

***McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare
Guidelines and Audit Criteria
Chickens at Slaughter***

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Animal Health & Welfare Guidelines and Audit Criteria Chickens at Slaughter

Category 1 Non-Compliance

Any Category 1 non-compliance will result in audit failure and discontinuation of raw material supply from the effected facility. Prior to facility re-approval and start of resupply, the facility is required to be re-audited by a recognized authority on AH&W approved by a member of McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare core team. This recognized authority will review the corrective action plan and verify that the plan is adequate to address the failure identified. The following provides clarification for recognized authorities on AH&W for McDonald's Corporation:

1. Corporate (Supplier) AH&W Officer: A qualified individual who reports through an organizational and/or functional structure distinct from that of Operations personnel located within a specific manufacturing facility.
2. Independent AH&W Auditor: A qualified external (3rd party) consultant who does not report through the supplier company structure.
3. McDonald's Quality Systems Auditor: A qualified individual with responsibility for animal health and welfare activities associated with the particular product category.

The following criteria apply to any facilities receiving Category 1 non-compliance:

1. Any facility failing a McDonald's animal health and welfare audit shall immediately cease to supply raw materials and/or finished product.
2. Any facility failing a McDonald's animal health and welfare audit shall provide a written corrective action plan for review within 10 days of the failed audit.
3. Any facility failing a McDonald's animal health and welfare must undergo a re-audit by a recognized authority on AH&W approved by a member of McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare core team, prior to that facility being re-approved and resupplying McDonald's

Category 1 audit failures within the slaughter facility are:

1. Live bird entering the scald tank / Uncut red bird exiting the scald tank for electrical water bath stunning
2. Any acts of intentional abuse
3. Live birds in crates/baskets/modules/etc., at the washer or when reloaded back onto the trailer in those situations where washing is not performed/required
4. Live birds in the Dead on Arrival (DOA) bin

General Principals Pertaining to McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare Program

1. Animal welfare is how an animal copes with the conditions in which it lives. An animal is in a good state of welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behavior, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress. Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and appropriate veterinary treatment, shelter, management and nutrition, humane handling and humane euthanasia or humane slaughter. Animal welfare refers to the state of the animal; the treatment that an animal receives is covered by other terms such as animal care, animal husbandry, and humane treatment. (OIE, September 2012)
2. For all approved facilities providing products to the McDonald's system, there shall be evidence of annual 3rd party animal health and welfare audits available for review upon request.

1.0 Personnel Training and Supervision

AH&W – Chicken Slaughter

Master Document

May 15, 2014

Standards

- All employees and contract labor (for example catching crews) handling live birds must receive task specific training. Comprehension of their training must be assessed, either written or verbally as it relates to bird health and welfare.
 - Annual refresher training and testing shall be provided for all employees and contract labor handling live birds.
 - Training and assessment shall be conducted through formal workshops or carried out 'on the job' by the animal health and welfare supervisor or qualified trainers.
 - Training materials, standard operating procedures, best practices and regulatory requirements (and appropriate updates), shall be reviewed annually for appropriateness and updated as required.
- There shall be a documented (written and documented) animal health and welfare training program specific to those jobs where employees and contract labor handle live birds.
- Each facility (slaughter plant, abattoir) shall have a designated "animal health & welfare supervisor". This individual(s) must receive training recognized by McDonald's, or via a certificate issued by a local veterinary authority, covering all aspects of bird welfare, from arrival of the live birds at the facility to stunning and slaughter due to blood loss.

Audit Criteria

1. *Verify that employees handling live birds at the processing facility are trained and their level of understanding of their specific job responsibilities have been assessed as it relates to bird health and welfare by randomly checking training records for employees or staff:*
 - a. *Training and assessment are documented and refresher training and assessment are conducted yearly as a minimum.*
 - b. *Dates on training records verify annual training is provided*
 - c. *Documented training records are maintained for all employees and contract labor handling live birds. NOTE: As catch crews may not be available for the auditor to review, the facility may maintain training records for this contract labor. If the facility chooses not to maintain these training records, the facility shall present the auditor evidence of an SOP for reviewing contractor training records and documentation for compliance against this requirement as part of the facilities audit of their contractors.*
2. *Verify that the Animal health and welfare supervisor has received training recognized by McDonald's, or that the individual(s) hold a valid certificate issued by a local veterinary authority.*
3. *Review records of Key Welfare Indicators (DOA, wing and leg damage, bruising). Corrective action shall be assigned and documented when performance does not meet standard required. Corrective Action Plans shall be kept on file and available for review. Key Welfare Indicators are defined as:*
 - a. *Bruising <2%*
 - b. *Broken and dislocated Wings <2%*
 - c. *Broken and dislocated Legs <1%*
 - d. *DOA <0.5%*
4. *Is there evidence of internal improvement program implementation that demonstrates compliance with McDonald's AH&W program and ongoing performance improvement in key welfare indicators?*

Training Documentation and Methods

- Evidence of written SOP's for training and assessment must be available for review upon request.

- Employees and contract labor handling live birds should receive written and/or verbal assessment verifying the effectiveness of in-house training to ensure they understand the content and meaning of the training provided.
- All training/assessment provided to staff/employees handling live birds must be documented and recorded, with the date and signature of the trainer and trainee.
- Individuals that conduct training must be able to provide proof that they received qualified training and receive retraining/recertification at least annually.
- New or inexperienced staff/employees must be trained and assessed prior to placement on the job. New or inexperienced staff/employees should be partnered with competent, trained members of the staff while gaining 'on the job' training and experience.

In-House Training Topics – May include but are not limited to the following

- Legal/ethical responsibility for bird health and welfare. (Not a legal requirement in all areas of the world).
- Importance of bird health and welfare in relationship to food safety and product quality
- Humane handling and treatment.
- How to recognise signs of heat and cold stress.
- How to recognise birds which are suffering from injury pain and/or distress.
- How and why to report bird welfare concerns to management.
- How to humanely euthanize (see casualty euthanize section for approved methods) injured birds or moribund birds which are too small to be effectively stunned in an electrical water bath – this is a specialist task and therefore training should include both classroom and practical training. Not all staff would be expected to be trained in this area, only those responsible for euthanasia of birds. However, all employees working in the hanging area must be trained to recognize these birds, remove them from the line and promptly bring to the attention of the supervisor or individual(s) responsible for euthanasia.
- Specific job training to allow employees to be able to competently carry out their duties and roles within the facility. Specific training must cover those tasks critical to satisfactorily performing a job associated with:
 - Lairage procedures
 - Unloading and handling live birds
 - Shackling procedures
 - Casualty euthanasia methods and procedure
 - Stunning methods and procedures
 - Cutting & Bleeding – manual or mechanical depending on the requirements of the facility
 - Ritual slaughter criteria (where applicable)

Category 1 non-compliance within the processing facility are:

1. Live bird entering the scald tank / Uncut red bird exiting the scald tank for water bath stunning
2. Any acts of intentional abuse
3. Live birds in crates/baskets/modules/etc., at the washer or when reloaded back onto the trailer in those situations where washing is not performed/required
4. Live birds in the Dead on Arrival (DOA) bin

Animal Health & Welfare Supervisor

The designated person(s), assigned the responsibility of animal health and welfare supervisor, must receive training recognized by McDonald's Corporation, or via a certificate issued by local veterinary authority, in all training topics listed in the previous section.

In addition, the animal health & welfare supervisor should be knowledgeable of:

- Regulation relating to bird health & welfare (including the requirements of the destination country in the case of exportation).
- Bird behaviour – typical and abnormal
- The bird's environmental comfort/welfare – temperature, humidity, noise and light.
- Live bird handling – focused on good practices, and reasons why birds become distressed and how to correct the issue.
- The stunning or killing system operated by the factory in which the animal health and welfare supervisor is assigned – correct settings and working parameters, and the ability to recognize if birds have been correctly stunned/killed and appropriate corrective action when the system is out of compliance.
- Carcass and meat quality – causes of problems such as bruises/damage and how these conditions relate to the live bird animal welfare.

Languages

- When possible, training should be conducted in the trainee's native language to ensure full understanding.
- Procedures, manuals and signage should be written in languages sufficient to ensure staff/employee comprehension and performance/compliance with such.

Continuous Improvement

- Staff training materials and standard operating procedures (and appropriate updates) shall be reviewed annually.
- Effectiveness of training – monitor and measure outcomes (e.g. wing, leg & breast bruises, percentage of birds dead on arrival) and ensure training programs are designed to improve these measures.
- The slaughter facility must monitor (for internal audit) the required key welfare indicators (KWI's) attached as guidance. A minimum of 300 birds must be checked each shift during slaughtering and the KWI scores recorded. Note: In some AOW's where flock size is small, or where slaughter capacity is limited, the sample size measuring key welfare indicators may be less than 300. In these situations, it will be at the discretion of the local McDonald's team to determine a statistically significant sample size.

NOTE: N=300 for a 1% defect rate provides a 95% confidence level.

C.J. Clopper and E.S. Pearson. 1934, The use of confidence or fiducial limits illustrated in the case of the binomial. *Biometrika* 26 (4) p. 404-413

Welfare Indicators Associated with Catch, Transport and Processing

Key Welfare Indicator	Criteria	Target Level	Location
Dead On Arrival (DOA)	Birds that have died after catching and through unloading/shackling.	< 0.5%	Monitor at bird shackling area.
Wing Damage	Broken wings or dislocated joints prior to slaughter. Guidance: In a 300 bird sample, count the number of birds with broken wing(s) and then divide by the total number of birds and multiply by 100 to determine the percent broken wings. NOTE: A 300 bird sample size has been determined to not be statistically different from 500 bird sample size and easier to adhere to, especially in systems that process fewer birds per minute.	< 2% birds with broken or dislocated wings	Monitor the front of the bird after shackling and before de-feathering, or if appropriate also after de-feathering and before evisceration.
Leg Damage**	Broken legs or dislocated joints prior to slaughter.	< 1% birds with broken or dislocated legs	Monitor after de-feathering and before evisceration.
Bruising	Bruises > 30mm, due to rough handling prior to slaughter.	< 2%	After de-feathering & prior to evisceration, monitor the front of the bird's breast & legs.
Live Birds	For reversible water bath stunning. Live birds entering the scald tank	0%	Monitor at entrance to scald tank
Uncut Red Birds	For reversible water bath stunning. Carcass color red at exit of scalding and the throat has not been cut	0%	Monitor at the end of the scalding

** Broken leg is defined as a significant haemorrhage indicating breakage prior to slaughter and a welfare concern due to associated pain.

All Key Welfare Indicators not meeting target levels must be recorded (documented) and reported to management (facility and farm) for corrective action. Evidence of communication and corrective action must be available for review upon request.

2.0 Holding and Unloading Processes for Live Birds at the Slaughter Facility

Standards

The unloading process used for live birds varies significantly depending on the type of transport crate/module and the stunning or killing system used at the facility.

Special Note: In order to minimize the likelihood of the spread of infectious diseases during transport, vehicles and containers must be designed, constructed and maintained to permit thorough cleaning and disinfection.

General welfare requirements for all systems – Holding

- The facility should have journey records on file including feed withdrawal times, departure time from the farm and arrival time at the lairage. Record retention policy needs to meet local regulation/legislation.
- The slaughter facility shall have a written plan for disaster response and recovery, including but not limited to structural damage and utility outages. Emergency back-up procedures or alternate facilities must be available in the event of a ventilation system failure. Periodic testing of the emergency generator is required and shall be documented.
- All slaughter facilities must have a dedicated lairage area designed and managed to minimize environmental stress. The lairage must have sufficient capacity to hold all birds arriving for slaughter and be able to provide protection from temperature extremes (both hot and cold) – direct exposure to the sun, rain and snow.
- The lairage must be covered to provide shade and incorporate a ventilation system to provide air movement to manage the expected range of weather conditions. In warmer climates the provision of additional cooling (fans and misters) may be required.
- Temperature and humidity in the lairage should follow recommendations provided in the Thermal Comfort Zone graph provided at the end of this section (Mitchell, M.A. and Kettlewell, P.J. 2004. Transport and handling. In: Weeks, C.A. and Butterworth, A. (eds.) *Measuring and auditing broiler welfare*. Wallingford. UK: CABI Publishing. Pp. 145-160). Temperature and humidity levels shall be monitored and documented and prompt corrective actions taken to minimize birds stress. The probe should be close to the birds in the cages/crates.
- Misting, or wetting birds (either in the broiler house, in loaded crates/vehicles or at the slaughterhouse) should only be considered in conditions where the practice does not place the birds at increased risk of mortality through heat stress - see the thermal comfort zone graph.
- To reduce stress on birds, the time between catch and slaughter shall be minimized. Under routine operating conditions, time at the slaughter facility (excluding transport time), shall not exceed six hours. Under routine conditions, time between catching and stunning must be less than 12 hours, with times exceeding 12 hours considered a major non-conformance requiring immediate investigation and corrective action. It is recommended that birds be provided at least 30 minutes in the lairage prior to slaughter to allow the birds to settle. **NOTE:** Time interval is defined from 1st bird caught to last bird stunned by trailer with the understanding that standard operating procedures call for trailers to depart the farm for slaughter as soon as they are full, and not wait until the entire house or farm has been caught and loaded.
- Stocking densities of inbound crates/modules or cages shall be such to allow enough room in the crates for all birds to sit at the same time.

General requirements for all systems – Unloading Crates/Cages/Modules

- Cages/modules shall be lifted and moved from trailers in a manner that does not result in injury to the birds. Cages/modules shall be designed to minimize bird injury and be operated in a manner that minimizes disturbance and stress. Movement of birds must be done in a manner to avoid rough handling. Best practices for unloading systems would include but not be limited to:
 - Moved smoothly – never jolted, shaken or abruptly stopped or shunted, thrust forward
 - Kept level – never tipped or tilted excessively
 - Raised and lowered slowly – never dropped
- Cages/modules shall be maintained in a good state of repair, following a written procedure for cage repair. Protrusions or rough edges that could result in injury to birds shall be repaired prior to use. See chart below.
- All systems must be designed and maintained to minimize birds from escaping prior to unloading and shackling. Frequent checks should be made to recover any birds that have escaped from cages/modules to prevent bird injury. Recovered birds should be promptly returned to the flock being processed at the time to minimize stress.
- Birds remaining in modules/cages after the unloading process (unloading the cages or modules, automatically, or manually for non CAS systems) shall be removed in a way that does not cause injury including not handling birds by the wings.
- For CAS systems, bird welfare must be monitored from trailer off-loading to induction into the gas chamber.

Additional requirements for multi-tier modular systems

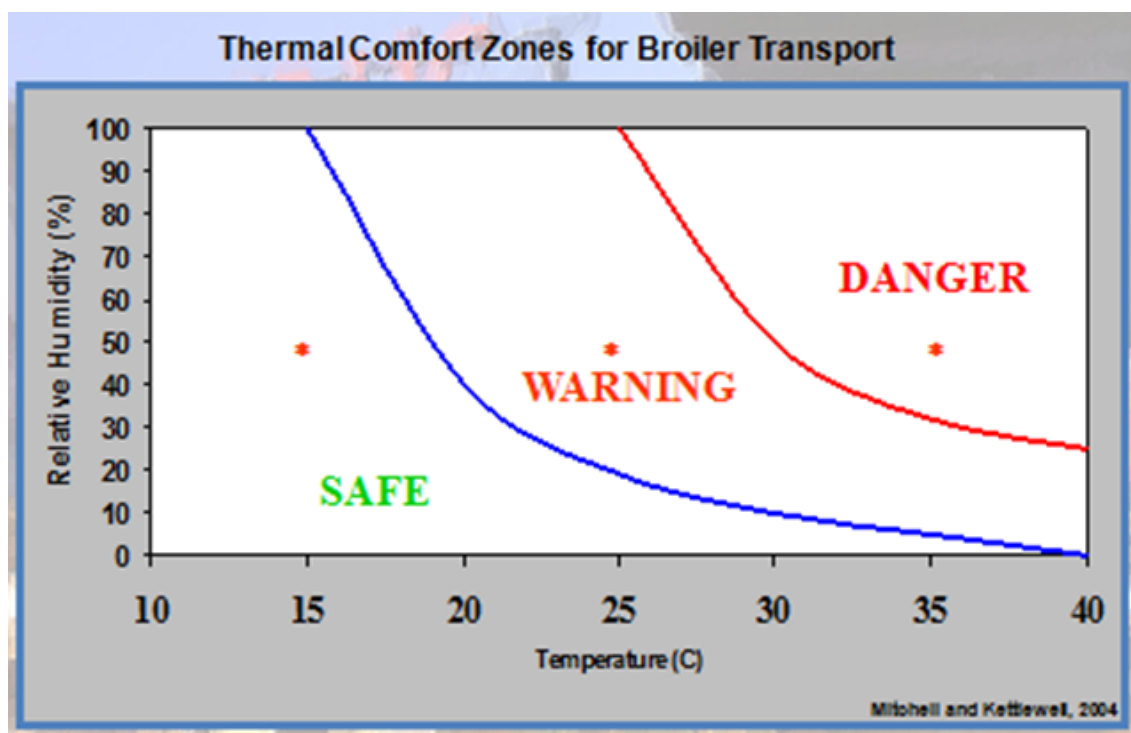
- Bird removal is commonly carried out via an automated system which tips the module so the birds slide onto an unloading belt.
- There must be a system to control the hydraulic tilting mechanism to regulate the rate at which birds exit the system to prevent unloading birds on top of one another.
- Unloading operator should operate equipment so that transfer belts are allowed to clear so that birds are not unloaded on top of birds previously unloaded.
- Conveyer belts should be designed and maintained so that birds can stand/sit without slipping and falling. If birds are transferred between conveyer belts there must only be a small differential in the belts speed and height.
- At no point should the birds' head, wings or feet become trapped.

Additional requirement for single cage or crate systems

- When bird removal is carried out manually, where the operator reaches into the cage or crate and physically removes the bird onto a transfer belt, or directly onto the shackle system, at no point should the birds' head, wings or feet become trapped in the cage or crate.

The range of equipment and stunning systems is summarized in the following table:

Crate / Coop	Bird Removal	Sample Size	Criteria
Single crates with hinged or sliding lids	Manual (birds alive)	Randomly select a truck load as your sample size. Within this sample, 95% of the crates/cages or modules shall be in acceptable condition. Split sample between crates w/birds and clean crates if applicable	Sliding lid Broken wire or plastic, protrusions into the crate/cage or module, spaces where heads, wings or legs get injured
Modular Systems with drawers e.g. Anglia Auto-flow	Manual (birds alive)		
	Manual (birds stunned or dead)		
Multi-tier modular systems e.g. Stork	Automated tipping (birds alive)		
Meyn/Praxair	Automated tipping (birds stunned or dead)		
The crate/module stocking density must be regulated and controlled so that there is enough room in the crates for all birds to be able to sit at the same time			



Audit Criteria

1. Review existing documentation (randomly select 3 records representing 3 different days) that shows feed withdrawal times, transport time and holding time. Times shall be within the stated standard and if it's not, corrective action plans shall be developed to address the cause of the deviation. All corrective action plans shall be kept on file and available for review.
2. Confirm the site has a written program for monitoring and managing temperature and humidity while birds are being held. Documentation of temperature and humidity control is current and demonstrates that the site is operating according to their stated standards (fans, misters/water nozzles are running above a certain temperature). At the time of observation, and if applicable, all fans and misters are working. Note: The number/location/size of fans/misters is site/location specific and environmentally (heat and humidity) dependent. Every reasonable effort must be taken to manage heat related stress.
3. Visually observe stocking density in the crates/cages/modules to confirm that there is enough space for all birds to be able to sit at the same time during transport without being on top of one another. As a guideline:
 - <1.6kg (<3.5 pounds) - 180 to 200 cm² / kg (12.7-14.1 square inches per pound)
 - >1.6 to 3kg (>3.5 to 6.6 pounds) - 160 cm² / kg (11.3 square inches per pound)
 - >3 to 5kg (>6.6 to 11 pounds) - 115 cm² / kg (8.1 square inches per pound)
 - Temperature above 25C require increased space//decreased density
4. Verify there is a written program for handling birds when waiting to be unloaded:
 - a. In warm weather, birds in the lairage (holding area) shall be held under fans designed to move enough air to reduce as much body heat as practical. Mistng, or wetting birds (either in the broiler house, in loaded crates/vehicles or at the slaughterhouse) should only be considered in conditions where the practice does not place the birds at increased risk of mortality through heat stress - see the thermal comfort zone graph.
 - b. In cold weather, birds in the lairage (holding area) shall be provided protection from cold, wind and moisture. NOTE: Weather extremes put bird health and welfare at risk. Auditors need to confirm that sites are taking proactive measures to manage these situations to the best of their ability.

- c. Check that birds show no adverse behaviors such as excessive panting or huddling. NOTE: Birds will pant (open mouth breath (like a dog) even when comfortable during warm weather. Look for signs of excessive and/or aggressive panting as an indicator of heat stress.
5. Emergency back-up electrical power generator is preferable. Records show that these power generators are routinely (weekly/monthly) tested and function properly in the event of a power loss. If no electrical power back up is available, the facility must provide documentation and SOP's to demonstrate how they manage a power outage and maintain bird's health and welfare.
 6. Review receiving records for the lairage (holding area) to ensure that time in the lairage (holding area) (this excludes transportation time) is ≤ 6 hours
 7. Verify with lairage (holding area) manager that under routine conditions, the time from commencement of catching to stunning (inclusive of transport time) must be less than 12 hours for each truck/trailer (this assumes that as trucks/trailers are loaded, they leave for the slaughter facility and don't wait for the entire house or farm to be loaded prior to departing), with times exceeding 12 hours considered a major non-conformance requiring immediate investigation and corrective action. Whenever possible, birds are provided at least 30 minutes in the lairage (holding area) prior to slaughter to allow the birds to settle improving meat quality and bleed out as stress hormones subside.
 8. Observe the transfer of live birds from the point of receiving to hanging for water bath stunning, or for induction into the CAS/LAPS system, looking for drop distances of greater than 12 inches (30.4cm) or rough handling that results in measureable injury.
 9. In the case of CAS/LAPS systems, follow crates to the point of entry into the system, observing the systems performance rough handling, for birds that have become trapped (heads, wings or legs) or have escaped.
 10. Birds shall be unloaded in a manner which prevents them from being piled on top of one another. The belt that the birds are unloaded onto is allowed to clear before the next cage is unloaded. Birds that have fallen over should be able to stand back up by themselves.
 11. Observe that any escaped birds within the unloading area are promptly and properly picked up and placed back onto the production line.
 12. Review the written cage repair policy, procedures and documentation kept on cage repair. Randomly select a truck load as your sample size. Within a truckload, $\geq 95\%$ of the crates/cages or modules shall be without broken doors, missing doors or broken pieces that could cause injury to birds. Split sample between crates w/birds and clean crates if possible/applicable.

Live birds in crates/baskets/modules at the washer or reloaded back onto the trailer where washing is not performed or required is a **category 1 non-compliance** resulting in discontinuation of raw material supply. Prior to facility re-approval and start of resupply, the facility is required to be re-audited by a recognized authority on AH&W approved by a member of McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare core team. This recognized authority will review the corrective action plan and verify that the plan is adequate to address the failure identified. (See section Category 1 non-compliance for further explanation)

3.0 Shackling Procedures

Standards

1. Birds can be presented to the shackler in a variety of ways including but not limited to:
 - Crates with hinged / sliding lids (access to the birds can be restricted by the crates limited opening).
 - Baskets that have been removed from modules (the top of the basket allows unrestricted access to the birds).
 - From a conveyor belt
2. No rough handling – that would result in injury to the bird – is permitted. In all situations the birds must be lifted and inverted by both legs, with the operator holding one leg in each hand. Note: Due to cage/box/crate design, to remove birds from the cage/box/crate, it may be necessary to remove the bird by one leg. This handling exception is only permitted to remove the bird from its transport container, but not to shackle the bird by one leg. Under no circumstances can removal by one leg or 2, result in injury to the bird.

3. Where crates with hinged or sliding lids are used, care must be taken to ensure that the bird's wings do not get caught or entrapped in the edges of the crate's lid during removal, to avoid injuring the bird.
4. Where carousels are used in the case of electrical stunning, the carousel must be allowed to empty after each round.
5. When live birds are being shackled, the conveyor belt and shackling line must be adjusted so that the bird's heads do not come in contact with the conveyor belt on which transport containers sit, or with the containers themselves.
6. For electric water bath stunning systems the shackling area and shackling line leading up to the stunning area shall be operated under subdued lighting. Excessive external noise levels (for example a blaring radio) shall be minimized. Equipment must be designed, operated and maintained to prevent contact of the live bird with equipment that could result in injury to the birds (live birds bumping into equipment/stationary surfaces). Birds must be settled and calm prior to stunning.
7. There must be a documented procedure in place in the event of line stoppage to assure the welfare of live birds and those that could regain sensibility. For electrical water bath stunning systems, this procedure shall include the removal of the live birds from shackles prior to the water bath stunner, and killing these birds via neck dislocation. With an abundance of consideration for human safety, birds in the water bath that were rendered insensible prior to the line stoppage should be left in the water bath. Birds that have exited the water bath insensible and prior to the neck cutter shall be removed from the shackles and killed via neck dislocation prior to them regaining sensibility.
8. The shackle operator must check the shackle to ensure its clear of any obstructions (cut feet) prior to shackling a bird. The birds must be placed smoothly into the shackles without using excessive downward force or pressure. The shackle width must be appropriate for the thickness of bird's legs to ensure a secure fit with the shackle, but they must not cause injury (for example shank breakage, but could be others) as the birds are placed in the shackle.
9. No live birds should be shackled by one leg. Observe 300 birds to ensure all birds are shackled by two legs.
10. For electric water bath stunning systems and to facilitate calming the bird and in an effort to reduce excessive wing flapping that may result in damaged wings or other injury, a breast comforter must be in place from the point at which the bird is shackled to the entrance of the water stun bath.
11. The time from shackling to stunning shall meet local regulation and be as short as possible. However, shackled birds must be shackled and on the line for a sufficient amount of time to permit settling of the birds prior to stunning. A best practice is a minimum of 12 seconds from shackle to stun to allow for settling.
12. Any birds that have died in transit (DOA) must not be shackled and shall be placed in the DOA container with the number of DOA recorded. In controlled atmosphere systems DOA's will be identified as having rigor mortis and shall be placed in the condemnation bin during the post mortem inspection with appropriate numbers recorded. **NOTE: Live birds are not permitted in the DOA container or garbage bins.**
13. All baskets, cages or crates must be inspected (manual or automatic) after the shackling step to ensure that no live birds remain inside before crates are sent to the next step in the process.

Audit Criteria

1. *As birds are removed from the baskets, cages or crates, they shall be removed in a manner that minimizes injury.*
2. *Confirm no rough handling at the time of shackling. In all situations, the birds must be lifted and inverted by both legs, with the operator holding one leg in each hand. Note: Due to cage/box/crate design, to remove birds from the cage/box/crate, it may be necessary to remove the bird by one leg. This handling exception is only permitted to remove the bird from its transport container but not to shackle the bird by one leg. Under no circumstances can removal by one leg or 2, result in injury to the bird.*
3. *When live birds are being shackled, the conveyor belt and shackling line must be adjusted so that the bird's heads do not come in contact with the conveyor belt on which transport containers sit, or with the containers themselves.*
4. *The time from shackling to stunning shall meet local regulation and be as short as possible. However, shackled birds must be shackled and on the line for a sufficient amount of time to permit settling of the birds prior to stunning. A best practice is a minimum of 12 seconds from shackle to stun to allow for settling.*

5. *Ensure that for electric water bath stunning systems the shackling area and shackling line leading up to the stunning area is operated under subdued lighting. Excessive external noise levels are minimized.*
6. *Is there evidence where equipment has been designed, installed or poorly maintained resulting in injury prior to slaughter?*
7. *Verify that a documented procedure is in place in the event of line stoppage to assure the welfare of live birds and those that could regain sensibility. For electrical water bath stunning systems, this procedure shall include the removal of the live birds from shackles prior to the water bath stunner, and killing these birds via neck dislocation. With an abundance of consideration for human safety, birds in the water bath that were rendered insensible prior to the line stoppage should be left in the water bath. Birds that have exited the water bath insensible and prior to the neck cutter shall be removed from the shackles and killed via neck dislocation prior to them regaining sensibility.*
8. *Live birds are placed on the shackle that is clear of any obstructions (cut feet) prior to shackling a bird. The birds are placed smoothly into the shackles without using excessive downward force or pressure. The shackle width **is** appropriate for the thickness of bird's legs to ensure a secure fit with the shackle, and do not cause injury (for example shank breakage, but could be others) as the birds are placed in the shackle.*
9. *Observe 300 birds from each shackle line if applicable, to ensure all birds are shackled by two legs.*
10. *Breast rubs must be present between shackle and stun for systems using water bath stunning.*
11. *Verify that there are no live birds in the DOA container or garbage bins. Facilities shall track DOA's by flock and this information is fed back to catch crews to improve performance. In controlled atmosphere systems DOA's will be identified as having rigor mortis and shall be placed in the condemnation bin during the post mortem inspection with appropriate numbers recorded. **NOTE:** Live birds are not permitted in the DOA container or garbage bins.*

A live bird in the DOA bin is a **category 1 non-compliance** resulting in discontinuation of raw material supply. Prior to facility re-approval and start of resupply, the facility is required to be re-audited by a recognized authority on AH&W approved by a member of McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare core team. This recognized authority will review the corrective action plan and verify that the plan is adequate to address the failure identified. (See section Category 1 non-compliance for further explanation)

4.0 Casualty Euthanasia

Scope

The scope of this standard applies to broilers in the supply chain that are injured, small in size to the point where these birds can't be effectively stunned (due to inconsistency in size), moribund or deemed unfit for human consumption identified during the unloading process and prior to shackling. **Note:** *Not applicable for CAS or LAPS systems.*

Standards

- Euthanasia of sick or injured birds (culling) during the production cycle must be conducted in a humane manner and performed in accordance with applicable national, regional and local laws, resulting in loss of consciousness and certain death.
- Death must be verified after euthanasia and before disposal of the bird. Death must be confirmed by examining the animal for cessation of vital signs
- Written procedures used for euthanasia must be developed in consultation with a veterinarian and/or based on the local legislation. These should be updated as new and improved methods are available. Procedures should include but may not be limited to acceptable methods and detailed instructions, restraint needed, operator competency, operator safety and biosecurity.
- Personnel responsible for euthanasia must receive additional specialized training to handle birds, operate euthanasia equipment if applicable, and ascertain unconsciousness and death. Each employee having responsibility for euthanasia must receive specialized training prior to performing any euthanasia and specific to the method of euthanasia used. If multiple methods of euthanasia are used records must indicate what

methods employees are certified to implement. Records must also indicate annual training updates are provided for those employees responsible for euthanasia.

- Any equipment used for euthanasia must be kept clean, calibrated and maintained in good working order according to the manufacturer's instructions. Records documenting cleaning and maintenance must be kept on file and available for review upon request.
- Approved euthanasia drugs (if used) must be within the expiration date and stored under the conditions prescribed by the label and any regulations. Records must be kept on file and available for review upon request.
- Records documenting euthanasia (culling), by date and numbers of birds involved, must be kept on file (for at least 3 years) and available for review upon request.

Approved methods for Casualty Euthanasia

Euthanasia should be carried out using one of the following methods, as considered to be appropriate to the circumstance and environment.

1. Manual or mechanical dislocation of the neck (cervical dislocation)
2. Exposure to an approved gas mixtures until death.
3. Lethal injection with an approved euthanasia solution delivered by an acceptable route, provided it is carried out under the supervision of a veterinarian.
4. Use of specialized equipment for percussive stunning followed by bleeding.
5. Electrical stunning followed by bleeding (slaughter) or electrocution leading to cardiac arrest

Unacceptable Methods

- Brain piercing
- Decapitation - Although this method is approved by the OIE and AVMA, there is a potential to transmit disease with decapitation and thus it is an unacceptable method
- Crushing of the neck using a pair of pliers or similar instrument
- Traumatic brain injury and death caused by one strike with a blunt instrument (commonly known as blunt trauma)

Audit Criteria

1. *Confirm the implementation of a written policy developed in conjunction with a veterinarian (signed and dated by a veterinarian and/or based on the local legislation) for euthanasia of sick or injured birds at the processing facility. Euthanasia shall be conducted in a humane manner and performed in accordance with applicable national, regional and local laws, resulting in loss of consciousness and death.*
2. *When performed during the audit, observe that the person(s) responsible for euthanasia confirm death after euthanasia and before disposal by examining the bird for cessation of vital signs (no breathing, limp or floppy body).*
3. *Personnel responsible for euthanasia must receive specialized training to handle birds, operate euthanasia equipment if applicable, and ascertain unconsciousness and death. Each employee having responsibility for euthanasia must receive training prior to performing any euthanasia and specific to the method of euthanasia used. If multiple methods of euthanasia are used records must indicate what methods employees are certified to implement. Records must also indicate annual training updates are provided.*
4. *Observe the equipment used for euthanasia (if equipment is used. In the case of euthanasia via cervical dislocation, no equipment may be used) is kept clean, calibrated and maintained according to the equipment manufacturer's instructions. Records documenting cleaning, calibration or maintenance are kept on file and are available for review.*
5. *Confirm that approved euthanasia drugs (if used) are used within the expiration date and stored under the conditions prescribed by the label and any regulations. Records must be kept on file and available for review upon request.*

6. *Verify that records are kept documenting euthanasia (culling), the numbers of birds involved, and the date of euthanasia.*

Supporting information

Euthanasia is the act of inducing a humane death. Euthanasia techniques should result in rapid loss of consciousness followed by cardiac or respiratory arrest and the ultimate loss of brain function. In addition, the technique should minimize distress and anxiety experienced by the animal prior to loss of consciousness. Euthanatizing agents cause death by three basic mechanisms: (1) hypoxia, direct or indirect; (2) direct depression of neurons necessary for life function; and (3) physical disruption of brain activity and destruction of neurons necessary for life.

It is imperative that death be verified after euthanasia and before disposal of the animal. An animal in deep narcosis following administration of an injectable or inhalant agent may appear dead, but might eventually recover. Death must be confirmed by examining the animal for cessation of vital signs. Each of the methods of euthanasia has advantages and disadvantages.

The acceptable methods of euthanasia for the on-farm culling of poultry as reviewed by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) include:

- Electrocution or electrical stun followed by exsanguination
- Exposure to a lethal gas mixture
- Cervical dislocation
- Captive bolt provided that the major vessels within the neck are severed without delay
- Injection with an approved drug

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Scientific Report on the welfare aspects of animal stunning and killing methods accepts all of the above methods for on-farm euthanasia. This report points out that there are two methods of cervical dislocation. Cervical dislocation by manual stretching where the neck is hyperextended and dorsally twisted to separate the first cervical vertebra from the skull is one of these. This severs the spinal cord and brain stem, and greatly reduces the diameter of the common carotid arteries, causing death from cerebral ischemia. Care must be taken to ensure complete dislocation of the neck. The vertebral column must be severed from the cranium. The other method involves mechanical neck crushing at the first cervical vertebra with a pair of pliers such as Semark pliers or the Burdizzo. Neck crushing does not sever the common carotid arteries and does not reduce its diameter. Therefore, it does not cause cerebral ischemia and hence loss of consciousness. If the spinal cord is severed without stopping blood supply to the brain, it results in death from asphyxia.

5.0 BROILER STUNNING

Scope

The scope of this standard applies to broilers in the supply chain that are stunned, reversibly or irreversibly, prior to cutting and bleeding.

Standards

- All stunning methods must induce death or insensibility to pain and loss of consciousness prior to cutting and bleeding.
- If stunning to render the bird insensible vs. stunning to kill the bird, the stun must be sufficient to ensure that the bird remains insensible until death. The stunning method used must be accepted as humane by local legislation, and if applicable by legislation established by the importing country.
- If electrical stunning is used, the entrance to the water bath stun cabinet shall be designed and operated in such a way to prevent water overflow at the entrance to the water bath which may result in pre-stun shock.

Stunning should be carried out using one of the following approved methods:

- Reversible – Electric
- Irreversible – Electric
- Irreversible – controlled atmosphere stunning (gas)
- Irreversible – controlled atmosphere stunning (low atmospheric pressure)

If a reversible stun is effective and the bird is unconscious and insensible to pain post-stun, the bird will show the following signs: (Note: the following criteria are indicators, but not all criteria need to be evident)

- no rhythmic breathing for 8-10 seconds (Anastasov and Wotton; 2012) after leaving the water bath
- neck arched with head directed vertically
- open eyes
- no reaction to comb pinch
- wings held close to the body
- rigidly extended legs (not an appropriate indicator when a bird is held in a shackle) constant body tremors

In systems that induce an irreversible stun, an effective process is demonstrated by:

- fixed, central, dilated pupils
- no rhythmic breathing
- No corneal reflex (no nictitating membrane reflex)
- no response to comb pinch
- limp carcass; floppy head

Personnel responsible for assessing proper stun must be able to evaluate and recognize signs of an effective stun regardless of the method used. Likewise, these individuals must be able to recognize ineffective or incomplete stun and assign immediate corrective action at the time of discovery.

Any equipment used for stunning must be kept clean, calibrated and maintained in good working order according to the manufacturer's instructions.

As a minimum standard, all checks done throughout the shift must have a stunning efficiency of $\geq 98\%$ immediately after the water bath stunner. Performance records must be maintained and available for review upon request that demonstrate system compliance. Immediate corrective action (at the conclusion of a line check) must be taken to bring the process back into control should the efficiency fall below the requirement of $\geq 98\%$. This corrective action shall be verified and documented by further assessment (a follow up evaluation).

Audit Criteria

1. *For water bath stunning systems - Using a 300 bird sample size (Clopper and Pearson 1934), measure that each processing line in the facility is operating at $\geq 98\%$ birds effectively stunned (see indicators for reversible and irreversible stun in section 5.4), immediately after the water bath stunner.*
2. *Confirm with facility management the type of stunning system in use. If stunning to render insensible using a water bath system, verify that birds are not regaining consciousness prior to the neck cutting process and until death.*
3. *If electrical water bath stunning is used, observe the entrance to the water bath stun cabinet to ensure that the water is not over flowing from the water bath which may result in pre-stun shock of the bird.*
4. *If CAS/LAPS systems are used, verify that 100% stunning efficiency is achieved by observing a sample size of 300 birds exiting the CAS/LAPS system*

6.0 Cutting/Bleeding

Scope

These standards apply to any bird that might remain sensible, independent of the method of stunning (Electric, CAS or LAPS) that may regain consciousness (sensitivity) if the stun, cut or bleed do not meet required standards, resulting in welfare concerns.

Standards

Personnel responsible for assessing proper cutting and bleeding must be able to evaluate and recognize signs of an effective cut and bleed regardless of the method used (automatic or manual). Only trained and competent personnel can be involved in the slaughter process ensuring all birds are humanely processed.

- Birds which are stunned using a reversible method must be cut and bled without regaining consciousness.
- Neck cutting operation (manual or mechanical) must sever at least one carotid artery to ensure proper bleeding. ***A best practice is to cut both carotid arteries and both jugular veins.*** The process must meet the requirements of the local law.
- The time between stun and neck cut should be as short as possible, with a target of 8-10 seconds or less, to ensure no birds regain consciousness
- Birds must be bled out before entering the scald tank. A best practice is a minimum of 90 seconds between neck cutting and the scald tank entrance to ensure birds are properly bled out before entering the scald tank.
- Processes (from stun to neck cut and entrance into scald tank) must be designed so that birds can be observed for the purpose of audit verification.
- The performance goal of the primary neck cutting operation shall be maximized with the objective to effectively cut $\geq 98\%$ of the birds. However, due to inconsistency in bird size across the system, as well as breed variations, facilities processing these inconsistently sized birds are expected to achieve not less than 95% primary (automatic or manual) neck cutting efficiency.
- Regardless of bird size/breed, a dedicated back up cutter shall be in place immediately after the primary neck cutting operation (automatic or manual) ensuring 100% of the birds are cut and bled prior to entering the scald tank without exception.

Audit Criteria

1. *300 birds from each kill line within the facility being audited will be observed for proper cutting and bleeding. Guidance: When possible, observe multiple flocks to determine if bird size variability between flocks is impacting cutting efficiency.*
2. *$\geq 95\%$ of birds must be properly cut and bleeding by the mechanical (primary) knife*
3. *100% of birds must be cut and bled prior to entering the scald tank. An assessment should be made immediately after the scald tank to assure the absence of uncut birds resulting in red birds exiting the scald tank.*
4. *Verify there is 100% slaughter efficacy evidence by birds that display the classic signs of insensibility due to rapid blood loss*

Uncut live birds entering the scald tank is category 1 non-compliance resulting in discontinuation of raw material supply. Prior to facility re-approval and start of resupply, the facility is required to be re-audited by a recognized authority on AH&W approved by a member of McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare core team. This recognized authority will review the corrective action plan and verify that the plan is adequate to address the failure identified. (See section Category 1 non-compliance for further explanation).

7.0 BROILER RITUAL SLAUGHTER

Scope

These procedures minimize suffering of birds slaughtered using “Religious Slaughter” techniques, where restrictions on stunning birds prior to the neck cut are prescribed by religious requirements (religious requirements that may vary from market to market and between Halal and Kosher).

Background

The core requisite of religious slaughter is that birds are alive at the moment of slaughter. Death must occur from the slaughter process (neck cut) and rapid loss of blood, and not from brain damage or cardiac arrest. As such, to ensure good animal welfare, the slaughter method must enable maximum and efficient blood loss to induce quick death and minimal suffering. Where religious requirements exist, they generally fall into one of two scenarios:

- a. **No stunning is allowed** – This method requires that bird’s neck vessels are cut by a trained slaughter person following applicable ritual procedures (prayer). Cut birds are then bled prior to scalding. Examples of this are Kosher or Halal slaughter
- b. **Reversible stunning** - This method permits birds to be stunned using low current electrical stun systems prior to ritual slaughter. This method requires that, as the result of the electrical stun, cardiac arrest is not achieved (the heart remain beating). Stunned birds must be able to “revive” after stunning. In certain Halal markets, the local religious authority may require verification of this by removing a number of birds from the line to confirm that these birds are able to regain consciousness. This is verified on a routine basis during plant operations. Examples are Halal slaughter per local requirements.

Standards

- Personnel responsible for assessing proper religious slaughter must be able to evaluate and recognize signs of improperly slaughtered birds regardless of the religious practice used. Only trained and competent personnel are to be involved in the religious slaughter process ensuring all birds are humanely processed.
- Where reversible stunning is required, signs of an effective reversible stun should be present. These signs are described in detail in the broiler stunning section.
- To enable rapid blood loss and subsequent rapid death, at the same time meeting applicable religious requirements (Halal or Kosher), both carotid arteries, both jugular veins, the trachea and the esophagus must be severed.
- Birds must be bled out/dead before entering the scald tank. A best practice is a minimum of 90 seconds between neck cutting and the scald tank entrance to ensure birds are dead before entering the scald tank.
- In countries where stunning is not allowed, use of inverted cones are required to facilitate rapid blood loss after ritual slaughter while limiting movement and thus injury.

Audit Criteria

1. *Verify that all slaughter persons have received training specific to the type of slaughter practiced at the facility being audited, by matching training records with individuals performing the slaughter. For example, being able to effectively cut both carotid arteries and the pertinent vessels.*
 - *Verification: Observe at least 2 persons assigned to this task, confirm that these requirements are met (Interviews may be conducted if observation enough is not enough).*

2. *In a sample size of 300 birds, verify that there is 100% slaughter efficiency evidence by birds that display the classic signs of insensibility due to rapid blood loss achieved by properly severing both carotid arteries, both jugular veins, trachea and esophagus. Verify that equipment allows a minimum of 90 seconds between the neck cut and the scald tank to enable sufficient blood loss and death to occur.*
 - *Confirm that the facility provides knife sharpening equipment so that knives used for religious slaughter are kept sharp and undamaged (no nicks or broken parts of the blade).*
 - *Verification: As an on-line quick method of determination the knife should easily slit a piece of paper into two with a clean cut*
3. *Verify that knife washing, sanitizing and sharpening facilities are provided and accessible to all slaughter persons.*
4. *Where stunning is not practiced for religious reasons, verify the facility adopts an effective means to enable rapid blood loss of cut birds while minimizing injury by restricting bird's movement.*

*Uncut live bird entering the scald tank is a **category 1 non-compliance** resulting in audit failure and discontinuation of raw material supply. Prior to facility re-approval and start of resupply, the facility is required to be re-audited by a recognized authority on AH&W approved by a member of McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare core team. This recognized authority will review the corrective action plan and verify that the plan is adequate to address the failure identified. (see section Category 1 non-compliance for further explanation)*

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