



FARM Animal Care 3rd Party Verification

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 3rd Party Verification?

A FARM Animal Care verification is conducted for the purpose of assessing the consistency and accuracy of FARM evaluators and the program itself to ensure its integrity. A statistical correlation is calculated between the original pool of 2nd party evaluations and the pool of farms that were 3rd party verified to see how closely the assessments agree. A high correlation indicates that the program is repeatable and consistent. A low correlation identifies areas for greater consistency.

Who Conducts the FARM 3rd Party Verifications?

The FARM Program is verified by Food Safety Net Services (FSNS). 3rd Party verifiers must meet the requirement of a degree in agriculture and 5 years' experience or 15 years of experience in the industry. Verifiers must also attend the FARM training program and successfully pass the training course and be re-certified on an annual basis.

Food Safety Net Services Certification & Audit (FSNS C&A) has been performing certification and audit services for over 15 years. Activities conducted by or on behalf of FSNS C&A are carried out by trained and highly qualified personnel that strive to assure each activity and end product meets FSNS C&A high standards. Their foundation and core competency has been working in the animal industry and animal welfare. Auditors are trained through education and experience, shadowing qualified long term auditors focusing on animal welfare standards across industries. Each of their audit team members are Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization (PAACO) certified and hold certification for the National Dairy FARM Train-the-Trainer.

What does a 3rd Party Verification Entail?

3rd Party Verifiers follow the FARM Animal Care Program guidelines when conducting a 3rd party verification. Once the list of farms eligible for 3rd party verification is established, the verifier reaches out to the cooperative and associated field staff to schedule the verification visit. FSNS will work with the farm and cooperative field staff to schedule the visit, providing at least two weeks' notice. A verifier will NEVER show up unannounced.

How is my Farm Selected for a 3rd Party Verification?

When a FARM Animal Care verification is conducted, it is conducted for the purpose of assessing the consistency and accuracy of FARM evaluators and the program itself to ensure its integrity. A statistical correlation is calculated between the original pool of 2nd party evaluations and the pool of farms that were 3rd party verified to see how closely the assessments agree. A high correlation indicates that the program is repeatable and consistent. A low correlation identifies areas for greater consistency.

What is the need for a 3rd Party Verification?

FARM is a comprehensive dairy animal care program that consists of education, on-farm evaluation, and objective third-party verification. A quality assurance program is only as good as the trust it inspires. Dairy farmers have a long history of responsible management, and the FARM Animal Care program provides the record of those good practices. Third-party verification provides the statistical proof of that record, so that customers and consumers know they can trust the program and the farmers participating in it.