



**Veal Farmers of Ontario**

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**The Veal Farmers of Ontario Commitment to Animal Care  
August 2018**

First and foremost, the health and welfare of our animals is of paramount importance to Ontario's veal farmers and the Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO). Together, we are committed to responsible livestock care and handling. This means animals in our care deserve to be healthy, safe and well cared for, able to express normal behavior, and experience freedom from hunger, thirst, discomfort, pain, injury, disease, fear and distress.

The VFO strongly condemns any animal abuse and is respectful of the leadership roles of the agencies charged with monitoring animal care in Ontario. To demonstrate this commitment the VFO formalized a partnership with the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 2014 to assist with on-farm animal care issues. The VFO has also been an active participant with Farm & Food Care's "Animal Care Helpline" since 1992.

The VFO supports the National Farm Animal Care Council's *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Veal Cattle* (2017) and stands behind the mandated phase-in dates, including the veal industry's ongoing commitment to transition to group housing by December 31, 2020. A diverse stakeholder group worked to develop the consensus-based Code that includes the minimum requirements of care all veal producers are expected to meet, and recommendations that producers can adopt to further enhance welfare on their farm. The Code is scientifically-based, summarizes the current knowledge of veal cattle welfare and references helpful resources. The VFO understands the importance of following this Code to promote the health and well-being of veal cattle.

The VFO firmly believes that understanding how different people, such as producers, researchers, veterinarians, government, retailers or the public, view animal welfare can help groups with different focuses realize that everyone is aiming for the same goal: to maintain the excellent level of animal care on farms across Ontario while striving for continuous improvement. The VFO will continue to work with our industry partners to make improvements and we invite our stakeholders and customers to engage and invest in research with us that will address the needs of the sector moving forward. Working with animals is important work that we take seriously. We are proud of what we do.