

**UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION**



**MINISTERIAL REGULATION  
ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THAI AGRICULTURAL STANDARD ON  
GOOD ANIMAL PRACTICES FOR ELEPHANT FACILITY  
AS A MANDATORY STANDARD  
B.E. 2565 (2022)**

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By virtue of Section 5 paragraph one and Section 15 paragraph two of the Agricultural Standards Act, B.E. 2551 (2008), the Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives hereby issues this Ministerial Regulation as follows:

Section 1 This Ministerial Regulation shall come into force after two years as from the date of its publication in the Royal Gazette.

Section 2 The Thai Agricultural Standard TAS 6413-2021 in accordance with the Notification of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives on the Establishment of Thai Agricultural Standard : Good Animal Practices for Elephant Facility under the Agricultural Standards Act, B.E. 2551 (2008) dated on 24<sup>th</sup> May B.E. 2564 (2021) shall be established as a mandatory standard.

Given on the 26<sup>th</sup> July B.E. 2565 (2022)

(Prapat Potasuthon)  
Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives  
Acting Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives

**Remark :** The rationale for the promulgation of this Ministerial Regulation is that : currently there are a number of elephant facilities operating in Thailand as a service business, e.g. providing activities of elephant tourism or elephant shows. A better understanding of most elephant facilities on good practices related to proper management and control as well as elephant care and raising is still required to prevent elephant health deterioration, abuses as well as environmental problems from elephant dung and garbage. Therefore, it is necessary to improve elephant management, control and care in elephant facility to meet standard on Good Animal Practices for Elephant Facility and the animal welfare principle. The Notification of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives on the Establishment of Thai Agricultural Standard : Good Animal Practices for Elephant Facility has been established under the Agricultural Standards Act, B.E. 2551 (2008), dated 24<sup>th</sup> May B.E. 2564 (2021), followed by public hearing from stakeholders in accordance with Section 18 of the Agricultural Standards Act, B.E. 2551 (2008). It is deemed necessary to establish the Thai Agricultural Standard on Good Animal Practices for Elephant Facility as a mandatory standard.

# THAI AGRICULTURAL STANDARD

## GOOD ANIMAL PRACTICES FOR

### ELEPHANT FACILITY

#### 1. SCOPE

- 1.1 This Thai Agricultural Standard provides requirements of good animal practices for elephant facilities/camps as defined in Section 2.1. It covers components of elephant camps and management of the facilities/camps, personnel, elephant health and welfare, environment, safety and record keeping. The aims are to promote elephants' good health taking into consideration animal welfare and environment while maintaining personnel's health, safety and welfare, and ensuring visitors' safety.
- 1.2 This Thai Agricultural Standard is applied only to elephant facilities/camps that raise or gather domesticated elephants of *Elephas maximus*.
- 1.3 This Thai Agricultural Standard does not cover:
- 1) Home own raising with no elephant-related business in tourism or shows.
  - 2) Raising for labour purposes, e.g. logging.

#### 2. DEFINITION

For the purpose of this standard:

- 2.1 Elephant facility/camp means a place used for raising or gathering elephants for business purposes, e.g. tourism, shows, or other profitable uses, whether or not admission or service fees are charged, either directly or indirectly.

### **3. REQUIREMENTS**

#### **3.1 Components of an elephant facility/camp**

##### **3.1.1 Location**

###### **Principle**

Site selection is essential for setting up an elephant facility/camp. Consideration shall be given to potential contamination of physical, chemical and biological hazards from the environment; availability of water resources; watershed forests and access to the facility/camp. The purpose is to ensure that there will be no adverse effect to elephant health and welfare, no shortage of water supply, ability to transport elephants, food, medical supply, tools and equipment and that there will not be any environmental impact on watershed forests.

3.1.1.1 Elephant facility/camp shall be located in an area where the environment causes no risk of contamination of physical, chemical and biological hazards which may be harmful to elephant health and welfare. Otherwise, the preventive measures shall be in place.

3.1.1.2 Elephant facility/camp shall be located in an area where sufficient clean water shall be available throughout the year.

3.1.1.3 Transportation route to the elephant facility/camp shall be available for transportation of elephants and delivery of food, medical supply and equipment.

3.1.1.4 The area of elephant facility/camp shall not cause any environmental impact to watershed forests.

##### **3.1.2 Size and layout of elephant facility/camp**

###### **Principle**

Size and layout of elephant facility/camp are essential for elephant health and welfare, environment as well as effective operation in a hygienic manner.

3.1.2.1 Area of an elephant facility/camp shall match with types of activities and number of elephants according to Annex A and spatial structure of such elephant facility/camp.

3.1.2.2 Layout of an elephant facility/camp shall be designed to facilitate hygienic practices.

3.1.2.3 Operation areas shall be laid out separately, e.g. areas for holding, resting, food storage, tools and equipment storage and area for garbage and elephant dung disposal.

### **3.1.3 Elephant holding and resting areas**

#### **Principle**

Holding and resting areas for elephants are essential in elephant raising. Size and surrounding area shall be taken into consideration to ensure that such areas are suitable for elephants' good health and welfare.

3.1.3.1 Holding area shall be in place for elephants before and after services.

1) In case of housing, sufficient space for raising elephants shall be provided, taking into consideration animal welfare principles. The structure shall be soundly built, covered with roof to protect elephants from sun and rain, with good ventilation, easy to clean and maintain. The floor shall not be waterlogged.

2) In case of no-housing, shade and adequate water supply shall be taken into consideration when selecting an elephant holding area.

3.1.3.2 Resting area shall be in place for elephants during off-service periods or nighttime, for example:

1) Elephants chained in a natural or a plantation forest, or in an open area using strong anchoring point, under the trees, or in a building. In all cases, a space provided for each elephant shall not be less than 16 m<sup>2</sup>. The length of ropes or chains shall not be less than 1.5 m.

2) Elephants roaming freely in an enclosure by taking into consideration shade, sufficient water supply as well as elephants' safety.

### **3.2 Management of elephant facility/camp**

#### **3.2.1 Manual for elephant facility/camp management**

##### **Principle**

Manual for management providing details of main operating procedures will enable the personnel to properly perform their tasks and enhance the effective management of facility/camp.

3.2.1.1 Manual for elephant facility/camp management shall be made available to provide details of main operations, for example:

1) Care and managements for pregnant elephant, elephant after parturition, calf, teenager, adult elephant, geriatric elephant and disabled elephant.

2) Calf separation and training

3) Breeding management

4) Management and control of musth and aggressive behaviours

5) Food and water management

- 6) Cleaning of elephant holding area, resting area and equipment
- 7) Elephant health management, such as vaccination, medication, disease diagnosis and treatment and management of sick and dead elephants
- 8) Animal welfare management
- 9) Environmental management
- 10) Management of elephant services and shows.

### **3.2.2 Food and water management**

#### **Principle**

Management of food so as to provide good quality and safe food with sufficient amount of food as well as water to meet elephant needs will promote elephant health and welfare.

- 3.2.2.1 Elephants shall be fed with good quality and safe food that suit to elephant requirements. Food shall comply with the Animal Feed Quality Control Act, B.E. 2558 (2015).
- 3.2.2.2 A separated area for food storage shall be provided. Food shall be properly stored to prevent deterioration and contamination.
- 3.2.2.3 Each elephant shall be able to get access to sufficient food and water suiting their needs. Varieties of food shall also be provided, e.g. forage, fruits and supplements.

### **3.2.3 Housing, tools and equipment management**

#### **Principle**

Elephant houses, tools and equipment are managed to keep clean to reduce the accumulation of pathogens. In addition, safe and well-maintained elephant houses and tools and equipment will enhance efficient operations and safety of both elephants and personnel.

- 3.2.3.1 Elephant houses, surrounding areas and tools and equipment shall be regularly cleaned to reduce accumulation of elephant dung and garbage which are sources of pathogens.
- 3.2.3.2 Elephant houses and tools and equipment shall be maintained in a good condition and to be safe for elephants and personnel.

### **3.2.4 Elephant's origin management**

#### **Principle**

Known origin of elephants is essential to prevent the fraudulent claims as domesticated elephants.

3.2.4.1 Each domesticated elephant shall have a legal identification such as registration certificate (dtua pim ruuphaphan), the stable offspring certificate (bai luuk khawk) issued by the competent authority stipulated in the Draught Animals Act B.E. 2482 (1939).

### **3.3 Personnel**

#### **Principle**

Personnel having knowledge and capability to undertake their assignment and in good health will be able to effectively carry out their works and provide proper health care and welfare for elephants.

3.3.1 The duty and responsibility of personnel shall be clearly defined taking into consideration number of elephants and types of facilities.

3.3.2 Elephant health care shall be under supervision of a veterinarian.

3.3.3 Mahouts shall have knowledge, receive trainings or practices in elephant raising and restraint, understand elephants' behaviours, and take responsibility of food and water management as well as elephant housing to ensure that elephant raising and management will be done properly.

3.3.4 Other personnel in charge of services, e.g. receptionist, customer service staff and security guard, shall have general knowledge on elephants and skills in providing services and assistance to visitors.

3.3.5 All personnel in the elephant facility/camp shall have good hygiene and annual health check-up, especially zoonotic diseases.

3.3.6 An elephant bullhook to ensure mahout's safety and insurance coverage shall be provided.

### **3.4 Elephant health**

#### **3.4.1 Disease prevention and control**

##### **Principle**

Prevention and control of diseases that are vital for elephant health, personnel and visitors shall comply with the Animal Epidemics Act, B.E. 2558 (2015) to ensure effectiveness of disease prevention and control in elephant facility/camp.

3.4.1.1 Inspection of elephant being and health shall be carried out daily. Abnormalities shall be reported to the responsible person or a veterinarian shall be consulted to subsequently take immediate corrective action.

- 3.4.1.2 Elephant annual health check shall be carried out.
- 3.4.1.3 Disease prevention and control programmes shall be in place, e.g. vaccination, proper control of endoparasites and ectoparasites, under supervision of the veterinarian or a person assigned by the veterinarian.
- 3.4.1.4 Disease surveillance and preventive measures of tuberculosis shall be made available.
- 3.4.1.5 Pest control measures shall be in place.
- 3.4.1.6 New elephants introduced to the facility/camp shall be quarantined. Sick elephants shall be separated from the healthy ones.
- 3.4.1.7 In the occurrences or suspicion of a disease outbreak, actions shall be taken in accordance with the Animal Epidemics Act B.E. 2558 (2015) and recommendations of the Department of Livestock Development.
- 3.4.1.8 Each elephant shall have an individual booklet to indicate its life history, identification, microchip, musth records, medical treatments and vaccinations as well as breeding and calving records.

### **3.4.2 Treatment of diseases**

#### **Principle**

Treatment of diseases shall be under supervision of a certified veterinarian for accuracy of disease diagnosis, proper treatments and prevention of diseases without any negative impact on elephants' health and welfare.

- 3.4.2.1 Treatment of diseases shall be under supervision of a certified veterinarian who performs veterinary profession under the Veterinary Profession Act B.E. 2545 (2002).

### **3.5 Animal welfare**

#### **Principle**

Management of elephant raising and use of elephants for services shall comply with animal welfare principles that enable them to express their innate behaviours, enhance their well-being without any suffering from unpleasant states.

- 3.5.1 Elephant care and handling shall meet the principles of five freedoms for animal welfare, as follows:
  - 1) Freedom from hunger and thirst (Section 3.1.1.2 and Section 3.2.2.3)
  - 2) Freedom from discomfort (Section 3.1.1.1, Section 3.1.3.1, Section 3.1.3.2, Section 3.2.3.1 and Section 3.2.3.2)



3) Freedom from pain, injury or disease (Section 3.4.1.1, Section 3.4.1.2, Section 3.4.1.3, Section 3.4.1.4, Section 3.4.1.5 and Section 3.4.1.6)

4) Freedom from fear and distress (Section 3.3.3)

5) Freedom to express normal behaviour (Section 3.1.2.1, Section 3.1.3.1, Section 3.1.3.2 and Section 3.7.2)

3.5.2 Elephant care and handling shall comply with the Cruelty Prevention and Welfare of Animals Act, B.E. 2557 (2014).

### **3.6 Environment**

#### **Principle**

Disposal of dead elephants, garbage, waste and effluent from elephant facility/camp can cause environmental impact. Therefore, proper waste management shall be practiced.

3.6.1 Dead elephants, garbage, waste and effluent shall be disposed of by appropriate methods as stipulated by the relevant laws.

3.6.2 Measures for dung management shall be in place to mitigate environmental impact, e.g. allocating a space for dung collection or removal of elephant dung from public water sources.

### **3.7 Safety management**

#### **Principle**

Measures to enhance visitors' safety shall be in place to promote a good image and reputation of elephant tourism.

3.7.1 Personnel, signs and documents shall be made available to provide instructions on safe approach to elephants, feeding, riding and close interactions with elephants as well as information on elephant behaviours.

3.7.2 Mahouts shall inspect elephant behaviours prior to providing each service to visitors.

3.7.3 Safety management procedures shall be in place, e.g. regularly checking howdah before each riding to ensure visitors' safety or making available appropriate elephant controlling tools.

3.7.4 Fences or barriers shall be in place between visitors and elephants during shows or feeding.

3.7.5 Contingency plan shall be made available and emergency preparedness shall be practised, e.g. providing aids for victims of accidents arising from elephants, controlling of musth or enraged elephants.

3.7.6 Loading and unloading points for elephant riding shall be firmly constructed, durable and secured.

### **3.8 Record keeping**

#### **Principle**

Data record and keeping are essential for investigating causes of problems or faulty management. The data shall also be used to trace the correctness of each operating procedure.

3.8.1 Important information to be recorded shall be on the followings:

- 1) personnel, trainings and practice, and annual health check-up
- 2) sources of food and water
- 3) the application of chemicals, disinfectants or hazardous substances for livestock
- 4) use of veterinary drugs and food supplements
- 5) elephant movement documents

3.8.2 These records shall be kept for a period of at least three years.

## **Annex A**

(for information)

### **Types of elephant facilities/camps**

**A.1 Types of elephant facilities/camps can be categorized based on activities, as follows:**

- 1) Traditional elephant facility/camp means a facility/camp that provides services on howdah elephant riding, and/or elephant shows.
- 2) Ecotourism elephant facility/camp means a facility/camp that provides services on howdah or bareback elephant riding, or walking with elephants, or giving knowledge on elephants and elephant conservation.
- 3) Disabled and geriatric elephant facility/camp means a facility/camp that is dedicated to rehabilitate and care of disabled or geriatric elephants.
- 4) Integrated elephant facility/camp means a facility/camp that provides combined services of traditional and ecotourism types of elephant facility/camp whose adjustable activities depending on circumstances.

**A.2 Sizes of elephant facilities/camps can be classified by number of elephants in each facility/camp, as follows:**

- 1) Small-sized elephant facility/camp means a facility/camp that raises not more than 10 elephants.
- 2) Medium-sized elephant facility/camp means a facility/camp that raises 11 to 30 elephants.
- 3) Large-sized elephant facility/camp means a facility/camp that raises not less than 31 elephants.