

IOWA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION
2055 Ironwood Court | Ames, IA 50014 | 515-296-2266

Green & Gold Tag Preconditioning Program

ICA Fact Sheet | April 2026

The Preconditioning Program is designed to promote good health and ensure a premium for preconditioned cattle. The unique serial numbers on the green and gold tags allow producers to verify through the IVMA that the required procedures were performed on the calves. The IVMA office keeps track of reported incidents of concern and holds veterinarians accountable for the certification protocol and process.

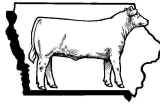
Benefits of the program:

- Enhance value.
- Pre-weaning immunization gives health protection at home during weaning and backgrounding.
- Production and sale of reputation feeder calves. Stimulates repeat buyers.
- PC system meets Iowa standards for Beef Quality Assurance (BQA).
- PC calves may qualify as source and process-verified cattle.
- Iowa PC calves are veterinarian-verified.
- Fewer sick calves mean greater feedlot performance, higher quality grades, and more grid market premiums.
- Utilize homegrown feedstuffs for low-cost gains and added calf value

Guidelines (*These guidelines supersede any previous guidelines*):

1. The **Green/Gold Tag Preconditioning (PC) Programs** were designed to increase animal health & performance as well as bolster economic value & financial return to cattle producers. Only IVMA member veterinarians can participate in the PC program.
2. The preconditioning certificates are reviewed yearly and are valid for a two-year period ending on a June 30th date. All other certificates are obsolete and should be discarded. New certificates may be ordered by calling the IVMA at 800/369-9564 or on our website: www.iowavma.org
3. The **green tag** placed in the calf's left ear indicates that the animal is appropriately processed, and the mandatory health products were properly handled and administered by an Iowa-licensed veterinarian, so the tagged calves have met the program initial requirements.
 - a. The presence of a green or gold tag alone does not indicate "preconditioned" unless the calves are accompanied by a valid Green or Gold Tag Preconditioning Certificate.
4. Castration/dehorning - The PC certificate provides a line to indicate if castration/dehorning was performed by the owner or the veterinarian. If the owner performs these procedures, there is a line to designate the date the veterinarian checked that those procedures were properly completed.

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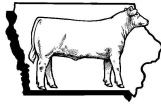


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5. Calves that have been green/gold-tagged but not weaned for at least 30/60 days (respectively) may be sold, but they are NOT PRECONDITIONED and must not be represented as such unless accompanied by a valid PC certificate. The preconditioning certificate is not provided to the owner until at least 30 days for Green Tag certificates / 60 days for Gold Tag certificates after weaning ...and the calves have been owned for a minimum of 60 days.
6. Preconditioning Certificates are valid for “one change of ownership”. If the second owner has owned the preconditioned calves for 60 days, and the tag numbers have been verified by a veterinarian, a new Green/Gold Tag Preconditioning Certificate can be issued.
7. A **gold tag** placed in the left ear indicates the calf has had **two doses of the required vaccines and that both sets of vaccines were administered by PC program standards**. Calves are officially gold tag preconditioned only if accompanied by a completed Gold Tag PC Certificate.
8. If the double vaccination/Gold Tag PC program is definitely going to be utilized, one gold tag will suffice without a green tag, but it is recommended that the calves, which were PC processed with the initial vaccinations, have a form of ID to verify this.
9. The gold tag should **not** be placed until the second set of vaccines has been administered.
10. Gold/Green Tag Preconditioning Certificates **must** be signed by both the owner or their agent and the veterinarian. The veterinarian or clinic staff can be the ‘agent’ but are held accountable for the owner’s information on the certificate.
11. All green tag and gold tag numbers must be recorded on the certificates. Tag numbers can be traced back to the member veterinarian through the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association office. It is the veterinarian’s responsibility to trace a number to a herd/producer. Green and gold tags are available only through the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association to member veterinarians only. The green and gold tags are patented by the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association (IVMA) and must be applied to cattle by a member veterinarian. A detailed procedure for handling any complaints associated with the program has been established and is rigorously enforced.
12. Owner/producer vaccination is not accepted in this program. This ensures the integrity, care and quality of the products used in the PC program.

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FAQs:

1. **Q.** Calves are worked and green-tagged only and sold before weaning. The second owner weans these calves 30 days and sells the calves. Can a Green Tag Preconditioning (PC) Certificate be issued?

A. No.

2. **Q.** Can Green Tag PC calves (accompanied by a Green Tag PC Certificate) purchased by a buyer be gold-tag preconditioned without starting the vaccination program over?

A. Yes. The key here is the buyer's Green Tag PC Certificate and the veterinarian verifies the tag numbers. The new owner must own the calves 60 days minimum.

3. **Q.** Calves are vaccinated and green-tagged, issued a 'vaccination certificate', but not an IVMA/ICA Green Tag Preconditioning Certificate, and then sold without weaning. The second owner weans the calves. Could they be vaccinated and gold-tagged?

A. No. They could be gold-tagged if they were issued a Green Tag PC Certificate which would require weaning prior to being sold. (See Q&A #2 above.)

4. **Q.** Can calves sold as preconditioned by a first owner be represented as "preconditioned" at a sale by the second owner?

A. Yes, if there is a valid PC certificate from previous owner, the tag numbers are verified by the veterinarian and the second owner has owned the cattle for at least 60 days. ➤ A new PC certificate must be completed to show the new owner information.

5. **Q.** Should calves that the veterinarian knows will not be "preconditioned" still be vaccinated and green-tagged?

A. Yes, at the veterinarian's discretion. The **green tag** only indicates that the calves have had science-based vaccinations and an external/internal parasite treatment regimen administered by a veterinarian who has verified properly dehorned and castrated as appropriate.

- The IVMA/ICA recommends green-tagged calves be "**Preconditioned**" with all **PC requirements met which includes weaning & feed ration and be accompanied by a valid Preconditioning certificate.**

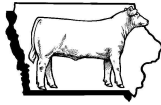
6. **Q.** Can a producer purchase vaccines from their veterinarian and administer the first vaccine, then have the veterinarian administer the second vaccination and gold tag the calves?

A. No - This is in direct violation of this veterinarian-verified program and is not allowed. All vaccination and parasite control measures must be administered by a veterinarian or by clinic staff under "immediate" supervision of the veterinarian. All medical procedures must be veterinarian verified. Additional procedures performed by the owner can be added as a comment on the PC certificate.

7. **Q.** Why a Gold Tag Preconditioning program option?

A. Boostered vaccinations and an increased weaning interval are preferred by many buyers. These additional healthcare measures potentially improve the immunity and

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health status of the animal. As such it is a marketing tool to increase the price the producer receives.

8. **Q.** Can vaccines, dewormers, or “pour-ons” purchased by a producer be used by the veterinarian as part of the preconditioning program?

A. No. The veterinarian has no knowledge of the source of drugs or supplies, or how they were handled or stored. Therefore, efficacy could be a concern.

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