stress have lower food conversion ratios, which affects the overall performance of production systems.

•**Meat quality:** Mistreatment of animals, the application of certain substances and poor transportation practices translate into important losses for the producer. Since these activities produce blows, injuries, traumas and blood clots in animal muscle tissue, they can negatively affect the quality of the cuts of the meat.

•**Competitive advantage in the market:** for ethically-aware consumers and the markets their purchases drive, animal welfare programs represent a distinct and competitive advantage in the meat and dairy product categories.

Some of the specific aspects related to animal welfare covered by the 2017 SAN Standard criteria are:

- no mistreatment and no-abuse of animals (Critical);
- existence of a health plan for the herd;
- sufficient food and water for the cattle;
- responsible carry-on of practices such as castration and dehorning;
- use of proper facilities for cattle management; and
- staff training to perform assigned tasks.



Productivity

Although many types of indicators exist for measuring productivity, cattle production systems generally use weight gain indicators (on beef cattle farms), levels of milk production per animal (on dairy farms), or a combination of these factors (on dual purpose farms).

Under the 2017 SAN Standard, the implementation of best practices to improve productivity aims to reduce the negative impacts of more traditional production systems by better optimizing the use of inputs. The key to increasing productivity in a cattle operation is to be found by continuously y improving the management systems driving product quality (the cattle and their by-products). It is this drive to improve quality that also helps prevent any impairment of the production system, so that by increasing the level of care given to the cattle, the overall quality standards are also raised.

Mitigation of environmental impacts

The cattle sector provides to consumer high value food products as well as performing important economic and social functions. Given the cattle sectors expansion, its implications in the continued use of natural resources are far-reaching. Currently, the cattle sector is the world's largest consumer of agricultural lands through grazing and the use of forage crops.

In addition, it plays an important role in climate change(through methane gas emissions), soil management, water use and biodiversity conservation.

In sustainable cattle production, reducing the negative impacts on the environment is a priority.

According to the 2017 SAN Standard, mitigation of the negative impacts of cattle production is accomplished through the conservation of biodiversity (Principle 2), the incorporation of best practices in natural resource management (Principle 3), the implementation of measures to improve productivity and proper manure management (Principle 5).

The mitigation of the environmental impact of production systems is a

priority for the 2017 SAN Standard and is related to compliance with several of its requirements, among them:

- Protectionof High Conservation Value (HCV) areas, natural ecosystems, protected areas, and natural resources;
- Implementationof a pasture management plan
- Evaluationof service providers
- Energyefficiency and emissions reductions.

Energy efficiency and emissions reductions in cattle operations focus on the management of manure and urine. In general terms, it is preferable to use anaerobic treatments that capture methane from manure and convert it into an input for energy generation.

The reduction of emissions is also addressed through practices such as soil conservation, proper use of natural resources and sound management of animal nutrition.



Principle 5

In summary:

Given the extensive size and scope of the cattle sector, there are many opportunities to improve production, thereby helping producers and driving better overall social and economic outcomes. Yet with this opportunity there also comes a great responsibility; to mitigate against the negative effects on the environment and to stop the key drivers of climate change. The 2017 SAN Standard now recognizes the importance of this part of the agricultural sector and has, for this reason, fully incorporated the certification requirements for cattle into the main body of the new standard.





SAN-Rainforest Alliance Partnership



When a farm is in compliance with the SAN Sustainable Agriculture Standard and achieves the SAN/Rainforest Alliance Certification, it gains the right to use the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal on its products

For more information visit
www.san.ag or **www.rainforest-alliance.org**