



Introducing Domestic Animals

Animals and people have lived together for thousands of years. With few exceptions, the hundreds of animal species and their breeds have descended from ancestors who were domesticated.

Domestication is a process people use to cultivate plants and animals to serve human needs. Domestic animals have gradually adapted to living with people and serving our need for food, clothing, work, transportation and companionship. In exchange, people provide domestic animals with food and protection.

How do we ensure that this type of humane and safe care is provided to domestic animals? Codes of Practice are nationally developed, voluntary guidelines for the care and handling of different species of farm animals. These Codes are designed to be used as a tool that can help animal owners ensure that sound animal welfare practices are followed. They provide both requirements and recommendations for farm animal welfare and care.

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) has also developed Codes of Practice for dog boarding and breeding kennels as well as **catteries**, places where cats are boarded or bred.

Values in the Codes Of Practice

Throughout the world, domestic animals are kept in a wide variety of situations. In Canada, the commercial and private animal industries are large and extremely diverse. Therefore, the Codes of Practice do not cover all situations, but try to define high standards for the basic principles of animal care and management. The requirements and recommendations in the Codes of Practice are based on the best knowledge currently available. The Codes of Practice identify the following principles and responsibilities:

- The purpose of the Codes is to promote the welfare of animals. Those involved with animals must make an effort to inform themselves and others in the proper care and handling practices.
- People working with animals must have due regard for their welfare.
- People involved with animals should be aware of the welfare of animals under their care or the care of others.
- It is the responsibility of people working with animals to be knowledgeable of proper care and handling. Ignorance is not acceptable as an excuse for cruelty and neglect.



You will find references to the Codes of Practice in many of the Need to Know cards. Codes of Practice provide requirements and recommendations for housing, care, transportation, processing and other areas of animal care. Watch for these references and compare them to what you are learning about acceptable levels of care for all domestic animals.

