



HEALDSBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT

601 Healdsburg Ave
Healdsburg, CA 95448

cityofhealdsburg.org
(707) 431-3360
FAX (707) 431-3146
fire@healdsburg.gov

City of Healdsburg Policy for the Humane Treatment of Animals in Grazing Operations for Fire Prevention

The City of Healdsburg (“City”) incorporates vegetation management in its fire prevention strategy. One vegetation management technique is the use of grazing animals to reduce wildfire fuels. The use of grazing animals, such as goats, sheep and cattle have proven to be an effective and ecologically sound practice. When the use of such grazing animals is deemed viable, the City may contract with various grazing contractors to provide this service. When doing so, the City will require the grazing contractor to provide the utmost care for and to safeguard the wellbeing of animals used for grazing in the City. The following protocols govern the treatment of animals for grazing operations and shall apply to all City contracts for grazing services.

Policy Purpose

Grazing livestock has three basic impacts on the landscape. They consume vegetation through grazing, they trample vegetation (which can facilitate the breakdown of plant carbon in the soil), and they transfer nutrients through their waste. Targeted grazing uses all three impacts to accomplish specific vegetation management goals.

This policy is intended to ensure the health and safety of animals while preserving natural resources. Basic animal care practices can support animal well-being and assist grazers in evaluating husbandry practices and offer practices that are ethical and cost efficient. The below-mentioned best practices and protocols have been developed in coordination with grazers and veterinary doctors. Keeping animals healthy will help maintain the viability of the operation while maintaining animal welfare of animals. Safeguarding the wellbeing of the grazing animals is in the best interest of the grazers and is required by the City of Healdsburg.

Animal Condition

Grazing contractors are required to conduct frequent body condition appraisals of all grazing animals. Contractors should use a systematic approach to review the condition of each animal prior to delivery, again when animals arrive, and throughout the grazing period. Contractors should arrange for a veterinarian to evaluate the herd condition on a regular basis. If any illness is found to be out of the scope of herders’ training and normal level of care, a veterinarian must evaluate, treat and provide a condition report to herder. This report is to be shared with the City of Healdsburg.

Health Care and Herd Health Plan

Grazing contractors are to manage grazing animals to prevent or reduce the incidence of disease and injury. Producers are required to have a licensed veterinarian assist in the design and implementation of their Herd Health Plan (“Plan”). The Plan shall be submitted to the City for review and approval prior to

Policy for the Humane Treatment of Animals in Grazing Operations

Page 2

the initiation of any grazing activities. No grazing activities may take place without a City-approved Herd Health Plan.

The Plan must outline appropriate antibiotic and pain treatment, protocols for treatment of sick animals (outlined below), and feed and water protocols.

The Plan shall address the prevention and treatment of disease and injury. Each Plan must include the following protocol in the event that an animal is observed with illness or health-related symptoms (cough, runny nose, diarrhea, injury etc.):

1. The employee who discovers the disease or injury shall notify the herder or foreman in charge of the job immediately.
2. The animal shall be assessed, and a plan of action developed to treat the animal. The treatment plan will include, at a minimum, a complete health check by the herder.
3. If the animal does not need substantial medical attention and is in good overall health the animal may remain with the herd and be treated in accordance with the healthcare plan.
 - Animals may be doctored with the medication deemed appropriate at the time by trained employees of grazing contractor.
4. If the health check by the herder concludes that the animal needs additional medical attention or to be quarantined, the herder will consider the following in determining next steps:
 - Animal may be quarantined or receive additional medical attention by separating the animal from the herd and keeping it under a close eye near a herdsman's trailer. If the condition worsens at any time, the animal may be removed from the property if deemed necessary by the grazing contractor.
 - If deemed necessary to remove the animal(s), the animal shall be picked up in a timely manner. Contractor will have 24 hours from notification of the need to remove and relocate an animal for further inspection/medical attention by qualified grazing contractor employee or veterinarian.
 - If a veterinarian has inspected the animal, the grazing contractor will comply with the veterinarian's recommended procedure. When the approved procedure has been completed and the animal looks to be in adequate health, the grazing contractor will contact the veterinarian for confirmation.

Feeding & Nutrition

Goats require a well-rounded diet that typically includes bulk foods such as well-made hay that is free from mold, seasonal green vegetation, and daily mineral supplements. Nutrients that are not provided through consumption of vegetation are to be supplemented as needed to maintain a healthy diet. Feeding protocols shall be detailed in the Herd Health Plan.

Water

Animal drinking water provisions must be addressed in the Herd Health Plan. The plan must be adapted to herd size, terrain, elements, and the availability of fresh water. Fresh water is to be provided through

Policy for the Humane Treatment of Animals in Grazing Operations

Page 3

water troughs in multiple locations and when necessary, with additional holding tanks/ reservoirs. Livestock shall not go more than 12 hours without access to fresh water.

Handling & Transportation

Animals shall be handled in a manner that minimizes stress for the animal. Grazing animals have panoramic vision – they can see nearly all the way around except directly behind them. To induce movement, a handler usually approaches from the side rather than from directly in front of or behind the animal. When approaching animals from any direction, a low, quiet voice will prevent the animal from being startled.

When livestock cannot be herded (walked) from one location to another, hauling is necessary. Trailers shall be well ventilated. Floor surfaces shall be covered with shavings, matting, or other materials to enhance traction and stability. Good sanitation practices shall be employed to help prevent disease in both grazing animals and humans.

Protection from Predators

Sheep and goats are especially vulnerable to a number of predators (including coyotes, mountain lions, black bears, and domestic dogs). Grazers shall utilize appropriate tools to protect livestock. These tools are appropriate to the degree of predator threat, as well as to the human environment where the livestock are grazing. These tools may include electric fencing, guardian animals (dogs, llamas, or donkeys), FoxLights™, or other devices that deter predation. If guardian animals are utilized, they shall be provided with appropriate health care, nutrition, and access to fresh drinking water.

Electric Fencing

Grazing operators may use electric fencing to contain livestock. Signage shall be utilized to inform the public of the electric fencing. Fences are typically only off when moving livestock or when the operator or his/her employee(s) are entering the paddock.

Signage

Grazing contractors must provide signs stating the company name, and 24-hour contact number, and should be located at multiple locations around the targeted grazing locations.

Additional signs may include, but are not limited to, signs that:

- Inform the public to keep personal dogs/ pets on leashes
- Inform the public not to feed grazing animals
- Inform the public that there are working dogs in the area
- Inform the public of electric fence (posted every 20-25 feet hanging from fence when in use)

Herder/Employee Training

Grazing company employees shall be trained in the operation's specific animal husbandry protocols. Employees shall also receive the necessary equipment and supplies to care for the animals (including dogs) under their supervision. Training practices shall be summarized in the Herd Health Plan.

Policy for the Humane Treatment of Animals in Grazing Operations

Page 4

Herd Provisions

Each individual herd shall be comprised of approximately 400 animals or less:

- There shall be at least 1 herder per 400 animals.
- If the herd exceeds more than 400 animals, a second herder shall be added to help facilitate and watch the herd.

Non-Ambulatory and Terminally Ill Animals

A non-ambulatory animal is one that is incapable of standing or walking without assistance. Every grazing operation will occasionally have to handle animals that are acutely diseased or injured and unable to walk. Handling sick and non-ambulatory animals shall be done with a minimum of force and trauma. Animals determined to be terminally ill by a veterinarian shall be euthanized without delay.

Animal Death

In the rare and unfortunate event of an animal death, due to illness, predator or any other circumstance, the grazing contractor is to notify the City of Healdsburg Fire Department as soon as possible. Depending on circumstances an additional written report may be requested. The animal remains are required to be removed from city property as soon as possible, and in no event more than 12 hours, and with great respect and care.

Questions or Complaints

If the Grazing Contractor, their supervisors, Herders, or any employees under their purview receive questions, inquiries, or complaints, they must promptly relay such communications to the designated City Contract Manager. The employee is expected to make every effort to provide the contact information of the individual raising the concern, ensuring a timely and appropriate response can be provided.

Monitoring and Enforcement

The City will implement the following monitoring measures to ensure compliance with the relevant contract and safety of the animals:

- 1) Regular Monitoring and Inspections: The City shall conduct periodic inspections of the grazing sites to monitor compliance with the policy's guidelines and protocols. Inspections may include visual evaluations of animal health, feeding and water provisions, handling and transportation practices, and adherence to the Herd Health Plan.
- 2) Violation Reporting: Community members, City staff, and grazing contractors are encouraged to report any observed non-compliance, including the mistreatment of animals, failure to follow the Herd Health Plan, or any other deviation from the established guidelines to the Healdsburg Fire Marshal.
3. Enforcement: Any contract for grazing services shall include reference to these policies, and provisions permitting the City to suspend or terminate the contract for violation of these policies.