

Poultry Ante-Mortem Inspection Job Aid

Instructions: Review this Job Aid and policy documents, regulations, and inspection methodologies with a mentor.

Acronyms/Definitions

- Ante-Mortem (AM) Inspection – The term ante-mortem means “before death.” Poultry AM inspection is the inspection of live birds prior to being slaughtered.
- Animal Disposition Reporting (ADR) – Function in PHIS IPP use to document findings made during post-mortem poultry inspection.

Task Overview

- IPP perform poultry AM inspection to prevent diseased animals from entering the food supply. Products that are not adulterated qualify to bear the mark of inspection.
- Poultry AM inspection regulations are found in [9 CFR 381.70 to 381.75](#).
- The required facilities for AM inspection of poultry are covered in [9 CFR 381.36\(b\)](#); a suspect pen is required for adequate ratite inspection.
- The procedures in this document are for poultry other than ratites. For ratite AM inspection procedures, see [FSIS Directive 6170.1](#).

Basic Procedure

- Perform poultry AM inspection **on the day of slaughter** by observing poultry in coops or batteries before or after removal from the truck ([FSIS Directive 6100.3](#), Sec. IV.).
 - Observe the overall condition of the birds, including the head, with attention to the eyes, the legs, and the body of the birds; and
 - Observe whether there are any unusual swellings or any other abnormalities on the birds.
- Notify the IIC when multiple birds are observed exhibiting these signs of disease that may indicate disease conditions throughout the flock:
 - An abnormal number of moribund (dying) birds
 - Swelling about the head and eyes
 - Edema of the wattles
 - Gasping and sneezing
 - Off-colored feces
 - Diarrhea
 - Skin lesions
 - Lameness
 - Torticollis (twisted neck) (e.g., wry neck)
 - Bone or joint enlargement

Note: If the IIC is not a Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO), the IIC is to consult with a VMO if they have questions about appropriate dispositions.

- IICs are to designate any birds on AM inspection as **“U.S. Suspect”** that do not clearly show but they suspect may have a disease or condition covered in [9 CFR Part 381](#) that may cause condemnation of part or the entire carcass on post-mortem inspection. IICs are to verify the establishment:

1. Segregates birds identified as suspects on AM inspection and slaughters those birds separately; and
 2. Releases poultry for treatment only under the control of the appropriate State or Federal officials. IICs are to notify the District Office through supervisory channels and follow the instructions in [FSIS Directive 6000.1](#) (Sec. IV.) when they suspect that birds are affected with a reportable or foreign animal disease.
- On AM inspection, IICs are to condemn any birds with diseases or conditions that would warrant condemnation on post-mortem inspection under [9 CFR 381.80 to 381.93](#).
 - Verify birds condemned on AM inspection do not enter the establishment for slaughter, and that the birds are disposed of appropriately ([9 CFR 381.95](#)).
 - For birds that are dead-on-arrival (DOA):
 - Verify DOAs are identified, counted, and weighed, and reported on a Poultry Condemnation Certificate; record the number in the ADR function in PHIS.
 - Verify DOAs are not dressed nor conveyed into any department of the establishment where poultry products are prepared or held. Verify the establishment removes DOAs through their live-hang sorting activities to prevent them from entering the slaughter operation.
 - Evidence of ongoing failure to properly handle DOAs is noncompliance.
 - Discuss DOA concerns in the weekly meeting and document in an MOI within the Meeting with Establishment Management task.
 - Document an NR for **systemic failure** citing [9 CFR 416.4\(d\)](#) and [9 CFR 381.71\(a\)](#) under an SPS verification task, if a trend of incidents indicates that the establishment lacks process controls to prevent DOAs from being hung on the shackle line and entering the slaughter operation.
 - If IPP observe the establishment failing to handle poultry in a manner that prevents needless injury and suffering, see [FSIS Directive 6110.1](#) for verification of poultry good commercial practices.

Discussion Points

- Discuss the importance of identifying disease conditions on poultry AM that affect the entire flock.

Knowledge Check

- Who does the IIC notify if they suspect that birds are affected with a reportable or foreign animal disease?

Resources

- [FSIS Directive 6100.3](#) – *Ante-Mortem and Post-Mortem Poultry Inspection*
- [FSIS Directive 6170.1](#) – *Ratite Ante-Mortem and Post-Mortem Inspection*
- [FSIS Directive 6000.1](#) – *Responsibilities Related to Foreign Animal Diseases and Reportable Conditions*