



# WARILBA'S CERTIFIED ORGANIC GRASS FED ASSURANCE



LAMB STANDARD



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## Warilba's Certified Organic Grass Fed Assurance

### Lamb Standard

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# GRASS FED ASSURANCE STANDARD

Warilba's Certified Organic Grass Fed Assurance (WCOGA) Standard has been developed to provide guidelines and integrity to product marketed under the Warilba Organic Grass Fed label.

The core objective of the Grass Fed standard is to provide consumers with assurance that the lambs in the supply chain have been fed Certified Organic pastures their whole life.

Compliance with this standard is demonstrated through records kept by producers as well as an annual audit carried out by Arcadian management.

Lambs supplied to the Warilba's Certified Organic Grass Fed Assurance (WCOGA) program are required to meet the following four components:

1. **Grass Fed** diet that complies with WCOGA standard
2. **Free Range** – never confined to a feedlot
3. **Identification** and Lifetime Traceability
4. **Organic Certification** to a minimum Australian Organic standard.

# 1. Grass Fed Diet

WCOGA eligible lambs must meet the following Organic Grass Fed definition.

The feed source consumed for the lifetime of the ruminant animal must be Certified Organic grass and forage. The diet shall be derived from forage consisting of grass (annual and perennial), forbs (such as legumes and Brassica), browse or cereal grain crops in the vegetative (pre-grain) state. The exception is milk consumed prior to weaning and supplementation used only in exceptional circumstances to ensure the animal's wellbeing.

Animals must have continuous access to pasture as required under the Australian Organic Standards. Hay, haylage, baleage, silage, crop residue without grain, and other roughage sources may be included as acceptable feed sources. Routine mineral and vitamin supplementation may also be included in the feeding regimen.

The producer is required to fully document any feed supplementation that occurs. This requirement applies equally to inadvertent exposure to non-forage feedstuffs and to supplementation for the purpose of ensuring the animals wellbeing at all times during adverse conditions (environmental or physical). The documentation (such as receipts, ingredients and tear tags) must include evidence of the supplements provided as well as the quantity and frequency of supplementation.

## 1.1 Supplements

A feed ingredient is considered a supplement when it is fed to counteract a deficiency in the regular diet. It should be used to complement pasture that for unforeseen circumstances, such as drought, has led to a shortage in quality and quantity.

Supplementary feeding is allowable under the WCOGA program as long as it does not exceed a 5% Dry Matter (DM) intake threshold. This is calculated over the twelve-month audit period and is based on feed records as required for auditing purposes.

It should be noted that supplementary products are to be used for maintenance and not for production purposes and only in exceptional circumstances, such as drought, to ensure highest animal welfare outcomes.

## 1.2 Cereal Grain Fodder Crops

Cereal crops in the pre-grain or post-harvest stages are allowed to be grazed under the WCOGA program. The definition for pre-grain stage is taken from Zadoks Decimal Code for growth stages in cereals (appendix 4). Up to and including stage 69 is considered pre-grain stage.

Post-harvest conditions are acceptable if the average vegetative growth over the paddock is over 21cm when sheep are first grazed.

Records of when sheep have grazed cereal crops must be kept, including photographs that demonstrate the crop was in the pre-grain stage or the regrowth post-harvest was sufficiently high.

## 1.3 Vitamins and Minerals

Where required, mineral and vitamin supplements are allowed under the WCOGA standards. These products must be used to ensure the health and well-being of the animal and not for production purposes. It should be stressed that these products need to meet the Australian Organic standards.

## 1.4 Weaner Lambs

All supplementary feed given to weaning lambs must be consistent with the Eligible Diet or identified as an approved supplement.

## **2. Free Range – never confined to a feedlot**

Lambs must have access to range or pasture their entire lives, unless they are being mustered and yarded for husbandry or marketing purposes. These times of confinement must not exceed 21 days in total over a twelve-month period.

During weaning lambs may be yard-weaned, however the same rule of not more than 21 days of confinement over a twelve-month period applies.

Livestock management records are audited to verify the length of time that lambs are confined for throughout the twelve-month period.

## **3. Identification and Lifetime Traceability**

WCOGA eligible lambs are required to be individually identified and traceable throughout their entire lifetime. Producers will comply with the use of an ear tag system and/or NLIS tags, as required under the Australian organic standard.

If lambs in the WCOGA program are intentionally or inadvertently exposed to excessive amounts of grain, they are required to notify the Arcadian livestock department. This will ensure the exposed lambs will not enter the Warilba Organic Grass Fed supply chain.

## **4. Organic Certification**

WCOGA eligible lambs must be at a minimum, Certified Australian Organic under a registered Australian Organic certifying body. Producers must have a current organic certificate accompanying their lambs when they are processed, thereby ensuring that their registration is current. It is strongly suggested that producers additionally carry out US National Organic Program (NOP) certification as this is required for Organic recognition in the United States of America.

## **5. References**

- American Grassfed Association. Grassfed & Grass Pastured Ruminant Standards, Feb 2015
- AWA Grassfed Standards 2015 072715
- Pasturefed Cattle Assurance System (PCAS) Standard Sept 2015
- The Coles Graze Grass-Fed Beef Standard

## Appendix 1. Definitions

### WCOGA: Warilba's Certified Organic Grass Fed Assurance Program.

**Grass Fed:** The feed source consumed for the lifetime of the ruminant animal must be grass and forage. The diet shall be derived from forage consisting of grass (annual and perennial), forbs (such as legumes and Brassica), browse, or cereal grain crops in the vegetative (pre-grain) state. The exception is milk consumed prior to weaning and supplementation used only in exceptional circumstances to ensure the animal's wellbeing.

Animals must have continuous access to pasture. Hay, haylage, baleage, silage, crop residue without grain, and other roughage sources may be included as acceptable feed sources. Routine mineral and vitamin supplementation may also be included in the feeding regimen.

The producer is required to fully document any feed supplementation that occurs. This requirement applies equally to inadvertent exposure to non-forage feedstuffs and to supplementation for ensuring the animal's well-being at all times during adverse conditions (environmental or physical). The documentation (such as receipts, ingredients, and tear tags) must include evidence of the supplements provided as well as the quantity and frequency of supplementation.

**Eligible Diet:** Forage consisting only of; grass (annual and perennial), forbs (legumes, brassicas), browse and cereal grain crops in an acceptable state.

**Forage:** Forage is defined as any edible herbaceous plant material that can be grazed or harvesting for feeding, with the exception of grain.

**Cereal Grain:** seed from cereal plants, caryopsis. Corn, wheat, rye, oats, rice, millet, sorghum, barley, triticale.

**Pre-Grain Sate:** Crops prior to having reached the end of the flowering stage as defined in Zadoks Decimal Code for growth stages in Cereals as up to and including decimal code 69. Refer to Appendix 2.

**Separated Grain:** Grain that is detached from cereal crop plants.

**Grain by-products:** Feed products that have been derived from grain ie: dried distillers grain, wheat shorts etc.

**Crop Residue:** Otherwise referred to a stubble – plant material that remains post-harvest.

**Vitamin:** Organic substances that are essential in minute quantities to the nutrition of most animals and some plants that act especially as coenzymes and precursors of coenzymes in the regulation of metabolic processes.

**Mineral:** Any of the various naturally occurring homogeneous substances obtained usually from the ground. Mineral supplements may be required where deficiencies exist in soil.

**Roughage:** Fodder that is high in fibre relative to its total digestible nutrients. i.e. Soybean hulls.

**Supplementary Feeding:** The Practise of supplying feed where regular pasture nutrients are deficient. Supplementary feeding is undertaken in order to maintain the wellbeing of the animal and is normally deemed necessary due to drought or other adverse seasonal or environmental conditions. It should be noted that supplementing is generally undertaken in small amounts, in contrast to the practice of substitute feeding.

**Weaner:** A lamb that has recently been separated from its mother. This can be a period of high stress due to changes in feed intake (no milk) and changes in social hierarchy.

## Appendix 2. Zadoks Decimal code

|    |  |      |   |
|----|--|------|---|
| 0  | <b>SOWING</b>                                    |      | <b>HEADING STAGES</b>   |
| 3  | Germination, seed swollen                        | 50   | First spikelet of spike just visible                          |
| 5  | Radicle emerged from seed                        | 52   | 20% of spike visible, early heading                           |
| 7  | Coleoptile emerged from seed                     | 55   | 50% of spike visible, mid heading                             |
| 10 | EMERGENCE  | 58   | 80% of spike visible, late heading                            |
|    |  | 60   | Full heading but not flowering                                |
|    | <b>LEAVES ON MAIN SHOOT</b>                      |      |   |
| 11 | 1st leaf more than half visible                  |      | <b>FLOWERING</b>  |
| 12 | 2nd leaf more than half visible                  | 62   | 20% of spikes are flowering                                   |
| 13 | 3rd leaf more than half visible                  | 65   | 50% of spikes are flowering                                   |
| 14 | 4th leaf more than half visible                  | 68   | 80% of spikes are flowering                                   |
| 15 | 5th leaf more than half visible                  |      |   |
| 16 | 6th leaf more than half visible                  |      | <b>KERNEL EXTENDING</b>                                       |
| 17 | 7th leaf more than half visible                  | 70.2 | Kernels near middle of spike extended 20%                     |
| 18 | 8 or more leaves visible and stem not elongating | 70.5 | Kernels extended 50%  |
|    |  | 71   | Kernels watery ripe, clear liquid                             |
|    | <b>TILLERING</b>                                 |      | <b>MILK DEVELOPMENT</b>                                       |
| 21 | Main shoot and 1 tiller                          | 73   | Early milk, liquid off-white                                  |
| 22 | Main shoot and 2 tillers                         | 75   | Mid milk, increase in solids                                  |
| 23 | Main shoot and 3 tillers                         | 77   | Late milk, increase in solids                                 |
| 24 | Main shoot and 4 tillers                         | 79   | Very late milk, half solid/half liquid                        |
| 25 | Main shoot and 5 tillers                         |      |   |
| 26 | Main shoot and 6 tillers                         |      | <b>DOUGH DEVELOPMENT</b>                                      |
| 27 | Main shoot and 7 tillers                         | 81   | Very early dough – mostly solids when kernels crushed, doughy |
| 28 | Main shoot and 8 tillers                         |      |   |
| 29 | Main shoot and 9 or more tillers                 |      |   |
|    | <b>STEM ELONGATION</b>                           |      |   |
| 30 | Stem starts to elongate                          | 83   | Early dough – kernels soft and almost dry                     |
| 31 | 1st node detectable                              | 85   | Soft dough – kernels firm but finger nail impression not held |
| 32 | 2nd node detectable                              | 87   | Hard dough – finger nail impression held                      |
| 33 | 3rd node detectable                              |      |   |
| 34 | 4th node detectable                              |      | <b>RIPENING</b>   |
|    | <b>BOOTING STAGES</b>                            | 90   | Kernels hard – difficult to divide by thumb nail              |
| 37 | Flag leaf visible                                | 92   | Harvest ripe – can no longer be dented by thumb nail          |
| 39 | Flag leaf collar just visible                    | 93   | Kernels loosening in daytime                                  |
| 41 | Early-boot stage                                 | 94   | Over-ripe – straw dead and collapsing                         |
| 43 | Mid-boot stage                                   |      |   |
| 45 | Late-boot stage                                  |      |   |
| 47 | Flag leaf sheath opening                         |      |   |
| 49 | First awns visible                               |      |   |



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