



BQA – Record Keeping

Shannon K. Williams

University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Extension Educator, Lemhi County

Key Points

- Individual animal identification is the first step in accurate record keeping.
- Treatment, feed, group processing, and restricted use pesticide records need to be kept for three years from sale or transfer of animals that have been treated.
- Veterinary Feed Directive records and non-restricted–use pesticide records need to be maintained for two years.
- Accurate records are a producer's only defense when there is a residue allegation.
- Residue violations occur when a producer has violated the withdrawal time, which is the amount of time required for the animal to metabolize the drug and reduce the concentration level to the approved, safe level.

KEEPING RECORDS is an integral part of any cattle operation and Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program. Records are a producer's only defense if any of their cattle are found with a residue violation. Records also demonstrate responsible use of products and show that drug withdrawal times have been met and can safely transfer ownership or sell the cattle.

The beginning of any accurate record keeping method is individual animal identification. A producer must be able to verify which animal was treated by reviewing the records and then being able to identify that animal within the herd. Some important considerations for animal identification are:

- Identification needs to be semi-permanent, meaning it needs to last longer than the withdrawal time.
- Duplicates are eliminated.

The important part is not how records are kept, but that it is done—and done consistently. Record keeping methods can include BQA treatment forms, a computer record keeping program such as a spreadsheet (Figure 1), IRM pocket books (Figure 2), calendars, and notebooks.

Treatment Record for Individual Cattle								
Animal ID: _____		Home Group/Pen: _____			Color: _____			
(Rx = medication name, WD = withdrawal time)								
Date	Diagnosis	Temp	Severity	Rx1	Rx2	Rx 3	Comments	WD

Figure 1. Example of a spreadsheet page for treatment records for cattle. Each cow should have its own treatment record.

The type of information that needs to be recorded depends on the management action. Management type also determines how long those records need to be maintained (Table 1), but for simplicity, the Idaho BQA program recommends that all records be kept for three years.



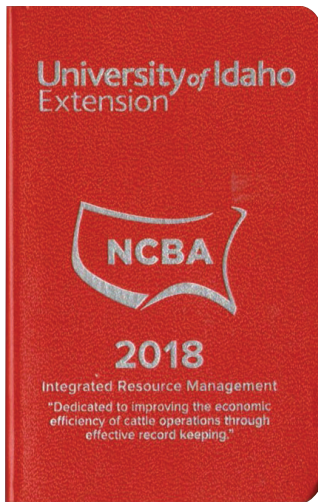


Figure 2. IRM pocket book.

Treatment records

Health treatment records are the most vital record to be kept. The only accurate way to determine that compliance has been met is to know exactly what was given, the dosage, the location of injection, and when it was given. Health treatment records must be kept for three years from date of transfer or sale of cattle. Health treatment records need to include:

- Animal treated
- What indicated treatment
- Date of treatment
- Product administered
- Product lot/serial number
- Dosage given
- Route of administration
- Person administering
- Earliest date withdrawal time is met

Feed records

When purchasing feeds, it is important to maintain a record of those feeds for three years from date of transfer or sale of an animal that consumed the feed. When purchasing feed, it is good practice to have an invoice that includes:

- Date of purchase
- Amount of feed purchased
- Lot/batch number
- Signatures of who delivered and who received feed

Table 1. How Long to Keep Animal Health Records

Type of Record	Years to Keep
Treatment Records	3
Feed Records	3
Chemical Records – restricted use	3
Chemical Records – non-restricted use	2
Veterinary Feed Directive Records	2

Chemical records

Responsible use of pesticides requires that records are kept. Idaho State law requires that records be kept for three years for restricted use pesticides. Records that meet state requirements also meet BQA requirements. BQA guidelines also require records of general use pesticides. Chemical use records need to include:

- Product name and EPA number
- Amount of pesticide applied
- Location of application, size of treated area and crop
- Date of application
- Name of applicator and license number if licensed
- Grazing restrictions and date when those restrictions are met

Group processing records

For routine vaccinations, worming, and insecticide applications, a group cattle processing record can be utilized. These records should be kept for three years. Group records should include:

- Description of cattle group
- Date product was administered
- Dosage administered
- Product administered including lot and serial number
- Route of administration
- Withdrawal time and earliest date met

Veterinary Feed Directive records

The veterinary feed directive (VFD) requires that there be a veterinarian–client–patient relationship for the use of VFD drugs or combination VFD drug in or on animal feed. A written statement from the veterinarian must be obtained to purchase. An electronic transmission of the VFD is acceptable to the feed company, a verbal transmission is not. On this statement, a date of expiration will be listed. This defines the period of time that a producer may utilize a VFD feed. A duration of use will also be indicated. Duration of use determines the length of time that an animal can consume the VFD feed. VFD records are required to be kept for three years and need to include:

- Copy of the written VFD
- Description of group of animals fed
- Date(s) of administration
- Amount administered
- Condition identified for administration

Summary

Keeping accurate records on a consistent basis is important to maintain beef quality assurance and a healthy herd, and to protect a beef operation from litigation regarding drug residue. Each operation's record keeping system will be unique. The important item is to keep and maintain those records for three years.

The Idaho Beef Quality Assurance Program is a partnership between University of Idaho Extension and Idaho Beef Council.

The BQA Mission

To maximize consumer confidence and acceptance of beef by focusing the producer's attention to daily production practices that influence the safety, wholesomeness and quality of beef and beef products.

BQA Certification

Certification requirements can be achieved by participating in a training session and completing the BQA quiz and personal contract. Certification is valid for three years. Learn more about BQA certification in Idaho, here: <http://extension.uidaho.edu/bqa/certification/>.

Issued in furtherance of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Barbara Petty, Director of University of Idaho Extension, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83844. The University of Idaho has a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era veteran.

