FARMS INITIATIVE

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE RESPONSIBLE MINIMUM STANDARDS

The attached *Principles Underlying the Responsible Minimum Standards* detail overarching requirements that apply to all farm animals and should be read in conjunction with any of the species-specific *Responsible Minimum Standards*.

About the FARMS Initiative and the Responsible Minimum Standards

The Farm Animals Responsible Minimum Standards (FARMS) Initiative's goal is for financial institutions to encourage and support meat, milk and egg producers, and other companies in the supply chain, towards meeting the Responsible Minimum Standards with respect to how farm animals are raised, transported and slaughtered. The FARMS Initiative was founded by a group of global animal protection organisations. The Responsible Minimum Standards are based upon the principles of a number of global frameworks and reflect input from numerous animal protection organisations and animal welfare certification organisations.

Principles Underlying the Responsible Minimum Standards

The *Responsible Minimum Standards* are based on a range of international frameworks and standards on animal welfare including the widely recognised *Five Freedoms*, the OIE's Chapter on animal welfare in its *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, EU legislation and the IFC's *Good Practice Note*. The FARMS Initiative has in particular taken the principles on ***welfare risks*** and accompanying ***mitigation strategies*** set out in the *Good Practice Note* (see page 13) and developed specific requirements that emerge from these for a number of farmed species.

The *Good Practice Note* states: "Scientific research shows that certain housing systems have inherent major disadvantages for animal welfare and do not have the potential to provide satisfactory outcomes, for example, systems of extreme confinement of animals or barren environments" (p. 16). The *Good Practice Note* identifies the following key ***welfare risks*** and ***mitigation strategies*** for addressing each risk:

1

Welfare Risk 1	"Limitations on space in individual stalls restricting the movement of animals."
Mitigation 1	"Increasing the space allowance for each animal (e.g. individual to group housing)" and "allowing animals space to stand, stretch, turn around, sit, and/or lie down comfortably at the same time."

2

Welfare Risk 2	"High stocking densities in groups increasing the potential for disease transmission and injurious contact with others."
Mitigation 2	"Stocking densities should be low enough to prevent excessive temperatures and humidity; competition, stress, aggression, and abnormal behaviour; and to enable good litter management."

3

Welfare Risk 3	"Barren/unchanging environments leading to behavioural problems."
Mitigation 3	"Providing environmental enrichment (e.g., straw for pigs to manipulate, nest boxes for hens) to stimulate positive emotional states."

4

Welfare Risk 4	"Feeding diets that do not satisfy hunger."
Mitigation 4	"Adding bulk to high energy diets to help satisfy appetite."

5

Welfare Risk 5	"Injurious husbandry procedures that cause pain."
Mitigation 5	"Alternatives should be used to routine management practices that cause pain (e.g., dehorning/disbudding, branding, castration, tail-docking, beak trimming), or effective pain relief should be provided."

6

Welfare Risk 6	"Breeding for production traits that heighten anatomical or metabolic disorders."
Mitigation 6	"Re-aligning production-orientated genetic selection to include welfare traits."

The *Good Practice Note* also identifies the following core principles related to transport and slaughter:

7	**Transport**	"The distance animals are transported, and the time taken, should be minimized" and "animals should be slaughtered as close as possible to the farm of origin to minimize the rigors of transport".

8	**Slaughter**	"All animals must be handled, restrained, rendered unconscious until death, and slaughtered in the least distressing and most pain-free manner possible by trained and competent staff."

The *Good Practice Note* also sets out the following important principles:

We do not elaborate these for each species as they apply to all species

Stockpersons: "There should be a sufficient number of trained and well-motivated personnel proficient in good stockmanship to maintain animal health and welfare, and ensure that the physical, health, and behavioral needs of animals are met."

Health: "Animals must be maintained in good body condition and remedial action (veterinary attention, improved nutrition, or husbandry) taken when in poor condition, or when there are signs of significant distress, ill-health, disease, or injury. Any sick or injured animals should be treated or cared for to alleviate pain and distress as soon as practically possible."

Feed and water: "Animals should receive a daily diet adequate in composition and quantity, and containing appropriate nutrients to maintain good health, meet their physiological requirements, and avoid metabolic and nutritional disorders. Animals should have an adequate daily supply of water that is palatable."

Flooring: "All animals should have access to a clean and dry place. All surfaces and flooring should be non-slip, without sharp projections or edges likely to cause injury."

Temperature: "Each operation should have strategies to prevent overheating and excessive cooling. Animals should be protected from abrupt temperature fluctuations and cold drafts."

Air quality: "Air quality should be maintained by minimizing transmission of airborne infectious agents and preventing the build-up of noxious or harmful waste gases, and minimize dust particles."

Light: "Natural or artificial light (of an intensity of at least 20 lux) should be available in all buildings for a minimum of eight hours daily, and there should be a period of darkness sufficient to allow proper rest."

Fire: "Housing should be constructed of fire-resistant materials, and electrical and fuel installations planned and fitted to minimize fire risk. Firefighting equipment and smoke detectors should be installed with sufficient exits to enable evacuation of the building in an emergency."

Transport facilities: "Facilities for loading, transporting, and unloading should be designed, constructed, and maintained to permit proper handling of animals and minimize risk of injury."