

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection
Service

**REPORT OF HUMANE HANDLING
VERIFICATION VISIT**

1. CASE NUMBER:
ABC0000000000YZ

2. EST. NUMBER:
M0000+P0000

3. EST. ID:
0000

4a. ESTABLISHMENT NAME:

Unnamed Plant

4b. ESTABLISHMENT ADDRESS/ P.O. BOX

555 No Street

4c. CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

Nowhere, ST 00000

5a. NAME OF DVMS

DVMO Awesome

5b. NAME OF PHV

PHV Wonderful

5c. NAME OF IIC

IIC Fabulous

6. DATE(S) OF VISIT (MM/DD/YY)

FROM: 2/27/2024 TO: 2/27/2024

7. CIRCUIT VISITED (4-
digit no.)

0000

8. PLANT SIZE

Large Small Very Small

9. SPECIES SLAUGHTERED

Cattle

Goat

Sheep

Swine

Other

10a. VOLUME (Heads/ Day)
150.0

10b. SPEED (Heads/ Hour)
32.0

10c. ANIMALS OBSERVED
45.0

11. STUNNING METHOD

12. REASON FOR VISIT

- Electric - head only
- Bolt-pneumatic
- Bolt-hand held
- Rifle/shotgun
- Pistol
- None - Ritual Slaughter
- Electric-head/thorax
- Controlled Atmosphere

- District Office Direction
- Routine Visit
- Repetitive Non-Compliance
- Data-Driven Visit
- Suspicion of Violations
- Special Correlation/Other 30-day Verification Plan Visit
- Egregious Violation
- Religious Exemption

13. SYSTEMATIC APPROACH USED?

- Yes No IMPLEMENTATION NOT ASSESSED PER THIS DATE

IF NO, CHECK ITEMS BELOW THAT HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED; NUMBERS CORRESPOND TO THE FOUR STEPS OF THE SYSTEMATIC APPROACH

- 1. Initial assessment performed.
- 2. Facilities design and handling practices minimize excitement, discomfort, and injury to livestock.
- 3. Periodic evaluations performed on handling methods and, if applicable, stunning methods.
- 4. Handling practices and facilities modified when necessary.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- No Action NR by IIC NOIE Suspension/Withdrawal Other Continued verification by IPP

FOR ALL RESPONSES, OTHER THAN "NO ACTION". CHECK ALL CATEGORIES BELOW THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATION:

- Inclement Weather
- Truck Unloading
- Water/Feed
- Ante-mortem
- Suspect/Disabled
- Prod Use
- Slips/Falls
- Stunning Effectiveness
- Return to Consciousness
- Facilities

15. NARRATIVE REPORT

Correlated With:

Unnamed Plant personnel: Mr. Plant Person, Chief Operating Officer

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) personnel: Dr. PHV Wonderful, Supervisory Public Health Veterinarian, SPHV
 Correlation with Dr. Wonderful was conducted separately and included pre-assessment findings and review of appropriate sections of regulations 9 CFR 313, Federal Register Notice (FRN), September 2004 – Systematic Approach to Humane Handling; FSIS Directives 6000.1, 6090.1, 6100.1, 6100.4, 6600.1, 6900.2, 10,800.1; 9 CFR 500 (Rules of Practice); FMIA, HMSA of 1978, and various FSIS Notices.

Summary of Data Assessment Prior to Visit:

Establishment M00000, Unnamed Plant is a small livestock slaughter and processing facility that slaughters bovine approximately five days per week on one shift. The establishment slaughters all animals under a Halal ritual exemption, and they typically apply captive bolt stunning after ritual slaughter. On January 16, 2024, the establishment was issued a Notice of Intended Enforcement (NOIE) for an egregious incident involving multiple ineffective stuns of a non-ambulatory cow with a hand-held captive bolt device (HHCB). After receiving corrective actions and preventive measures, the NOIE was placed in Deferral (NOD) on January 16, 2024. No new or on-going humane handling issues were identified during the previous verification visit on February 17, 2023. Prior to this visit on February 27, 2024, Public Health Information System (PHIS) data associated with the verification of the Livestock Humane Handling task for the time period from February 19, 2023 through February 19, 2024 was reviewed. There was one noncompliance record (NR) and one memorandum of interview (MOI) associated with livestock humane handling documented during the time period reviewed.

🕒 On 01/26/2024 IPP documented noncompliance with multiple ineffective stuns of a non-ambulatory cow, deemed egregious and NOIE issued.

🕒 On 03/13/2023 IPP – IPP documented concerns with a cow that was entrapped by her head in the final drive alley to restrainer, cow unable to get free and went down-euthanized.

The in-plant inspection team is submitting weekly summary reports on a regular basis, and these were reviewed prior to this visit.

Systematic Approach Comments:

This establishment has a Systematic Approach to Humane Handling of Livestock for Slaughter as defined by the FRN Federal Volume 69, No. 174, Thursday, September 9th, 2004 [Docket No. 04-013N]; Humane Handling and Slaughter Requirements and the Merits of a Systematic Approach to Meet Such Requirements. As the establishment was issued a NOIE, the humane handling program was not considered robust at this time.

Summary of Reason(s) for Recommendation:

The recommendation of “continued verification by the in-plant inspection team” was based on the finding that the establishment was in compliance with the applicable parts of the humane handling regulations (9 CFR 313) at the time of this visit and during the abeyance period for the NOIE.

Findings Narrative Report:

Entry Meeting:

An informal meeting was conducted with establishment management prior to beginning the humane handling verification visit. A brief entrance meeting was held with FSIS personnel where I explained the purpose for this visit and what areas I would be reviewing to determine compliance with the humane handling regulations. I asked if they had any questions on the visit and provided the opportunity to address any concerns.

Direct observations of the humane handling practices in the livestock receiving, holding, and stunning area were made as part of the verification visit. The livestock holding pens, driveways, and ramps at this establishment were in good repair.

We noticed a loose piece of metal, at the exit door of one livestock trailer, but no animal injuries were observed. The floors of the pens, ramps, and driveways were constructed of poured concrete and most pens were roughened to provide for better footing. There was a slight build-up of manure in most pens, due to the length of time cattle were present in the pen. We noticed one animal slip, down on front legs, as it was being moved from the holding pen into the back alley during antemortem (AM) inspection. All areas were inside of the building which protected them from adverse weather conditions.

One unloading ramp for goose-neck trailers is not under roof. The holding pens had watering devices in them. All bovines have room to lie down in the pens if they desired. No animals had been held for more than twenty four hours so no feed was required. It is unusual for cattle to be held longer than twenty-four hours.

No specific U. S. Suspect pen was identified at this establishment. Signage was available so that any of the holding pens could be designated as a suspect pen. All holding pens were under roof inside of the barn area and all of these pens provided sufficient protection from adverse weather conditions for animals awaiting disposition by the inspector. Multiple hand-held captive bolt devices are available for use in euthanizing animals as necessary but was not observed during today's visit.

All animals observed were moved with a minimum of excitement and discomfort. No animals were forced to move faster than a normal walking speed. A battery-operated electric prod was available for use in the single file chute to the restrainer and was utilized appropriately to move animals to the restrainer.

Employees used alternative driving implements such as plastic rattle paddles/bats and flags to direct animal movement. No driving implements were used excessively or inappropriately during this verification. A butt-gate is present at the entrance of the restrainer but was not used to push animals while in the restrainer. In the area prior to the restrainer balking was noted during movement to the restrainer. This required significant effort by establishment personnel to motivate animals to move through this area. No pipes, sharp or pointed objects, and other items which would cause injury to animals were used to drive livestock during this verification.

Animals at this establishment are slaughtered ritually (Halal) and on the day of the visit, stunning was performed following the cut. This restrainer limited the free movement of animals sufficiently to allow for the ritual cut and was used in a manner that minimized stress and discomfort and did not result in animal injury. The operator was patient and accurate in the placement and discharge of the stunner. The stunning instrument appeared appropriately powered to produce immediate unconsciousness in the size, type, breed, and sex of animals slaughtered. All animals observed ritually slaughtered and stunned were unconscious and remained unconscious prior to shackling, hosting and cutting.

Verification Activity:

1 - Training records reviewed from initial incident/training. No new employees trained recently.

2 - HHCB and firearm maintenance records reviewed. No hands-on observation of stunning maintenance procedures during this VP visit.

3 - No animals euthanized during this visit. Records reviewed for previous days. Animal welfare audit records reviewed. No stunning noncompliance documented by establishment. A few audit findings were noted for skids, but no slips or falls.

4 - All animals observed received an initial ritual cut, followed by a HHCB stun before release from the restrainer. All animals remained unconscious.

5 - All animals observed on the bleed rail remained unconscious.

Exit Meeting:

An exit meeting was conducted with Mr. Person and Dr. Wonderful on February 27, 2024. I presented findings during the humane handling verification visit that the establishment was in compliance with the applicable regulations at this visit. The establishment has developed a humane handling program that meets the criteria for a Systematic Approach as described in the FRN of September 9th, 2004, for a Systematic Approach to Humane Handling of Livestock for Slaughter. As the establishment was issued a NOIE, the humane handling program was not considered robust at this time of the visit. We discussed the observations of slips during AM inspection and balking within the single-file alleyway and at the restrainer entrance. We also talked about the ritual slaughter process and the practice of HHCB stunning after the ritual cut. Additional guidance material on ritual slaughter was provide electronically to the SPHV/FLS and will be further discussed by IPP at forthcoming weekly meetings. We discussed the verification plan and the associated establishment records. I stated that in-plant inspection personnel will continue verifying the verification plan for at least another thirty (30) days. I provided establishment management the opportunity to comment on the findings of the visit and ask questions. No other issues concerning humane handling were discussed and the meeting was concluded.