

# AMERICAN★HUMANE

*FIRST TO SERVE®*

**FARM PROGRAM NEWSLETTER  
FALL 2024**







## IN THIS NEWSLETTER

**2**

Meet Our Team

**5**

Continuously Improving and  
Innovating With Culver Duck

**6**

Certification Standards Updates:  
Broiler Chickens

**10**

Scientific Advisory Committee  
Spotlight

**12**

Meet an American Humane  
Certified™ Auditing Body

**14**

Cultivating A Humane Ethos With  
The Farmer's Hen

**15**

Upcoming Meeting Attendance

**16**

Raising the Bar for Pet Food  
With The Honest Kitchen

**17**

Our Collective Impact

# A MESSAGE FROM DR. ROBIN GANZERT PRESIDENT AND CEO, AMERICAN HUMANE



As our anticipation builds for the year-end rush sure to be packed with celebrations among loved ones and plenty of food, I am pleased to share this edition of the American Humane Farm Program Newsletter.

This year has brought tremendous advancements and growth for American Humane, particularly for our Farm Program. Since January, we have awarded the American Humane Certified™ seal to 34 entities, and even more are in the process of becoming certified. With these additions, American Humane Certified has caught the attention of the pet food industry, further signifying our commitment to comprehensively elevate animal welfare, from farm animals in the United States and worldwide to our pets at home.

American Humane Certified™ has built a strong reputation by focusing on continuous improvement. You will see this theme throughout this newsletter, but it is also an approach the Farm Program enacts every day. Our certification standards are updated based on ongoing scientific research and evidence-based outcomes for each species. We are currently updating our audit tools and standards to incorporate the latest scientific research and emerging technologies, with the first updates applying to our Broiler Chicken Standards and Audit Tool. Please take the time to review these changes on page 6.

By sharing in our commitment to improve the welfare of farm animals, our certified producers, processors, retailers, restaurants, and food service companies elevate the reputation of the American Humane Certified™ seal. It is because of these efforts that consumers around the world can source ethically and humanely raised food for their tables all year long. Thank you for joining alongside American Humane for the betterment of the animals within our care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin R. Ganzert". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Robin R. Ganzert, Ph.D.  
President and CEO

# MEET OUR TEAM

Our team is dedicated to working hand-in-hand with leaders across industries to continuously elevate the humane treatment of farm animals.



## **Haley Grimes, MS**

*Director, Farm Program Operations*

Joined: 2018 | 📍 Virginia

“As a ninth-generation farmer, I have always had a love for agriculture and livestock production, and I have a personal commitment to animal welfare and helping ensure a sustainable and food secure future for generations to come. My background in livestock production and animal welfare led me to American Humane, where I am fortunate to connect and work with the many facets of the agriculture community and support initiatives for continuous improvement and solutions for animal welfare and care.”



## **Melanie Bergman, MS**

*Field Operations Manager*

Joined: 2024 | 📍 Illinois

“While completing my graduate studies, I researched the impact of environmental enrichment on Pekin ducks and layer hens and had the opportunity to visit commercial farms that are American Humane Certified. Seeing firsthand how our animal welfare standards can help improve the lives of farm animals led me to reach out to the Farm Program upon receiving my degree. I am so excited to join this team and work alongside farmers and producers to continue elevating animal welfare.”



## **Kevin Braman, MS**

*Field Operations Manager*

Joined: 2024 | 📍 Wisconsin

“My background in animal welfare, specifically dairy cattle, and agricultural auditing led me to American Humane, where I work with our certified producers and those who are just starting the certification process. It is so fulfilling to support such a diverse range of species and products that adhere to science-backed welfare standards based on a principle of continuous improvement and know our work impacts the broader food industry.”





**Kelsey Bruno-Bayliff, Ph.D., PAS**

*Farm Standards & Science Coordinator*

Joined: 2023 | 📍 Kansas

“As someone who has spent many years researching on animal behavior, well-being, production, and sustainability, I am constantly inspired by American Humane’s approach to animal agriculture certification. In my role, I partner with our Scientific Advisory Committee to identify and improve our certification standards across all farm animal species. I love working so collaboratively with people throughout the agriculture community who are equally committed to improving animal welfare.”



**Cheyenne Eller**

*Sr. Field Operations Manager*

Joined: 2020 | 📍 Maryland

“As I started my career in animal agriculture, I knew that species-specific animal welfare standards grounded in science and reviewed by a board of qualified individuals was very important to me — and I found this at American Humane. I am most passionate about working with each of our certified farmers, producers, and processors. They deserve the spotlight for going above and beyond for stewarding the welfare of the animals in their care.”



**Harley Grenier**

*Field Operations Manager*

Joined: 2023 | 📍 Tennessee

“After working in broiler live operations and welfare for the first several years of my career, I was drawn to American Humane’s long-standing dedication to science-informed standards that are tried and tested in real-world settings, whether on a farm, at a zoo, or in our local communities. Knowing that the work we pursue improves the humane care of animals and increases the ethical foods available to my family and so many others is special to me.”



**Nicki Hardy, MS**

*Field Operations Manager*

Joined: 2024 | 📍 Pennsylvania

“ My passion for animal welfare originated from raising my own dairy heifers as part of my local 4-H club while growing up, driving me to study animal science and pursue additional certifications in dairy cattle welfare. I am thrilled to bring my expertise to the American Humane Farm Program Team. Joining American Humane allows me to actively promote animal welfare while supporting the dedicated producers who work tirelessly to feed our communities.”



**Rich Musselman**

*Manager, Strategic Partnerships*

Joined: 2009 | 📍 Arizona

“ I grew up in rural Illinois, where I developed a passion for raising animals through 4-H and FFA. However, life took me on a different path, leading to a more than 20-year successful career in management and human resources at home improvement retailers. Now, at American Humane, I combine the best of my experiences by fostering partnerships with like-minded agriculture leaders who share our dedication to elevating the welfare of the animals in our care.”

If you are not yet connected with a member of our team or have questions about how to align your farm or company with American Humane animal welfare standards, please reach out to:

**[farmanimalprogram@americanhumane.org](mailto:farmanimalprogram@americanhumane.org)**

# CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING AND INNOVATING WITH CULVER DUCK



Culver Duck's pursuit of American Humane certification, which was awarded in 2019, stemmed from a commitment to their White Pekin ducks, their consumers, and their longstanding strategy to continuously improve and innovate—a factor they found reflected in American Humane Certified™.

"The humane treatment of our ducks is a core value that guides our business," said Sean Smith, Culver Duck's General Manager. "We believe that animals deserve respect, compassion, and ethical treatment, and this principle is integrated into our operations, products, and culture."

"American Humane's focus on requiring continuous improvement aligns with our business strategy. Since partnering with American Humane, we have achieved our goal of keeping humane handling at the forefront of the daily conversations that drive our business," Sean continued.

As a company founded more than 160 years ago, Culver Duck understands the importance of adapting to changing consumer expectations. Like many of the businesses American Humane certifies, Culver Duck recognized an increasing interest among their consumers for ethically sourced products, and the company sees the American Humane Certification as a crucial factor in influencing purchasing decisions.

"The American Humane Certified™ seal gives consumers confidence that they are purchasing humanely raised products," Sean explained. "It was important that we work with an independent certification program to further demonstrate transparency in our

animal welfare programs to our clients and consumers."

Reflecting their drive to continuously innovate and meet consumer expectations, Culver Duck recently launched a new initiative that reaches an entirely new market—pet treats! Over the years, customer inquiries about pet treats prompted the company to explore this new market. With careful research and development, Culver Duck created a line of "one ingredient pet treats" called Duck Country, which is made with American Humane Certified™ duck that meets the same animal welfare standards that their human consumers know and trust.





# Updated Broiler Chicken Audit Tool and Standards

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



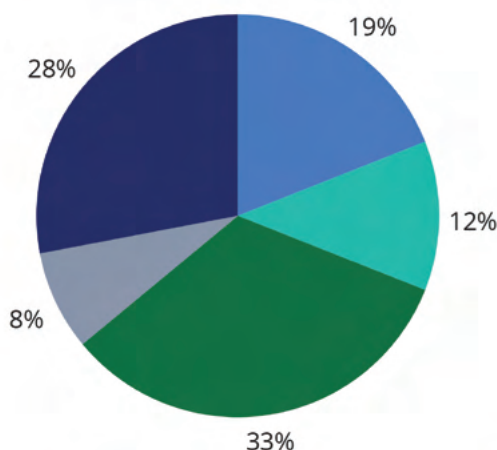
### What changed?

- Standards document reworded to include additional scientific reasoning and references
- Key Welfare Indicators (KWIs) identified and defined to measure continuous improvement
- Scoring scale revised to further emphasize outcome and environmental-based measures specific to animal welfare
- Additional Pass/Fail criteria added to address proper euthanasia methods, assess waste disposal areas, and evaluate transport trailers
- Expanded observations of animals, their environment, and Standard Operating Procedures documentation during auditor evaluation of farm, transport, and processing
- New introduction written by Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)
- Revised wording to boost clarity and remove repetition
- Updated formatting for both documents

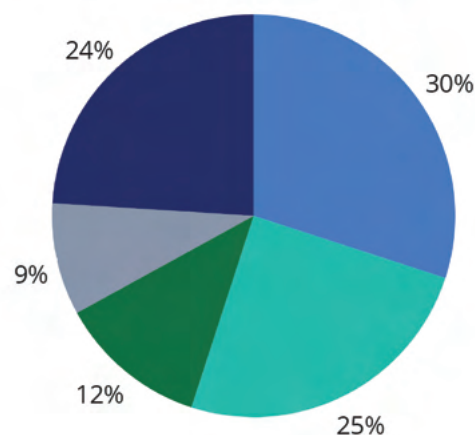
### How has the scoring scale changed?

The point system was adjusted to further emphasize outcome and environmental-based measures specific to animal welfare as outlined below.

**Current Score Breakdown**



**Updated Score Breakdown**



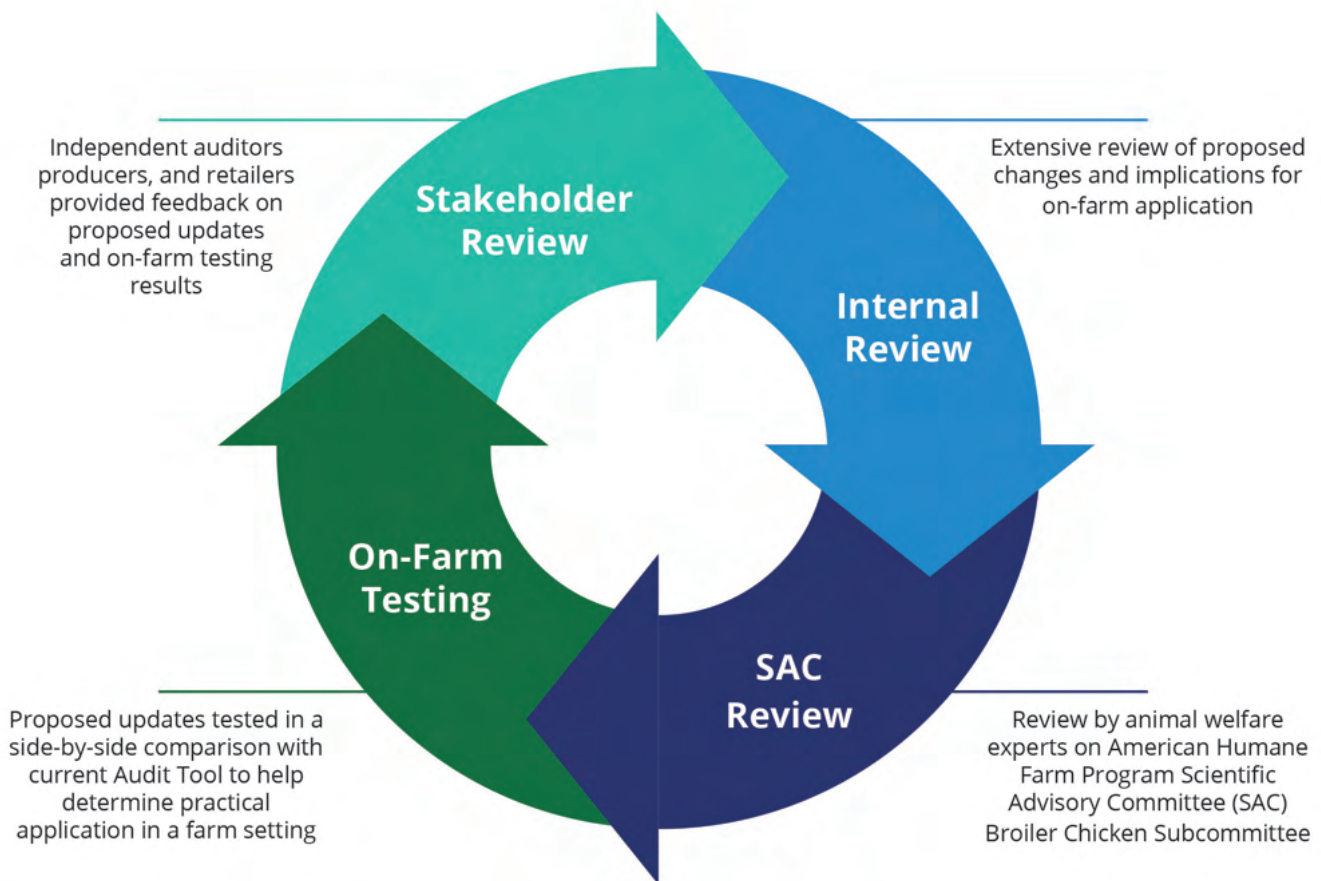


### What was the revision process?

The revisions to the American Humane Broiler Chicken Audit Tool were informed by a comprehensive process that incorporated the latest broiler chicken scientific research, feedback from animal welfare experts, and tests that applied the updates in a real-world, on-farm setting.

The proposed changes underwent an extensive internal review before being provided to the American Humane Farm Program Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Broiler Chicken Subcommittee, auditors, producers, and retailers for feedback.

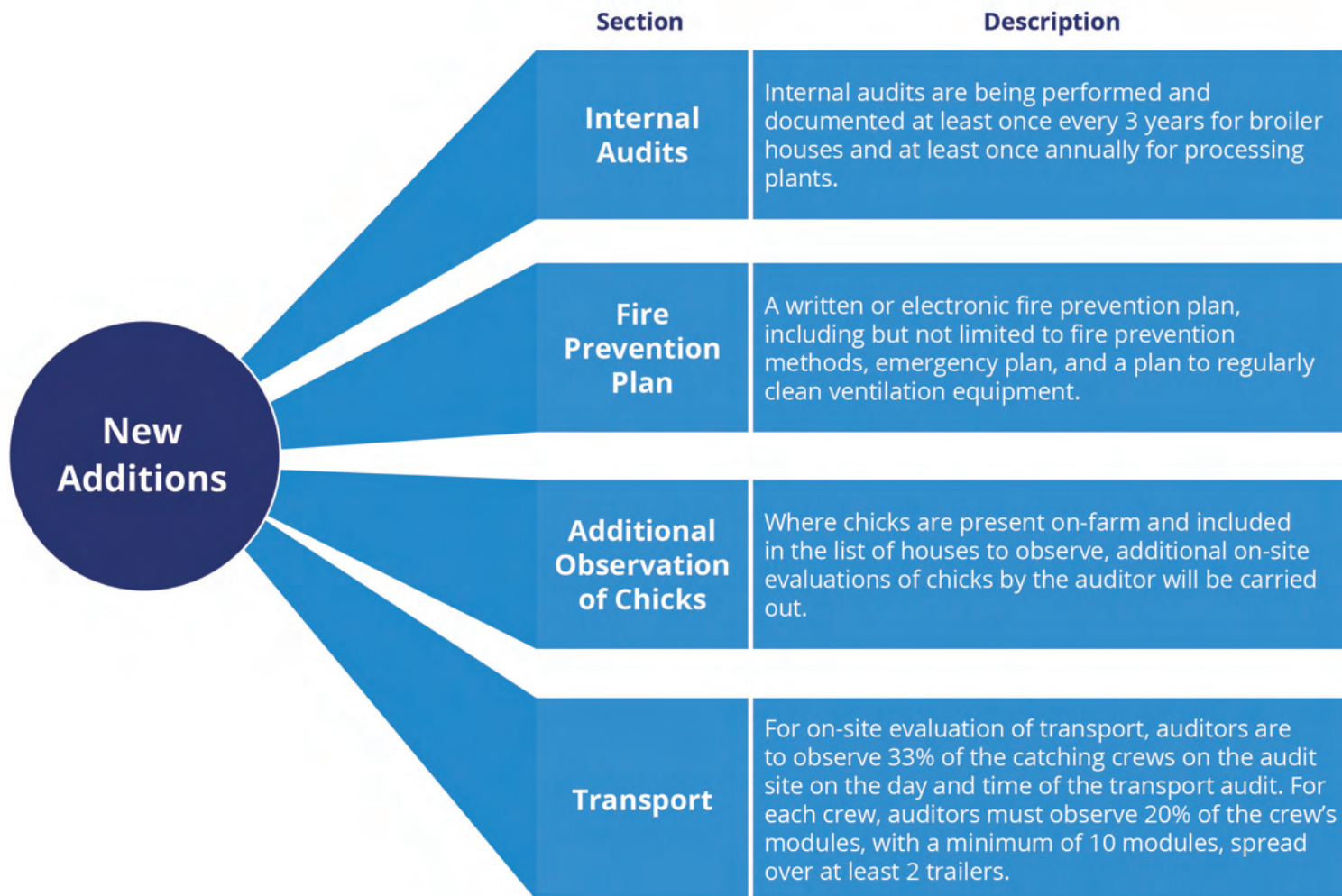
The updated tool was then tested on-site in a side-by-side comparison with the current audit tool to understand real on-farm functionality of the revised tool, implementation of the newly revised standards, and how actionable the test results were to improve animal welfare outcomes. After review and testing on-site, observations from auditors, producers, and retailers were collected and thoroughly discussed during the internal review and evaluation. After the initial round of discussions, additional revision rounds were performed internally, and each stakeholder had additional chances to comment on the proposed updates.



## Which points have significantly changed?

Topic	Summary of Change	Science Behind It
<b>Lighting</b> 	Including alternative lighting systems, such as gradient and natural lighting.	New research has reported positive welfare outcomes in broilers raised in environments where gradient lighting systems were utilized, as these lighting systems mimic the natural environment of a bird.
<b>Air Quality</b> 	Ammonia, a key indicator of air quality, must be measured at the height of the broilers in three locations spread throughout the barn and each location must be less than 25 ppm.	The relationship between ammonia and broiler welfare have been well-documented, consequently each measure must fall below the threshold, and the measures must represent the entire house.
<b>Enrichment</b> 	Environmental enrichment (elevated resting place, foraging, outdoor access, or gradient lighting) must be evenly distributed and provided in sufficient quantity to allow broilers to use freely.	Scientific literature supports the idea that environmental enrichment can be beneficial to animal welfare. There is a solid foundation of scientific research that can be applied for producers to tailor effective enrichment for broilers in a variety of facilities.
<b>Space</b> 	Adjustment in space requirement according to environmental conditions, verified through records. This is not a measure of final broiler weight.	Current scientific review supports that appropriate space for birds is based on a variety of factors beyond pounds per square foot as a lone criterion, and with excellent environmental conditions, broilers can be housed at up to 8.2 lbs/ft <sup>2</sup> . Verification of environmental conditions is performed by the auditor on the farm and at the processing plant, in addition to ongoing records of regular testing.
<b>Evaluation of Broilers</b> 	Step-by-step instructions for observing broiler distribution, panting behavior, deceased broilers, upside down broilers, and broiler gait score.	To more effectively measure broiler welfare, evaluations include a range of indicators (behavioral and physiological indicators), at both the individual and flock level, by assessing through scientific methods.





### How will our independent auditors be trained?

American Humane Certified Auditing Bodies will be required to complete a virtual or in-person training on these new standards and the Audit Tool.

### When do these new standards go into effect?

The new Standards and Audit Tool will take effect and be utilized by American Humane independent auditors starting January 1, 2025. There is a phase-in period for some of the additions, which are clearly defined within the updated Standards and Audit Tool documents and must be implemented by January 1, 2026.



# SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

## Richard Blatchford, PhD

Assoc. Professor of Extension,  
Small to Large Scale Poultry  
Dept. of Animal Science  
University of California, Davis



**You are an invaluable part of our Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). What made you want to join the committee?**

My goal as a researcher and extension specialist is to bring science-backed information to producers that will enhance the life of animals in the real world. Joining the SAC at American Humane was a perfect fit for furthering that goal.

**Can you give us an overview of your responsibilities as a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee?**

My responsibilities on the SAC are to help guide the Farm Program with the latest science available to inform the program's standards. More specifically I provide information on poultry species.

**What are some of the most important factors surrounding whether a producer is prioritizing animal welfare?**

I think the most important factor is providing the right environment for animals to be healthy and able to display their full range of behavior. Part of that environment is providing the animals with choice about where they want to be and behave as they would like.

**Can you discuss some of the research that you are working on currently, and the important role it plays to inform best animal welfare science and practices?**

My research program revolves around management of poultry and how the birds view that practice from their perspective. I currently have projects looking at keel bone fractures in laying hens and how to mitigate them, as well as implementing enrichment programs for broilers. Results from both of these projects will help inform how to better manage poultry in ways that are meaningful to the birds.

**How have you seen farm standards change and evolve since you've been on the Scientific Advisory Committee as a result of emerging research and in-field data?**

The biggest change has been moving from resource-based measures of animal welfare (such as nest space, stocking density, feeder space, etc.) to animal-based measures (such as behavior, health measures, etc.). While resource-based measures provide information on the potential for good animal welfare, they don't actually measure welfare, as animal-based measures do. As science provides more of these measures that are valid and reliable, it has been wonderful to see them incorporated into the standards.



**What are you most excited about researching in the future as it relates to animal welfare?**

I have become really interested in understanding how management and affective state (feelings) of poultry are related. What effect does the environment we provide (for example, lighting and enrichment) have on the mental state of birds? Are we alleviating suffering, are the birds in a neutral state, or are they in a positive state, which is what we are striving for with animal welfare?

**Why is the Scientific Advisory Committee so integral to helping ensure the humane treatment of farm animals on American Humane Certified™ farms and ranches?**

Having scientists with the latest animal welfare knowledge as advisors allows the standards to be created and updated on scientific knowledge as it becomes available, rather than what we think may be best for the animals (which sometimes is not the case). It also allows for producers to make meaningful change for the animals with guidance from the standards.



# AUDITING AMERICAN HUMANE CERTIFIED™ WITH VALIDUS

American Humane Certified™ earns its well-established reputation among consumers, farmers, retailers, and beyond by being grounded in science- and evidence-based standards that are informed by leading experts and evaluated by independent auditors.

Validus is one of six Certified Auditing Bodies American Humane works with to help verify that certified producers' farm animal care and husbandry practices meet our rigorous animal welfare standards and rightfully earn the American Humane Certified™ seal. They recently took a few minutes between on-farm visits to share more about the company's mission and their dedicated approach to animal welfare-centered, independent auditing.



## **Tell us a little bit about Validus—its history and mission.**

Validus, a division of Where Food Comes From, Inc., was founded in 2000 and became ISO 9001:2015 certified and ISO 17065 certified in 2014.

At the time of our founding, audits were primarily conducted for environmental and animal welfare factors. Today, that is still at our foundation, but we have since expanded into livestock feed, pet food, food plants, biosecurity, worker care, and pets as well.

Our goal is to provide our clients with a quality independent audit. Our commitment to quality ensures client satisfaction by evaluating ourselves and our client's experience with us. We continue to grow our agricultural and on-farm audit services. In fact, we completed more than 5,000 audits in 2023!

## **How do you help ensure your team of auditors are the best in the field (or on a farm)?**

We identify auditors who have a degree in agriculture and 5 years of industry experience or 15 total years within the industry. Validus auditors go through our training processes and protocols, which encompass webinar and in-field trainings, as well as trainings and shadow events administered by Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization (PAACO). Validus auditors are also required to go through annual training events to maintain their credentials as an auditor for us.





**After nearly 20 years of working together, what has factored into Validus' decision to continue partnering with American Humane?**

When we first began working with American Humane nearly 20 years ago, it was important for us to identify partners that had a similar mission regarding animal welfare. We have continued to find alignment between our mission and goals and that of American Humane Certified.

**How have you worked with American Humane to meet audit bundling needs to improve efficiencies in auditing and scheduling?**

As a valued business partner for independent verification, Validus not only audits to American Humane Certified™ standards, but we work with them to offer bundled on-farm audit services in one visit, which helps reduce the number of individual audits that take place at an operation as well as decreases costs and biosecurity risks overall.

**Is there anything else you would like to share about your company?**

As our clients, like American Humane, have increased their needs for independent audits, we have grown our services and auditor pool. Among the multiple divisions within our Where Food Comes From team, we are able to provide trained auditors to meet the demand from our clients. American Humane has been a great client that has grown with the number of audits needed and allowed us to identify quality individuals that go out and conduct audits for Validus.



## CULTIVATING A HUMANE ETHOS WITH THE FARMER'S HEN

Many people, from gourmet connoisseurs to college dorm room cooks, often have a favorite brand of eggs, but our team knows which eggs are really the best: any of the 115+ brands that carry the American Humane Certified™ seal. Each one is dedicated to providing the best product for their consumers and working to ensure that their laying hens are humanely raised.

The Farmer's Hen earned its American Humane Certification in 2022. Our Senior Field Operations Manager, Cheyenne Eller, has worked with the company since it joined the program and recently had the opportunity to learn more about their history and commitment to animal welfare.

"The humane treatment of our animals is an integral part of our ethos," reflected Ashley Swaffar, The Farmer Hen's Vice President of Compliance. "Through the years, we have upheld our commitment to our hens by evolving our methodologies to achieve the to achieve high standards of animal welfare."

By providing their hens with space to roam, access to natural light, a balanced diet, and dedicated care from their team of experts, The Farmer's Hen helps ensure their hens are raised in environments that prioritize their physical and psychological well-being.

Ashely continued, "We aren't just producing eggs. We're nurturing a healthier, happier environment for our hens."

### **Why is animal welfare and maintaining an American Humane Certified™ seal so important to The Farmer's Hen?**

"The American Humane Certified™ seal holds immense importance for our company. This certification signifies our unwavering commitment to stringent animal welfare standards set forth by an independent, reputable organization. Choosing to work with the American Humane reflects our dedication to transparency and accountability in our practices. We firmly believe in the significance of independent certification,



giving our consumers full confidence in the humane treatment of our animals.”

### **How has the American Humane Certification impacted your brand?**

“As consumer tastes evolve and the interest in humane certified products continues to rise, The Farmer’s Hen has needed to adapt accordingly. Earning the American Humane Certified™ seal has been met with resounding positivity from our customers. It sets us apart from other producers by showcasing our steadfast dedication to animal welfare. This recognition assures consumers that when they choose our eggs, they’re not only selecting a high-quality product but also supporting humane farming practices.”

### **What should your consumers expect to experience because of The Farmer Hen’s commitment to certification?**

“Consumers who choose The Farmer’s Hen products should expect a steadfast commitment to animal welfare. They can anticipate eggs produced by hens raised in environments that prioritize their health, happiness, and well-being.

“We want consumers to know that our commitment to ethical farming practices goes far beyond any certification. It’s our way of life,” Ashley concluded. “We’re dedicated to providing the highest quality eggs while upholding the values of compassion, integrity, and responsibility toward our animals and our consumers.”

---

## **UPCOMING MEETING ATTENDANCE**

Members of our team will be at these events and conferences — be sure to come say hello!

**Egg Industry Issues Forum**  
October 29-30  
Baltimore, Maryland

**HPAI Impact  
& Insights Forum**  
October 29-30, 2024  
Arlington, Virginia

**Western Organic Dairy Producers  
Alliance Conference & Tradeshow**  
November 19-20  
Reno, Nevada

**International Production  
& Processing Expo**  
Jan 28-30, 2025  
Atlanta, Georgia



# RAISING THE BAR FOR PET FOOD WITH THE HONEST KITCHEN



As more pet owners search for the best food for their companions, pet food companies are beginning to take note and seek ways to assure customers of their commitment to the well-being of all animals. With a pulse on the industry's evolution, American Humane Certified™ recently expanded into the pet food space, welcoming The Honest Kitchen® as one of the first to include American Humane Certified™ chicken in their products.

Founded in 2002 by Lucy Postins in San Diego, California, The Honest Kitchen's mission is to help as many pets as possible get on the road to good health through good food. Since the beginning, The Honest Kitchen has grounded its business decisions as a human-grade pet food brand around conscientious principles, enforcing stringent standards among their ingredient suppliers and even earning a B Corp Certification in 2022.

"We have always believed that it is our responsibility to continuously raise the bar for ourselves and the pet food industry at large by using our business as a force for good," shared Lucy, who now serves as The Honest Kitchen's Chief Integrity Officer.

One of the most important differentiators in the pet food industry is the quality and traceability of meat that is incorporated into a brand's products, so in an effort to continue meeting their customers' increasing expectations, the company connected with American Humane Certified™. Now, their chicken suppliers undergo annual independent audits to help ensure that its dry dog and cat foods are made with chicken that adheres to American Humane's rigorous, science-based farm animal welfare standards.

"As a producer of 100% human grade foods for animal companions, we're passionately focused on helping pet parents improve the lives of their dogs and cats, through our healthy, whole food offerings. Sourcing proper ingredients is pivotal to our mission, and the humane treatment of animals and using our business for good has been at our core since we began," Lucy said. "We're proud to work with American Humane to help ensure the impact of our food goes beyond the bowl."





# OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

We currently certify  
producers in

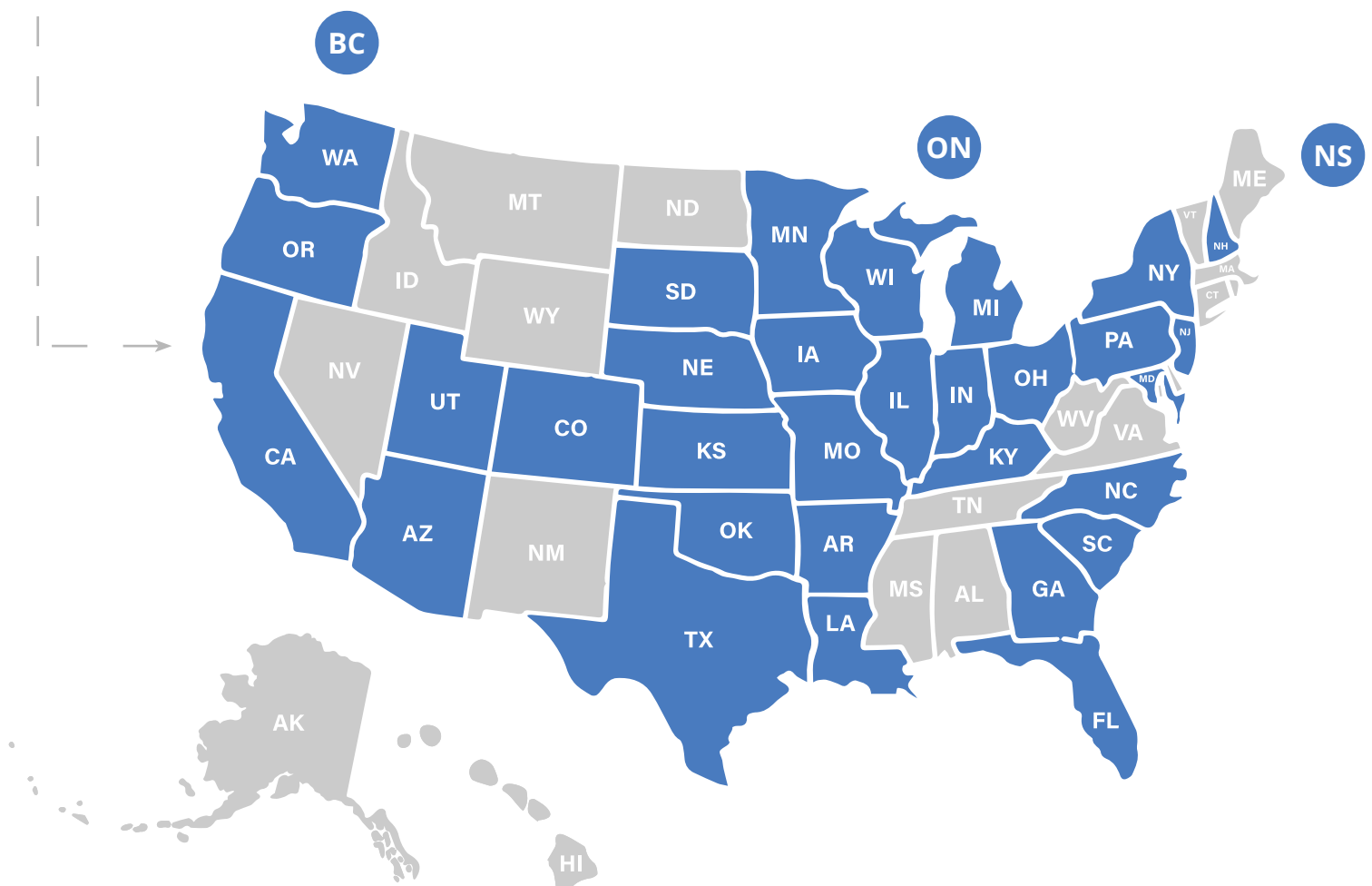
**31 states & 4 countries**



**USA, Canada, Colombia, & Chile**

**194** producers currently on our certified list

**34** new certified producers in 2024





**Whether through a corporate or individual donation, your generous support of American Humane advances animal welfare, worldwide.**

It funds research to continuously improve our understanding of each farm animal's needs. It protects wild animals at risk of becoming extinct. And it puts healing leashes into the hands of veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress.

**For the animals whose lives you touch, thank you.**

**Donate today so that we are prepared tomorrow.**



**AMERICAN★HUMANE**  
*FIRST TO SERVE®*

(800) 227-4645 | 1400 16th Street NW, Suite 360, Washington, DC 20036 | [AmericanHumane.org](https://AmericanHumane.org)