NATIONAL CHICKEN COUNCIL ANIMAL WELFARE GUIDELINES AND AUDIT CHECKLIST

FOR BROILERS

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NATIONAL CHICKEN COUNCIL ANIMAL WELFARE GUIDELINES

The National Chicken Council (NCC) is the national trade association representing vertically integrated broiler producer-processors. NCC recommends the following guidelines to its members to assure the humane treatment of animals and to promote the production of quality products.

Preface

An animal is considered to be in a good state of welfare "…if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress" (OIE). Animals' physical needs are relatively easily discussed, described, and studied, but their mental states and needs can be more difficult to characterize. We recognize that this is an ongoing discussion and evolving science. With that in mind, the NCC Animal Welfare Guidelines are updated regularly to include new science-based parameters.

The NCC Animal Welfare Guidelines have been developed to evaluate the current commercial strains of broiler chicken by auditing how these birds are raised, housed, managed, and slaughtered. It is important to note that such standards may not be appropriate for other types of poultry as management practices may differ.

The following principles (which apply to all types of housing and strains of chickens) were considered in the development of this document:

1. Poultry raised for food should be cared for in ways that prevent or minimize fear, pain, stress, and suffering.

2. Guidelines for welfare should balance scientific knowledge and professional judgment with consideration of ethical and societal values.

3. It is the welfare of the chickens themselves that is foremost, not how humans might perceive a practice or an environment.

4. Poultry should be treated with respect throughout their lives and provided a humane death when processed for food or when they are euthanized for any other reason.

5. The NCC Animal Welfare Guidelines and Audit Checklist are formally reviewed every two years, with the current review conducted by a committee of scientific advisors followed by a review by the NCC Animal Welfare Committee, who recommends final changes to the NCC Board of Directors. This two-year cycle will continue indefinitely.

Introduction

Domestic animals are adaptable to a variety of conditions. Today's broiler chicken has been selected to thrive under modern management conditions. Management practices that promote good health and production, prevent disease, and minimize stress are consistent with generally accepted criteria of humane treatment. The specific applications of these criteria are spelled out in these guidelines and the checklist is used assess compliance. Broiler chicken producers and processors endorsing these guidelines must designate a management person or group within the company responsible for promoting adherence to the guidelines. NCC Animal Welfare Guidelines for Broilers, which outline best practices for broiler production and processing, are categorized into the following sections:

A. Corporate Commitment
B. Personnel Training
C. Hatchery Operations
D. Grow-out Operations:
    D1. Designated Management, Training, and Emergency Plan
    D2. Nutrition and Feeding
    D3. Comfort and Shelter
    D4. Health Care and Monitoring
    D5. Flock Husbandry
E. Catching and Transportation
F. Processing Operations
G. Abuse and Audit Failures

History

February 1999	Guidelines originally approved by Board of Directors
January 2001	Revision approved by Task Force, additional revisions made by Executive Committee
February 2001	Additional revisions made by Board of Directors, revisions approved by Board of Directors
July 2001	Revisions recommended by Task Force
September 2001	Revisions approved by Executive Committee
October 2001	Revisions approved by Board of Directors
December 2001	Revisions recommended by Task Force
January 2002	Revisions approved by Executive Committee
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January 2003	Revisions approved by Executive Committee
March 2003	Amendment approved by Board of Directors

January 2005	Revisions approved by Executive Committee
April 2005	Amendments approved by Executive Committee
December 2009	Revisions approved by Task Force
January 2010	Minor edits approved by Task Force Chairman, revisions approved by Executive Committee and Board of Directors
January 2014	Minor edits approved by Task Force Chairman, revisions approved by Executive Committee and Board of Directors
November 2016	Revisions recommended by Task Force
February 2017	Revisions approved by Board of Directors

GUIDELINES

A. Corporate Commitment

1). The company must have a written animal welfare program that provides a clear understanding of how the program is to be implemented throughout the company.

2). Current senior management must endorse and fully-support the animal welfare program.

3). The company must have a person or management group responsible for animal welfare throughout the operation.

4). The company must have, implement, and document an internal (i.e., first party) and an external (i.e., third party) auditing program.

5). The company must have a mechanism in place whereby animal welfare violations can be reported without threat of retaliation. Signs stating the importance of animal welfare with contact information for reporting incidents should be posted prominently in locations where birds are handled.

B. Personnel Training

1). All employees who work with live birds must be trained at least annually on the fundamentals of chicken behavior and welfare. An optional training program is included in Appendix 1.

2). All employees who handle live birds must also be trained annually using a SOP-based or task-specific training program that focuses on acceptable procedures at the specific locations where they work (hatchery, grow-out, catching and transportation, and slaughter). All procedures involving live birds must be accomplished in such a manner as to avoid stress and injuries.

3). Training must be documented for each employee and should include how the training was conducted (classroom, on-line, etc.) as well as the tasks and responsibilities for which the employees were trained.

4). Training material must be multilingual where appropriate.

5). Training must emphasize that abuse of the animals is not tolerated under any circumstances.

C. Hatchery Operations

1). The hatchery must have a person in charge of ensuring that proper animal welfare practices are followed at all times and that there is strict adherence to the guidelines.

2). The hatchery must have a written training program for chick processing, culling, euthanasia, sexing, and vaccinating procedures, where applicable. This training must be conducted annually for all employees involved in conducting these procedures.

3). The hatchery must have a written plan for disaster response and recovery, including, but not limited to, SOPs addressing structural damage with potential to impact bird welfare, loss of power, and water outages. The hatchery must have a written program for monitoring egg room and incubator controls available for the auditor to review. Written or electronic logs must be kept on the egg room and incubator temperatures and humidity.

4). The facility must have an alarm system or regular monitoring system in place to alert hatchery personnel to failure of critical systems (heat, electricity, etc.). A documented emergency power back-up program must be in place and available for review by the auditor and should include a method by which the hatchery can gain access to supplemental power.

5). Both manual and automated chick processing systems must be designed, maintained, and operated in a manner that prevents injuries to the chicks. The speed of the belt, belt material, slides and chutes all play a role in preventing injury to chicks. In the hatchery, chicks must not be dropped from heights more than 12 inches. The hatchery must have a written program to monitor chick injuries during processing and handling. Should injuries occur, these should be documented and corrective action must be taken in accordance with the hatchery program.

6). The mechanical separator must be checked for proper operation daily. The hatchery must have a written protocol for checking for and removing chicks that are misplaced or stuck in a manner that protects personnel and chick safety.

7). Only methods of euthanasia approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA, 2013) can be used. Rapid maceration or displacement of oxygen with nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or other approved gas are preferred methods of cull chick and pipped egg euthanasia. Employees must be trained for the method in use and proper implementation of the method must be verified and documented.

8). If maceration is used, the macerator must be designed, maintained, and operated in a manner that results in instantaneous euthanasia. In the event the primary system is not functioning, the hatchery must have a documented backup plan in place so that repairs can be made or an alternative, approved method can be used. No chicks can be placed in the macerator until it is operational. If gas is used for euthanasia, it must be verified that the chicks are dead when it is safe to do so (ie. the gas has been turned off). There must

be no live chicks in the waste disposal container after gassing. Different types of systems exist for handling hatchery waste:

a. Closed-macerator system: Hatchery waste cannot be seen in this closed system. The operation must be verified by the function of the system (noise/vibrations) when in use. A pile-up of waste in the feeding hopper is an indicator of a system malfunction.

b. Open-macerator system: Hatchery waste should be verified in the collection containers only when it is safe to do so. There should be no live chicks in the hatchery waste stream post-maceration.

9). Regardless of the approved euthanasia method used, a live chick in the hatchery waste stream after the completion of the euthanasia process is a major non-conformance. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Hatchery Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees at the hatchery.

10). The hatchery must have a written program for pips and culled chicks to be euthanized after each flock change at a minimum, and disposed of by the end of the day.

11). The hatchery must have a written guide for which chick defects should result in culling for the welfare of the bird.

12). Chicks should be evaluated for equipment-related injury. Prior to shipping, evaluate chick injury by examining a minimum of 10 boxes of chicks (total of 1,000 chicks) for severe equipment injuries (torn legs, broken legs or wings). Corrective action must be taken and documented in accordance with the hatchery's written plan for corrective action related to chick injuries.

13). Maintaining an appropriate environment is critical to the comfort and health of the chicks. The hatchery must have a temperature range goal for the chick holding area to allow chicks to maintain normal body temperature. Since hatchery layouts and airflow differ between hatcheries, each hatchery must establish and document holding room temperatures. Chick behavior should be used to determine the comfort of the birds and to determine the acceptable temperature of the holding room. If necessary, measure internal chick body temperature (optimal at 102^0F to 104^0F).

14). The hatchery must have a written program in place to retrieve any loose chicks while maintaining employee safety. This must happen, at a minimum, after each flock change.

15). Although fast-growing strains of broilers do not need to be beak-trimmed to prevent injury due to feather pecking behavior, slower-growing strains may need to be. These strains should be trimmed at the hatchery using either the hot blade or the infrared method. No more than 1/3 of the beak should be removed with either method. If beak trimming is performed, task-specific training based on a written SOP must be available

and verified.

16). A written chick delivery vehicle SOP, for both daily operation and for emergency, must be available for review by the auditor.

17). Transport vehicles for chicks must be equipped with temperature-control capabilities, and with alarms should these systems fail during transport when the driver is physically separated from the chick environment.

D. Growout Operations

D1. Designated Management, Training, and Emergency Plan

1). Growout operations must have a person in charge of ensuring that proper animal welfare practices are followed at all times and that there is strict adherence to the guidelines.

2). The growout operation must have a written training program for basic broiler behavior, chick placement, general signs of disease, culling, euthanasia, handling and catching techniques, and vaccination procedures, where applicable. This training program must be conducted annually for all employees involved in conducting these procedures.

3). The growout operation must have a written plan for disaster response and recovery, including, but not limited to, SOPs addressing structural damage, loss of power, water and feed outages, and emergency depopulation using a Federal and/or State-approved method.

4). The growout operation must have a written plan for expected temperature, lighting, and ventilation levels within the house appropriate to bird age, size, and activity level. The growout operation must have an alarm system or regular monitoring system in place to alert farm personnel about failures of critical systems (water, electricity, etc.).

5). The growout operation must have current contact information for local emergency services, and each producer must display a list of emergency contacts.

D2. Nutrition and Feeding

1). The feed mill must meet good manufacturing practices (GMP) for feed production. The feed mill must be licensed through the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) if medicated feeds are produced.

2). Diets must be formulated, produced, and fed to prevent all signs of nutritional deficiency and to promote good health and normal maintenance and growth. Companies should consider the recommendations of the National Research Council (NRC), as well as other currently available information when formulating diets. Formulations should be reviewed by a poultry nutritionist.

3). Feeder and watering space must meet manufacturers' recommendations or good poultry

husbandry practices. Feed and watering systems must be sited and adjusted in height as the birds grow so that these systems are easily accessible by all birds.

4). All feeding and drinking systems must be checked for proper operation on a daily basis. The company must have a written water sanitation program to control bacterial growth in the drinker system.

5). Feed intake and water consumption must be monitored.

D3. Comfort and Shelter

1). Poultry housing and equipment must be designed, maintained, and operated in a manner to protect the birds from environmental conditions, including typical seasonal temperatures and precipitation as well as from predatory animals or birds.

2). Effective biosecurity procedures must be designed, established, and implemented to minimize any negative impacts on bird welfare and protect flock health. Components of a biosecurity program may include provisions for, but are not limited to, a control program for rodents, predators or other pests such as insects, visitor entry requirements, mortality disposal, and traffic control. Companies should consider the National Poultry Improvement Plan Program Standards' Biosecurity Principles[1], as well as other currently available information, when designing biosecurity procedures.

3). A written plan or checklist must be in place for chick placement and brooding. To minimize stress and mortality, chicks must be placed in a pre-warmed house. Chick placement must be done in a manner to minimize injury. A brooding SOP must include information on house and bedding temperature, ammonia level, feed/water availability, and lighting.

4). Ventilation systems must be designed, maintained, and operated in such a manner as to provide optimal air quality at all times. The facility must have a written protocol for minimum ventilation requirements, which must include specifications for maintaining temperature and reasonable control of humidity.

5). Ammonia in the atmosphere must not exceed 25 parts per million at bird height. A documented ammonia monitoring program must be in place which must include appropriate corrective actions should the maximum ammonia level be exceeded.

6). Litter moisture must be evaluated in the middle of the house, not immediately under or around drinking or feeding systems. Litter should be loosely compacted when squeezed in the hand. If the litter remains in a clump when it is squeezed in the hand, it is too wet. A minimum of two houses must be evaluated for litter moisture.

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[1] United States Department of Agriculture – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services. (2017, January) *National Poultry Improvement Plan Program Standards*. Standard E – Biosecurity Principles. Retrieved from http://www.poultryimprovement.org/documents/ProgramStandardsJanuary2017.pdf.

7). Litter, ventilation, drinking systems and feed formulations must be managed to maintain optimal foot pad health and to control ammonia. Foot pad health must be assessed at the processing plant by the auditor and the scoring system can be found in Appendix 4.

D4. Health Care and Monitoring

1). Access to a veterinarian experienced in poultry care must be available.

2). Each company must have a written flock health and welfare monitoring plan developed in consultation with a veterinarian. This plan should include, but is not limited to, information about: immunization program (including training of those who handle birds for immunizations or blood testing); daily flock checks; daily mortality/morbidity monitoring, which should include detailed culling parameters; euthanasia procedures; gait monitoring; and when, how, and under what circumstances a producer reports a disease or other health situation to the appropriate person for determination of corrective action. This person may be the veterinarian, service technician, live production manager, or other qualified individual.

3). A period of at least 10 days between flocks is recommended but may be modified based on health status of the flock, weather emergencies, litter replacement, total cleanout, and/or utilization of practices and technologies that lower the health risk to the birds. Consultation with the veterinarian, service technician, or live production manager and written documentation is required before the period is shortened.

4). Flocks must be inspected at least twice a day and all dead birds must be removed daily. Inspection should be conducted in a manner that does not unnecessarily disturb birds, such as moving quietly and slowly through the flock to prevent piling.

5). The company must have a written plan in place to respond to sudden increases in mortality. The plan may include veterinary consultation and actions to address the problem where necessary.

6). When necessary, birds must be properly euthanized. Birds that cannot access feed and water for normal growth and development must be humanely euthanized on a timely basis. A written SOP must be in place for on-farm culling and euthanasia training. An example of a cervical dislocation training diagram is provided in Appendix 5. Only methods of euthanasia accepted by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA, 2013) can be used. The following are acceptable methods of on-farm euthanasia:

a. Rapid decapitation.

b. Rapid cervical disarticulation at the junction of the skull and first cervical vertebra. If a tool is used it should separate, but not crush, the vertebrae.

c. Displacement of oxygen with carbon dioxide or other approved gas.

d. Captive bolt.

7). Withdrawal of feed and water before processing is necessary for sanitary processing and for improving food safety. Feed and water withdrawal periods must be kept to a minimum and must be consistent with good processing practices.

a. Feed withdrawal must not exceed 18 hours prior to slaughter.

b. Water withdrawal must not exceed one hour prior to the start of catch for that house.

D5. Flock Husbandry

1). Birds should have space to express normal behaviors such as dust bathing, preening, eating, drinking, etc. Upon entering a broiler house, most of the birds should be sitting and relatively quiet, with background chirping or clucking. Evaluated flock husbandry practices including, but not limited to, stocking density, lighting, and gait scoring are important to assess normal behavior.

2). Stocking density must allow all birds to access feeders and drinkers, and will depend on the target market weight, type of housing, ventilation system, feeder/drinker equipment, litter management, and husbandry. Stocking density is typically determined at the end of the flock based on target market weight, by adjusting the initial placement numbers with the average mortality and must not exceed the following:

Maximum Bird Weight Range	***Maximum Stocking Density***
Below 4.5 lbs liveweight	6.5 pounds per square foot
4.5 to 5.5 lbs liveweight	7.5 pounds per square foot
5.6 to 7.5 lbs liveweight	8.5 pounds per square foot
More than 7.5 lbs liveweight	9.0 pounds per square foot

3). Except for the first week and last week of growout, birds are provided with a minimum four hours of darkness every 24 hours. The four hours of darkness may be provided in increments of one, two, or four hours (see Appendix 3 for more details). During the period(s) of darkness, light levels at bird height must not exceed 10 percent of the light level during the period(s) of light.

At this time, there is not conclusive research on the optimum light intensity for broiler chicken health and welfare that may be uniformly applied to all housing systems.[2,3,4,5,6]

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[2] Olanrewaju, H. A., Thaxton, J. P., Dozier, W. A., III, Purswell, J., Roush, W. B., & Branton, S. L. (2006). A Review of Lighting Programs for Broiler Production. International Journal of Poultry Science, 5(4), 301-308. doi:10.3923/ijps.2006.301.308

[3] Lien, R. J., Hess, J. B., Mckee, S. R., Bilgili, S. F., & Townsend, J. C. (2007). Effect of Light Intensity and Photoperiod on Live Performance, Heterophil-to-Lymphocyte Ratio, and Processing Yields of Broilers. Poultry Science, 86(7), 1287-1293. doi:10.1093/ps/86.7.1287

[4] Newberry, R. C., Hunt, J. R., & Gardiner, E. E. (1986). Light Intensity Effects on Performance, Activity, Leg Disorders, and Sudden Death Syndrome of Roaster Chickens. Poultry Science, 65(12), 2232-2238. doi:10.3382/ps.0652232

Consultation with a veterinarian or poultry welfare professional and written documentation with supporting internal data and/or scientific evidence of benefit to bird welfare **must** be provided for the design of a flock lighting program. Measurements of the chosen light intensity must be taken at bird height, directly beneath the light source.

4). To monitor bird leg health and their ability to access feed and water, gait scoring must be performed once per flock no earlier than seven days prior to slaughter. Walk approximately 100 feet of the house between the wall and the first line of drinkers and observe the birds' gait. Evaluate 100 birds. Record the number of birds unable to walk or move after gentle encouragement (Score of 2) using the U.S. Gait Scoring System found in Appendix 2.

5). Any abuse of birds during the growout phase is a major non-conformance. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Growout Operations Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees of the growout facility.

E. Catching and Transportation

1). Any abuse of birds during catching or transportation is a major non-conformance. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Catching and Transportation Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees involved in catching and transportation.

2). The live-haul department must have a person in charge of ensuring that proper animal welfare practices are followed at all times and that there is strict adherence to the guidelines.

3). Any birds that are found during catching to be unfit for transport due to injury or illness should not be loaded. An individual responsible for humanely euthanizing birds unfit for transport on a timely basis must be designated by the company.

4). The live-haul department must have a written training program for bird catching, handling, and transportation. This training must be conducted annually for all employees involved in conducting these procedures.

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[5] Deep, A., Schwean-Lardner, K., Crowe, T. G., Fancher, B. I., & Classen, H. L. (2010). Effect of light intensity on broiler production, processing characteristics, and welfare. Poultry Science, 89(11), 2326-2333. doi:10.3382/ps.2010-00964

[6] Downs, K. M., Lien, R. J., Hess, J. B., Bilgili, S. F., & Dozier, W. A., III. (2006). The Effects of Photoperiod Length, Light Intensity, and Feed Energy on Growth Responses and Meat Yield of Broilers. The Journal of Applied Poultry Research, 15(3), 406-416. doi:10.1093/japr/15.3.406

5). The live-haul department must have a written plan for emergency response and recovery, including, but not limited to, truck accidents. Incidents must be recorded and the effectiveness of the response plan must be evaluated and necessary adjustments must be made to the plan to improve response effectiveness.

6). Supervisors of catching crews must train crew members to handle birds so that risk of injury to birds is minimized. The company must have a system in place to ensure that this responsibility is being met at all times. The supervisors themselves must be well-trained to recognize the risks of injury to birds associated with the catching and handling methods and equipment being used.

7). Broilers must be caught by their legs as this is standard catching procedure. Birds must never be lifted, carried, or drug by the wing or neck and birds must never be thrown. Observe 5 cages being loaded for instances of gross mishandling. The number of birds in the catcher's hand depends on the size of the bird and must not cause injury to the birds. For birds weighing more than four pounds, the maximum number of birds per hand is five. If a mechanical catching system is used, there must be a SOP in place to ensure birds are handled according to the same criteria for hand-caught birds.

8). Transport modules are made up of separate compartments for the birds which must be appropriately sized and in good repair so that no birds can be injured and none can escape during transit. Compartment damage, including large holes, broken or missing doors, or broken (not bent) wires, should be assessed when evaluating the condition of the individual compartments. Inspect a total of 100 individual compartments (not 100 transport modules) on two empty trailers for signs of damage that can injure birds or allow them to escape during transit.

9). The company should schedule catching to minimize the time between catching and slaughter. Potential for temperature and climatic stress should be considered when scheduling catching, transport, and holding and appropriate measures should be taken in extreme weather events such as use of fans or side boards. It is recommended that the time from catching to slaughter does not exceed 12 hours.

10). Loss of birds from trailers during transport to the processing operation is a major non-conformance. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Catching and Transportation Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees involved in catching and transportation.

11). Density in the transport modules should permit the birds to sit during transport without being on top of one another (in a single layer). Examine 5 trailer loads to ensure all birds are in a single layer.

F. Processing Operations* (religious slaughter exemption)

1). Any abuse of birds during processing is a major non-conformance. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Processing Operations Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees involved in processing live birds.

2). Processing operations must have a person in charge of ensuring that proper animal welfare practices are followed at all times and that there is strict adherence to the guidelines.

3). Processing operations must have a written training program for bird handling, transportation, shackling, and euthanasia. This training must be conducted annually for all employees involved in conducting these procedures.

4). In the event of a utility outage, mechanical breakdown, or some other event that limits the processing of birds moved to the processing plant, measures must be taken to make the birds comfortable and reduce mortality. Rehousing birds is stressful and should be considered only in extreme situations. An emergency response plan must be in place which includes a response timeframe to address issues related to live birds during all stages of slaughter including holding, shackling, and stunning.

5). The company must have a program that effectively protects birds from extremes of heat and cold while in holding sheds or during the unloading process.

a. Holding areas should be covered and equipped with fans (and misters if necessary) or heaters to ensure proper cooling/warming of birds according to the company guidelines.

b. Procedures for ventilation/cooling/heating must have designated temperatures at which fans, misters (if present), and heaters are to be operated.

6). Written procedures must be in place to retrieve loose birds that emphasize timeliness and worker safety.

7). Holding times of live birds at the plant must be kept to the minimum consistent with good processing practices, with the maximum time from catching to slaughter recommended to not exceed 12 hours. If the time from catching to slaughter is greater than 12 hours, the reason for the delay in processing should be documented.

8). The number of animals dead on arrival (DOA) at the plant must be minimized. DOA's must be documented on a flock basis. DOA's averaging over 0.5% on a weekly basis should trigger an investigation by the plant and corrective action if necessary.

9). No live bird should be discarded as a DOA. Injured or sick birds removed from processing must be properly euthanized before placement in DOA bin. A live bird in the DOA bin is a major non-conformance. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Processing Operations Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees involved in processing live birds.

10). The plant must have a written policy in place for euthanasia following an AVMA approved method. Euthanasia must be performed by trained plant personnel on a timely basis. Any live birds culled at the plant must be euthanized by:

a. Rapid decapitation.

b. Rapid cervical disarticulation at the junction of the skull and first cervical vertebra. If a tool is used it should separate, but not crush, the vertebrae. An example of a cervical disarticulation training diagram is provided in Appendix 5.

c. Displacement of oxygen with carbon dioxide or other approved gas.

d. Captive bolt.

11). Unloading:

a. Cages/coops must be lifted and moved from trailers in a manner that does not injure the birds.

b. The unloading and conveyor system must be designed, maintained, and operated to avoid injury to the birds. Birds should not be unloaded on top of other birds.

c. Conveyors must have adequate space to accommodate the broilers with no obstructions.

d. Birds remaining in cages/coops after unloading must be gently removed. Birds must never be lifted by the wings.

e. A live bird left in a cage module before reloading is a major non-conformance. All live birds retrieved from cage modules must be humanely returned to the processing system, if uninjured. Observe 5 cage modules for instances of live birds being left in a module before reloading. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Processing Operations Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees involved in processing live birds.

12). Shackling:

a. The shackling area must be designed and maintained for the comfort of birds as well as workers, in terms of adequate space, lighting, air quality and ventilation.

b. Best management practices, such as adjustment of light levels and belt speeds, must be used to help keep birds calm and to minimize stress.

c. Management practices must be in place to minimize worker fatigue (rotation or similar practices) which also prevents inappropriate bird handling.

d. Shackles must be properly-sized so that birds can be shackled without causing visible injury. Personnel must be carefully trained in proper handling and shackling techniques. A bird being visibly injured during shackling is a major non-conformance and an audit failure for the Processing Operations area. 500 birds must be observed being shackled for instances of gross mishandling. All instances of non-conformance must be recorded and corrective action must be taken and documented. If this non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the processing operations section of the audit.

e. Birds should be kept calm after shackling and prior to stunning. Excessive wing activity should be prevented by reduced lighting or breast-rubs.

13). Stunning and Slaughter:

a. Stunning and slaughter equipment must be maintained, operated, and monitored to ensure proper functioning for humane processing.

b. The goal is to have at least 99% of the birds effectively stunned which renders the bird insensible to pain. Pre-stun shocks should be prevented. Corrective action must be initiated if the percentage of effectively-stunned birds is below 98%.

c. The goal is to have at least 99% of the birds effectively cut by the automatic knife to induce bleed-out. Corrective action must be initiated if the percentage of effectively-cut birds is below 98%.

d. There must be backup personnel after the automatic knife to induce bleed-out in any birds not effectively killed by the equipment. Backup personnel must have sufficient room and lighting to ensure that the blood vessels are cut on 100% of the birds.

14). All birds must be dead before entering the scalder. 500 birds must be observed after the picker to ensure that no live birds entered the scalder. A bird observed with uncut carotid arteries after the picker is a major non-conformance. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Processing Operations Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees involved in processing live birds.

15). A monitoring program must be in place to monitor wings and leg injuries that may have resulted from improper handling by equipment or personnel. The company must have a documented monitoring program in place for wing and leg injuries, and, if the standards

are exceeded, employees must be retrained. If both wings are broken or dislocated or if both legs are injured on one bird, this counts as one bird for auditing purposes.

a. Broken or dislocated wings must be monitored immediately before or after the stunner. If these locations are not accessible, birds can also be evaluated prior to the scalder. While the goal is to have zero wing injuries, an acceptable incidence rate is less than or equal to3% of birds with broken or dislocated wings out of a 500 bird sample (15 out of 500 birds). Corrective action must be initiated if the level exceeds 4% (20 out of 500 birds). Wing injuries may be assessed by the auditor using the guide in Appendix 6.

b. Leg injuries must be monitored after scalding and picking. Leg injuries may involve leg breaks, trauma-induced fractures, or severe hematomas. While the goal is to have zero leg injuries, an acceptable incidence rate is less than 0.4% of birds with leg injuries out of a 500 bird sample (2 out of 500 birds). Corrective action must be initiated if the level exceeds 0.6% (3 out of 500 birds). Leg injuries may be assessed by the auditor using the guide in Appendix 7.

c. For any stunning system that involves stunning and/or killing prior to shackling, wing injury assessment can be performed on live birds prior to killing. If using Controlled Atmospheric Stunning (CAS), Controlled Atmospheric Killing (CAK), or Low Atmospheric Pressure Stunning (LAPS), it is recommended that a module of 500 birds be evaluated for conformance to the same criteria as outlined above for both handling-related wing breakage and leg injury.

G. Abuse and Audit Failure

1). The abuse of the animals is not tolerated under any circumstances. Conditions that put chicks or broilers in immediate danger are referred to as acts of intentional and egregious animal abuse. These include but are not limited to:

a. Poking a stick, prod, or other object into a sensitive part of the bird such as the eye, nostril, mouth, ear, or cloaca, with the exception of company approved practices such as blood collection for diagnostic testing.

b. Cutting off limbs, wings, skinning, or cutting into any bird that shows any sign of sensibility (consciousness), with the exception of company or religiously-approved practices to optimize bird well-being (for example, nicking for blood - example blood sample collection, Kosher or Hallal slaughter).

c. Malicious use of equipment that results in breaking a bone, suffocation, or death of a bird(s).

d. Dragging, hitting, kicking, or throwing a bird with the intention of causing injury.

e. Striking a bird(s) with any type of object with the intention of causing injury.

2). Audit Failure: Any intentional and egregious abuse observed by the auditor during any stage of this audit is considered a major non-conformance. Any non-conformance must be documented and appropriate corrective action must be taken. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of that section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees involved in that section of the process.

National Chicken Council
Animal Welfare Audit Checklist

The following checklist is provided to assist chicken companies in complying with the Animal Welfare Guidelines recommended by the National Chicken Council and voluntarily adopted by this company. This audit checklist is used in conjunction with the Guidelines.

Auditors are reminded of the importance of maintaining biosecurity. Flocks that may be experiencing a disease must not be chosen for auditing due to biosecurity reasons.

This audit applies to the following company, complex, or facility:

Auditor:_____

Company and Plant:_____Est. No.:_____

Address: _____
_____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Date: _____

Accompanied by: _____

Title _____

Summary:

Area	Maximum Score	Score Needed to Pass	Facility Score
A. Corporate Commitment	**160**	**160**	
B. Training	**40**	**40**	
C. Hatchery Operations	**290**	**250**	
D. Growout Operations	**570**	**490**	
E. Catching and Transportation	**200**	**170**	
F. Processing Operations	**470**	**400**	
Point Total for ALL Areas	**1730**	**1510**	

AUDIT FORM Confirm that each point is done by facility and award full score for each point done and zero for each point not done, except for those items for which a sliding scale is provided. Any designated "major non-conformance" (indicated in the Audit Form in **boldface** type) is an audit failure for that particular area (Hatchery, Growout, Catching & Transportation, etc.) and must be documented on the audit form. A major non-conformance occurs only if the auditor personally observes it in the course of an audit.			
Requirement	**Points available**	**Check if done**	**Points awarded**
A: Corporate Commitment			
The company has an animal welfare program endorsed and fully-supported by current senior management	**40**		
The company must have a person or management group responsible for animal welfare throughout the operation.	**40**		
The company must have, implement, and document an internal and external auditing program.	**40**		
The company must have a mechanism in place whereby animal welfare violations can be reported without threat of retaliation.	**40**		
A: Corporate Commitment – Point Total	**160**		
B: Personnel Training			
Employees who handle birds are trained at least annually. Verify documentation of training.	**40**		
B: Personnel Training – Point Total	**40**		

C: Hatchery Operations			
Ensure that the hatchery has a person in charge of ensuring proper animal welfare practices and strict adherence to the guidelines.	**20**		
Confirm that the hatchery has a written task-specific training program, including proper euthanasia and culling procedures, conducted annually for all employees involved in conducting those tasks. Verify training.	**40**		
Ensure that the hatchery operation has a written plan for disaster response and recovery which may include parameters described in the guidelines. Ensure the hatchery has a written program for monitoring egg room and incubator controls, and written or electronic logs of egg room and incubator temperatures and humidity.	**10**		
Ensure that the facility has an alarm system or regular monitoring system in use to alert hatchery personnel to failure of critical systems (heat, electricity). A power failure emergency response program is in place and available for review.	**40**		
Ensure chicks are not dropped from heights of more than 12 inches. Chicks must be protected from sharp corners and edges during transitions. Confirm there is a written program to document chick injuries during processing and handling.	**20**		
Ensure that the separator is working properly to segregate healthy chicks from hatchery waste. Confirm that the hatchery has a written protocol for checking for and removing chicks that may become misplaced or stuck if using a mechanical separator.	**20**		
If a macerator is used, ensure it is functioning properly and that no chicks are placed in the macerator until it is operational. If gas is used for euthanasia, ensure no live chicks are in the waste disposal container after this method is used.	**40**		

A live chick in the waste stream after the completion of the euthanasia process is a major non-conformance and an audit failure for the hatchery. All instances of non-conformance must be recorded and corrective action must be taken and documented. If this non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the hatchery section of the audit	**Hatchery Audit Failure**		
Ensure the hatchery has a written program for pips and culled chick euthanasia and disposal. Verify that the hatchery has a written guide for which chick defects result in culling for the welfare of the bird.	**20**		
Check injury reports for processing or equipment injury to chicks. Ensure corrective action is taken and documented if processing injuries occur.	**20**		
Ensure the hatchery has a temperature range goal for the holding room in the hatchery when chicks are present and that the temperature of this room is documented.	**20**		
Ensure the hatchery has a written program in place to retrieve loose chicks from the floor which must happen, at a minimum, after each flock change.	**10**		
If beak trimming is performed, a written SOP must be in place and employees must be properly trained.	**20**		
Review the chick delivery vehicle SOP. Ensure that transport vehicles are equipped with temperature-control capabilities and alarms during transport if the driver is physically separated from the chick environment.	**10**		
C: Hatchery Operations – Point Total	**290**		

D: Growout Operations			
D1: Designated Management, Training and Emergency Plan			
Verify that the growout operation has a person in charge of ensuring proper animal welfare practices and strict adherence to the guidelines.	**20**		
Verify that the growout operation has a written task-specific training program, conducted annually for all employees involved in conducting those tasks. Verify annual training.	**40**		
Ensure that the growout operation has a written plan for disaster response and recovery which may include parameters described in the guidelines.	**10**		
Confirm that the growout operation has an alarm system or regulatory monitoring system in place to alert personnel of a failure of critical systems. Check that the operation has a written plan for temperature, lighting, and ventilation levels within the house for the duration of growout.	**40**		
Confirm that the growout operation has a current contact list displayed.	**10**		
D2: Nutrition and Feeding			
Feed mill must meets good manufacturing practices for feed production and is a Food and Drug Administration licensed feed mill if medicated feeds are produced.	**10**		
Feed formulations are reviewed by a poultry nutritionist.	**10**		
Ensure that all feeding and drinking systems are in proper operation and easily accessible by all birds. Verify that the company has a written water sanitation program to control bacterial growth in the drinker system.	**20**		
Ensure that feed intake and water consumption is monitored.	**20**		

D3: Comfort and Shelter			
House and equipment must be maintained and operated to protect the birds from environmental conditions.	**40**		
Effective biosecurity procedures must be designed, established, and implemented to minimize any negative impacts on bird welfare and protect flock health.	**20**		
Verify that a written SOP is in place for chick placement and brooding.	**40**		
Ensure the facility has a written protocol for minimum ventilation requirements.	**20**		
Ensure sampling and monitoring SOP of atmospheric ammonia (not to exceed 25 ppm) is in place. Document that corrective actions are in place should that number be exceeded.	**20**		
Litter should be loosely compacted when squeezed in the hand. Evaluate two houses per guideline criteria at a minimum. Award points on a sliding scale: Dry and friable litter throughout the majority of house = 40 Caked litter beyond 2 ft of feeders and drinkers = 20 Caked and wet litter throughout the house = 0	**Up to 40**		
D4: Health Care and Monitoring			
Access to a veterinarian experienced in poultry care must be available.	**10**		
Each company must have a written health plan developed in consultation with a veterinarian. Information that should be included in the health plan can be found in the guidelines.	**40**		
Confirm layout period of at least 10 days or written approval if there is a deviation.	**10**		
Verify that mortality and culling are documented at least twice a day, with dead birds removed daily. Confirm that the company has a written plan to respond to sudden increases in mortality.	**20**		

Evaluate feed and water withdrawal practices. Ensure feed withdrawal does not exceed 18 hours prior to slaughter. Ensure water withdrawal does not exceed one hour prior to the start of catch for that house.	**10**		
D5: Flock Husbandry:			
Verify that the stocking density (based on expected market weight) in growout house does not exceed limits set in guidelines.	**40**		
Ensure that birds are provided with a minimum of four hours of darkness every 24 hours. Verify that the flock lighting program has been designed in consultation with a veterinarian or poultry welfare professional, and is supported with internal data and/or scientific evidence of benefit to bird welfare. Points should be awarded based off time period and flock lighting program design separately at 20 points each.	**Up to 40**		
Gait scoring must be done as outlined in the guidelines. Observe 100 birds no earlier than 7 days prior to slaughter. Record the number of birds unable to walk or move after gentle encouragement (Score of 2). Award points on a sliding scale: 0-2 birds = **40** 3-9 birds = **20** ≥10 birds = **0**	**Up to 40**		
Any abuse of birds during the growout phase is a major non-conformance and an audit failure for the growout operation. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Growout Operations Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees at the growout facility.	**Growout Audit Failure**		
D: Growout Operations – Point Total	**570**		

E. Catching and Transportation			
Any abuse of birds during catching or transportation is a major non-conformance and an audit failure for the Catching and Transportation area. All instances of non-conformance must be recorded and corrective action must be taken and documented. If this non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the catching and transport section of the audit	**Catching Audit Failure**		
Verify that the live-haul department has a person in charge of ensuring proper animal welfare practices and strict adherence to the guidelines. Confirm that an individual responsible for humanely euthanizing birds unfit for travel is identified by the company.	**20**		
Verify that the live-haul department has a written task-specific training program, conducted annually for all employees involved in conducting those tasks. Verify annual training.	**40**		
Ensure that the live-haul department has a written plan for emergency response and recovery.	**20**		
Catchers may not lift, carry, or drag birds by the wings or necks. Ensure birds are being caught by their legs and are not placed on their backs. Observe five cages being loaded.	**40**		
The number of birds in the catcher's hand depends on the size of the bird and should not cause injury to the birds. For birds weighing more than four pounds, the maximum number of birds per hand is five. If a company employs a mechanical catching system, ensure that a protocol has been developed to ensure humane handling of birds	**20**		
Inspect a total of 100 individual compartments (not 100 transport modules) on two empty trailers for signs of damage per guideline criteria. Award points based on a sliding scale: < 3 damaged compartments = **20** 3-5 damaged compartments = **10** > 5 damaged compartments = **0**	**Up to 20**		

Loss of birds from trailers during transportation is a major non-conformance and an audit failure for the Catching and Transportation area. All instances of non-conformance must be recorded and corrective action must be taken and documented. If this non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the catching and transport section of the audit.	**Catching Audit Failure**		
Density in the transport modules should permit the birds to sit during transport without being on top of one another (in a single layer). Examine 5 trailer loads with birds to ensure all birds are in a single layer.	**40**		
E: Catching and Transportation – Point Total	**200**		
F: Processing Operations			
Any abuse of birds during processing is a major non-conformance and audit failure for the Processing Operations area. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If this non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the processing operations section of the audit.	**Processing Audit Failure**		
Verify that the processing operation has a person in charge of ensuring proper animal welfare practices and strict adherence to the guidelines.	**20**		
Ensure that the processing operation has a written task-specific training program, which must include euthanasia training, conducted annually for all employees involved in handling live animals. Verify annual training.	**40**		
Confirm that the processing operation has a written emergency response plan in place in the event of a utility outage, mechanical breakdown, or other event which prevents birds from being processed.	**40**		
Ensure that the company has a program and equipment for keeping birds comfortable while trailers are being unloaded.	**20**		

Verify that there is a procedure in place to retrieve loose birds that emphasizes timeliness and worker safety.	**20**		
Holding times must be kept to the minimum and documentation should be available if the total time from catching to slaughter is greater than 12 hours.	**20**		
Ensure that birds that are dead on arrival (DOA) are documented on a flock basis. DOA's averaging over 0.5% on a weekly basis requires a documented investigation and corrective action if necessary. Confirm that the plant has a written policy for humane euthanasia.	**40**		
Live birds in the DOA bin is a major non-conformance and an audit failure for the Processing Operations area. All instances of non-conformance must be recorded and corrective action must be taken and documented. If this non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the processing operations section of the audit.	**Processing Audit Failure**		
Evaluate the unloading process. Verify that cages are lifted and moved from trailers in a manner not to injure birds and any birds remaining in cages are carefully removed.	**20**		
A live bird left in a cage module before reloading is a major non-conformance. All live birds retrieved from cage modules must be humanely returned to the processing system, if uninjured. Observe 5 cage modules for instances of live birds being left in a module before reloading. Non-conformances must be recorded and corrective actions made in all circumstances. If a non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the Processing Operations Section of the audit and must result in retraining of all employees involved in processing live birds.	**Processing Audit Failure**		
Verify that the shackling area consists of adequate space, lighting, and air quality. Ensure that the shackles are well-maintained. Observe 500 shackles.	**20**		

Observe 500 birds being shackled. Ensure that shackles are properly-sized so that birds can be shackled without causing visible injury. A bird being visibly injured during shackling is a major non-conformance and an audit failure for the Processing Operations area. All instances of non-conformance must be recorded and corrective action must be taken and documented. If this non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the processing operations section of the audit.	**Processing Audit Failure**		
Evaluate bird comfort from shackling to stunning. Observe bird activity to ensure compliance.	**20**		
Observe 500 birds after stunning. Verify that the equipment is functioning properly and birds are being rendered insensible. Award points based on a sliding scale: ≤5 birds un-stunned = **40** 6 to 10 birds un-stunned = **20** > 10 birds un-stunned = **0**	**Up to 40**		
Observe 500 birds after the automatic knife. Verify that the automatic knife is effectively cutting blood vessels to induce a rapid bleed-out. Award points on a sliding scale: ≤ 5 birds un-cut = **40** 6 to 10 bird un-cut = **20** > 10 birds un-cut = **0**	**Up to 40**		
Confirm that a backup employee is present after the automatic knife to induce bleed-out on any birds not effectively killed by the equipment.	**10**		
Evaluate 500 birds after the picker to ensure that no live birds entered the scalder. A bird with uncut carotid arteries after the picker is a major non-conformance and results in an audit failure for the entire Processing section. All instances of non-conformance must be recorded and corrective action must be taken and documented. If this non-conformance is witnessed by the auditor, it results in an automatic audit failure of the processing operations section of the audit.	**Processing Audit Failure**		
Ensure the company has a monitoring program in place to monitor wing and leg injuries.	**20**		

Evaluate 500 birds for broken or dislocated wings as outlined in the guidelines immediately before or after the stunner. Use the AAAP Wing Injury Guide (Appendix 6) to evaluate wings. Award points on sliding scale: ≤ 3.0% (≤ 15 wing injuries) **= 40** 3.2 to 4.0% (16 to 20 wing injuries) **= 20** > 4.0 % (> 20 wing injuries) **= 0**	**Up to 40**		
Evaluate 500 birds for leg injuries as outlined in the guidelines after scalding and picking. Use the AAAP Leg Injury Guide (Appendix 7) to evaluate legs. Award points on a sliding scale: ≤ 0.4% (≤ 2 leg injuries) **= 40** 0.6% (3 leg injuries) = **20** > 0.6 % (> 3 leg injuries) = **0**	**Up to 40**		
Evaluate a random sample of 100 birds (200 paws) at the plant for footpad health. Use the AAAP Paw Scoring System (Appendix 4) to score paws as either a pass or fail. 90% of the paws scored (180 out of 200) must pass.	**20**		
F: Processing Operations – Point Total	**470**		

Guidance for Conducting Audits Under National Chicken Council Animal Welfare Guidelines

1). **Facilities to be Audited**. The Company may choose to audit all of its operations or only a subset of its operations, depending on its needs with respect to its customers. The audit applies only to facilities or complexes named on the checklist.

2). **Audit of a Complex.** If asked to verify compliance for an entire complex, the Auditor should expect to visit a hatchery, a processing plant, and a sample of the farms associated with that plant. At least three growout houses on different farms are audited in connection with each complex. One of these farms should have chicks that are seven days old or less and one of these farms should have birds within seven days of processing. Average scores for all audited growout houses should be taken to obtain a final score for the Growout Operations Section (Section D) of the audit. A non-conformance witnessed by the Auditor at any growout house results in an automatic audit failure of the Growout Operations Section of the audit.

3). **Audit of a Company.** If a company-wide audit is desired, the Company may elect to contract with more than one auditor in the interest of getting the audits done in a timely manner. The company may also choose to audit only those facilities that serve a particular customer.

4). **Written Report**. The Animal Welfare Checklist prepared by the National Chicken Council as adopted or amended by the Company is the only authorized basis for an audit of the NCC Guidelines. If, however, the company desires additional information from the auditor, it may elect to ask you to prepare a report on your observations and recommendations in addition to the checklist; but in all cases the checklist must be completed.

5). **"Free To Roam."** The Animal Welfare Guidelines state: "Birds are allowed to roam freely throughout the growing area." The growing area is defined as either the entire house or a subdivision thereof if dividers are used during brooding or other stage of growout.

6). **Initial Evaluation of a flock in a growout house:** Enter the house quietly and do not startle the birds. Stand quietly at the door for several minutes to monitor the birds for displays of normal behaviors such as dust bathing, posturing, eating, drinking, etc. Most of the birds should be sitting and relatively quiet, with background chirping or clucking.

Standard Contract for Audits Under National Chicken Council Animal Welfare Guidelines

This AGREEMENT was made on [*date*]_____ between [*Company*] _____ and [*Contractor*] _____

1). **Services To Be Performed.** Contractor agrees to perform Animal Welfare audit(s) of Company facilities for purposes of verifying the facilities' compliance with the Animal Welfare Guidelines of the National Chicken Council, as adopted or amended by the Company.

2). **Time For Performance.** Contractor agrees to complete the performance of these services on or before [date] _____.

3). **Estimated Time Required.** The Company estimates that Contractor will require ____ day(s) on site to complete the proposed audit. Any days, or portions thereof, in excess of this estimate are subject to prior approval by the Company.

4). **Payment**. In consideration of Contractor's performance in full of these services, Client agrees to pay Contractor as follows: $____ per day on site or in travel to and from site.

5). **Out of Pocket Expenses**. Actual, reasonable expenses related to the contractor's work, including meals, long distance telephone charges, travel, hotel, fax transmission, copying, postage and shipping will be reimbursed by the Company.

6). **Invoices.** Contractor will submit invoices for all services performed and attach receipts for all actual expenses.

7). **Basis of Audit**. Contractor agrees that the Animal Welfare Audit Checklist, as prepared by the National Chicken Council and adopted or amended by the Company, shall be the basis for the Contractor's audit of the Company's facilities. Company shall provide Contractor with sufficient copies of the checklist for the facilities to be audited.

8). **Work Product**. The desired work product consists of complete checklists for each facility audited. No other report will be provided by Contractor, unless specifically requested by the Company. It is agreed and understood that the completed checklists are

the property of Company, and that Company regards such checklists as confidential proprietary business information. Contractor agrees not to release the checklists, or copies thereof, to third parties without the express written permission of Company.

9). **Other Clients.** Contractor retains the right to perform services for other clients.

10). **Independent Contractor.** For purposes of this agreement, Contractor is an independent contractor, and, under no circumstances, shall be considered or treated as an employee of Company. This agreement creates no partnership or any kind of joint undertaking or venture between Contractor and Company.

11). **Entire Agreement**. This agreement represents the entire agreement and understanding between the parties, and supersedes all prior written and oral negotiations. This agreement may not be amended or modified, except in writing signed by both parties.

CONTRACTOR **CLIENT**

_____ _____

_____ _____

APPENDIX 1

Suggested Topics for Animal Welfare Training of Personnel Working in the Broiler Industry

(can be used for initial training and/or annual re-training)

1. **Introduction**
    a. What is Animal Welfare
        i. Provide company's description for animal welfare.
        ii. Discuss the connection between animal health (physical characteristics) with animal well-being (behavioral characteristics)
            1. Provide examples of how the well-being of a bird (behavior) may reflect that the bird has a health problem (physical defect), or vice versa.
        iii. Discuss how animal welfare is relevant and critical to the role of each person in the company who is involved with live animals (production, transport, vaccination, veterinary, nutrition, etc.)

2. **Company Expectations for Animal Welfare**
    a. Provide company's animal welfare position or statement
    b. Emphasize the importance of each employee's responsibility for meeting company expectations and best management practices (Animal Care, Animal Handling, Euthanasia, etc.)
    c. Discuss the consequences for animal welfare violations
    d. Emphasize the company's expectation for any employee to immediately report any concerns or observations of abusive behavior or mistreatment of animals to a company supervisor
    e. Mention the importance of animal welfare for the birds, for the company, for the customers and how audits may be used to verify compliance

3. **Learning Objectives for Broiler Health and Behavior (specific to work area)**
    a. Discuss and give examples for normal bird behavior and activity
    b. Discuss and give examples of expected environment for good poultry health
        i. Include what temperature, lighting, noise, will be "normal" in the area
        ii. Include how this can impact behavior and health if it is not correct
    c. Discuss company expectations for biosecurity and how this is important for good bird health, preventing the introduction of disease, and how it relates to welfare

4. **Learning Objectives for Animal Handling (specific to working area(s) of employee)**
    a. Discuss and demonstrate proper technique of handling chickens
        i. Emphasize that deliberate abuse is not tolerated, and include what is not allowed per company policy for bird handling
    b. Discuss expectations for employees working in the area with regards to movement of staff members, equipment, etc. so that bird welfare can be optimized and so that risk for injury, entrapment and stress can be minimized
        i. Include how to work with broiler behavior to achieve safe handling (working in dim lighting, moving slowly, avoiding loud noises, etc.)
    c. Discuss and give examples of what is not allowed for handling and what can result in animal welfare violations
        i. Include how improper handling may result in bird injury and/or stress
    d. Discuss how to move groups of birds safely and securely, and how to monitor and protect them from injury and damage during transport
    e. Discuss the importance of evaluating equipment that may be damaged or may require repair <u>before</u> using it to move or load birds.
    f. Discuss the importance of, and expectations for, maintaining bird comfort during holding periods

5. **Learning Objectives for Culling and Euthanasia (specific to working area of employee)**
    a. Discuss and give examples of poultry that may be defective (anatomically), ill or injured and need to be considered for culling and humane euthanasia
    b. Discuss what euthanasia is, why it is used and the goals of effective euthanasia
    c. Discuss what methods of euthanasia are (and are not) allowed by the company
        i. Demonstrate how to hold the bird and how to perform the method.
        ii. Discuss how to verify that the euthanasia was effective
        iii. Discuss what the ‘normal reaction’ is for the bird after euthanasia
    d. Discuss what should be done for disposal of the bird(s) after euthanasia

APPENDIX 2

Gait Scoring in the Commercial Broiler

For most audits, the auditor will only watch the broiler and their movement. However if a "gait score" is required, the U.S. Gait Scoring technique is recommended (Gait Scoring in the Commercial Broiler. Office of Agricultural Communications, Box 9625, Mississippi State, MS 39762. (662) 325-2262).

Broilers may need to be gently encouraged to walk. If the broilers become stressed, especially in hot weather, discontinue scoring immediately

Score 0 – Bird should walk at least 5 feet, and while the bird may appear ungainly, there are no visible signs of lameness.

Score 1 – Bird should walk at least 5 feet, but appears awkward, uneven in steps.

Score 2 – Bird will not walk 5 feet without sitting down or there is obvious lameness.

APPENDIX 3

Evaluating Lighting Programs

Birds have much better visual acuity than humans and the way a bird sees is different from humans.[7]

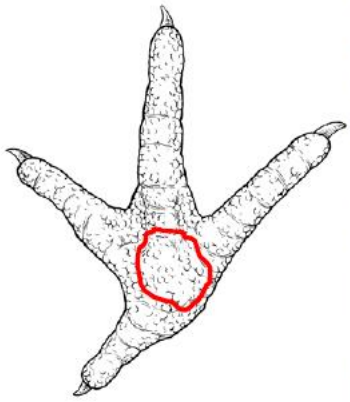
Birds are sensitive to light levels, displaying behavioral and physiologic responses. Poultry flock managers use lighting programs to manage a breeder flock's reproductive activity. Lighting programs have also been developed to help manage broiler flocks by reducing behavioral problems, controlling growth and improving musculoskeletal development. Lighting programs may need to be adjusted to account for breed differences, disease conditions, or environmental changes.

Lighting programs will vary depending on the size of the broiler when it is taken to market. The lighting program will also depend on whether natural light (open-sided house) or artificial light (solid or dark-curtain walled house), or some combination of the two are used. Continuous or near-continuous lighting has detrimental effects on broiler health and behavior and must not be used. There must also be sufficient contrast in light intensity between the day and night periods. While there numerous lighting programs available, NCC does not currently recommend any specific program, only that the overall welfare of the flock is addressed.

[7] Meyer, D. B. (1986). The Avian Eye. In P. D. Sturkie (Ed.), Avian Physiology (4th ed., pp. 38-48). New York, NY: Springer-Verlag. doi:10.1007/978-1-4612-4862-0

APPENDIX 4

American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) Paw Scoring System



Broiler Paw Scoring Guide

Paw scoring is an important part of welfare audits for broiler flocks. To optimize scoring accuracy & to minimize welfare concerns with handling broilers in the field, broiler paws should be evaluated in the processing plant to more precisely and efficiently assess the bottom of the foot. The paw includes the broiler foot pad (red circled area) and the toes.

At the processing plant, broiler paws should be assessed after the removal of the cuticle, or alternatively after paw cleaning. A random sample of 200 paws (representing 100 broilers) should be evaluated per flock and a pass or failure score should be assigned to each paw.

A result of 90% (or greater) of paws with a pass score is considered to be acceptable for animal welfare when evaluating broiler paws.

PASS (Score Criteria)

- Normal color* and skin
  (*note, skin color may vary from yellow to white due to breed or diet)
- Slight discoloration or darkened skin
- Hyperkeratosis (thickening of skin)
- Lesion covering less than 1/2 of foot pad

Pass (washed paws with no lesions & normal skin color)

Pass (paws with no cuticle and normal skin color)

Pass (washed, post-scald paws with scab covering less than 1/2 the area of the foot pad)

Pass (paws with no cuticle & some color variation, healed skin and no ulcerations)

FAIL (Score Criteria)

- Erosions, ulceration, or scab formation that covers more than 1/2 of foot pad and may include the toes
- Hemorrhages or swelling of foot pad

Fail (washed paws)
Ulceration is present and lesion is more than 1/2 the area of the foot pad; lesions are also present on the toes

Fail (paws without cuticle)

Ulceration is present and the lesion is more than 1/2 the area of the foot pad. Swelling of the foot pad is also visible.

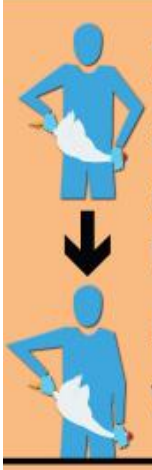
Produced by the AAAP Animal Welfare & Mgmt Committee, 2015

APPENDIX 5

University of Arkansas Center for Food Animal Wellbeing Cervical Dislocation Training

How To Perform Cervical Dislocation

1. Grasp the chicken near the feet or below the hocks using the non-dominate hand. Do NOT hold between the hocks and thigh.



2. Place the other hand's thumb and index finger at the base of the skull on either side of the head. Using your leg for support as necessary, rotate the head backward while pulling straight down on the neck.

3. When you feel complete seperation of the neck vertebrae place the bird on its back on the ground. Reflexive wing flapping and leg movement will occur for several minutes.

4. To verify death observe for rhythmic breathing, and touch the eye to check for blink reflex.

Center for Food Animal Wellbeing
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

APPENDIX 6

American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) Broiler Wing Injury Scoring Guide

Broiler Wing Injury Scoring Guide

Assessing wing damage is an important part of broiler welfare audits. Wing injury can result from incorrect handling during catch, improper use of or poorly maintained equipment, rough transport conditions, incorrect handling during shackling or sub-optimal stunning conditions. Evaluation of wing injury and damage includes broken and dislocated wings. To optimize scoring accuracy during the broiler welfare audit, wings should be evaluated at the processing plant before or after stunning, and always before feather removal. The auditor should be positioned to face the breast of the bird and should evaluate both wings on each bird for the 500 bird sample. Per NCC guidelines, the goal is zero wing injuries; however, less than or equal to 3% (≤15/500) of birds evaluated with broken or dislocated wings is considered a passing score. (Note: Birds with damage to both wings should only be counted once during the 500 bird sample.)

PASS (Score Criteria)

- Normal wing posture
- No dislocation or broken wing bone noted

Pass (normal wing posture with wings tucked close to body)

FAIL (Score Criteria)

- Abnormal wing posture
- Broken wing bone(s) visible

Fail (broken or dislocated bone is visible (circle); abnormal wing posture)

Fail (wing posture is not normal and wing hangs straight down (arrow) due to dislocation)

Note: Posture of the wings is the primary criteria for this portion of the audit. Birds with normal wing posture will have their wings tucked close to the body or may have wings slightly extended from the side of the breast. Both wing appearance and wing position should be evaluated for accuracy during the audit to determine if any broken or dislocated wings are present in the 500 bird sample being observed. Since wing damage can occur post-mortem due to wing contact with feather removal equipment, evaluate wings prior to feather removal for audit accuracy.

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APPENDIX 7

American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) Broiler Leg Injury Scoring Guide

Broiler Leg Injury Scoring Guide

Leg injury scoring is an important part of welfare audits since broilers are handled by the leg at the farm & at the processing plant. Leg injury can result from incorrect handling by staff, from equipment that is not used correctly, from poorly maintained equipment, and from rough transport conditions. Leg injury scoring includes bruising (hematomas) on the leg and broken leg bones. To optimize scoring accuracy, legs should be evaluated at the processing plant after carcass scalding and feather picking of the carcass, but before chilling. The auditor should be positioned to see the keel of the bird and should evaluate both legs on each bird for the 500 bird sample. Per NCC guidelines, the goal is to have less than 0.4% of birds evaluated with injuries and bruising related to broiler catching, transport and shackling. (This is equivalent to 2 birds with failing scores for leg injury out of a 500 bird sample.)

PASS (Score Criteria)

- Normal skin color* and no broken bone
  (*note, skin color may vary from yellow to white due to breed or diet)
- Slight discoloration or darkened skin
- Bruise covering less than the size of a quarter

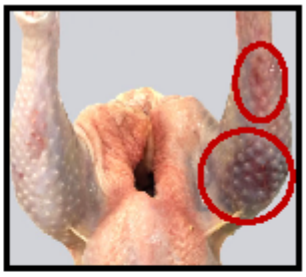
FAIL (Score Criteria)

- Broken leg bone is visible
- Bruise covering more than the size of a quarter
- Various bruises covering more than the size of a quarter

Pass (drumstick with normal skin color & no bruising)

Pass (drumstick has slight bruising but < quarter size)

Fail (drumstick with bruise > quarter size)



Fail (drumstick with various bruises covering > quarter size)

Note: If both legs are injured on one bird, this counts as one 'leg injury failure' for auditing purposes.

Guide for Coloration of Bruising *(Gregory et al, 1992)*

Estimated Time of Bruising	*Color of Bruise on Skin*
2 minutes	*red*
12 hours	*dark red/purple*
24 hours	*light green/purple*
48 hours	*yellow/orange/light green*

Note: Bruises and leg damage can occur on the thigh and on the drumstick of the bird. The coloration of bruises associated with incorrect handling during catching, transport and shackling of broilers is normally dark red or purple as shown in the photos above.

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