



# Perry Johnson Registrars Food Safety, Inc.

## California Department of Agriculture (CDFA) & Animal Care: An Introduction

The humane treatment of farm-raised animals is becoming a key focus among consumers evaluating food products in grocery store aisles. Animal Care is a new program within the Animal Health and Food Safety Services (AHFSS) division of the California Department of Agriculture (CDFA). The CDFA's AHFSS Division is responsible for protecting and promoting the health and well-being of California's livestock and poultry. They oversee programs such as disease prevention, animal health inspections, and the regulation of livestock markets.

Back in November of 2018, California voters approved Proposition 12, the Farm Animal Confinement Initiative. This law requires that covered animals be housed in confinement systems that comply with specific minimum standards for freedom of movement, cage-free design, and minimum floor space, and identifies covered animals to include veal calves, breeding pigs, and egg-laying hens, as specified. After the passing of Proposition 12, Animal Care was formed.

Animal Care focuses on two main areas of Prop 12:

1. The Confinement of Covered Animals in California

- Egg-laying hens
- Breeding pigs
- Veal calves

2. The Sale of Covered Products in California

- Shell eggs
- Liquid eggs
- Pork meat
- Veal meat

Modeled after the USDA Organic regulatory framework, CDFA accredits private, third-party certifying agents to certify producers and distributors. Those producers and distributors will need to be third-party certified **by January 1, 2024**. After January 1, 2024, any application to CDFA by a distributor for initial registration, or for purposes of renewal, shall be accompanied by documentation of a valid third-party certification for each location where registration is being sought.

The Animal Care Program will play a crucial role in ensuring safe and high-quality food products for consumers while also promoting responsible practices within the livestock industry.

**Contact CDFA Animal Health and Food Safety Services, Animal Care Program**

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