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FSIS Compliance Guide for a Systematic Approach to the Humane Handling of Livestock

FSIS (Food Safety and Inspection Service) of the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) developed this guide to promote a systematic approach to achieve compliance with the [9 CFR Part 313](#) regulatory requirements for humane slaughter of livestock. FSIS is committed to providing establishments the best assistance possible.

Preface

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has published this guide to assist establishments in complying with humane handling requirements. This guide represents the Agency's current thinking on a systematic approach to humane handling of livestock. FSIS encourages slaughter establishments to use the guide.

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Patriots Plaza 3
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Room 8-163B, Mailstop 3782
Washington, DC 20250-3700

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FSIS Compliance Guide for a Systematic Approach to the Humane Handling of Livestock

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Introduction

This is the first edition of the FSIS Compliance Guide for a Systematic Approach to the Humane Handling of Livestock. FSIS developed this guide to promote a systematic approach to achieve compliance with the [9 CFR Part 313](#) regulatory requirements for humane handling and slaughter of livestock. The guide also provides a sample humane handling plan and an assessment tool. FSIS is committed to providing establishments the best assistance possible.

FSIS believes that a well-implemented systematic approach for humane handling is the best way to achieve the best practices for humane handling and slaughter of livestock. This guide describes a systematic approach that FSIS believes represents the current best practices.

This guide does not include all items that could be included in an establishment's development and implementation of a systematic approach to humane handling and should not serve to limit the design of a systematic approach. The guide is simply a starting point for those establishments needing guidance and assistance in establishing a systematic approach.

KEY INFORMATION

What is a systematic approach to humane handling?

With a systematic approach, establishments focus on treating livestock in such a manner as to minimize excitement, discomfort, and accidental injury the entire time they hold livestock in connection with slaughter.

Background

In the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA), Congress declared that humane handling and slaughter of livestock was public policy.¹ The HMSA states, "that the use of humane methods in the slaughter of livestock prevents needless suffering; results in safer and better working conditions for persons engaged in the slaughtering industry; brings about improvement of products and economies in slaughtering operations; and produces other benefits for producers, processors, and consumers which tend to expedite an orderly flow of livestock and livestock products in interstate and foreign commerce."

Congress amended the HMSA in 1978 to provide USDA the authority to inspect slaughterhouses for compliance with the HMSA and to penalize violators. The HMSA is referenced in the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) (21 USC 603²) and is implemented by FSIS humane handling and slaughter regulations found in 9 CFR Part 313. The FMIA provides that, for the purposes of preventing inhumane slaughter of

How do I get answers to my questions?

You can access FSIS assistance with this guide through [askFSIS](#) or by telephone at 1-800-233-3935.

¹ 7 USC 1901 - It is therefore declared to be the policy of the United States that the slaughtering of livestock and the handling of livestock in connection with slaughter shall be carried out only by humane methods.

² 21 USC 603(b) - For the purpose of preventing the inhumane slaughtering of livestock, the Secretary shall cause to be made, by inspectors appointed for that purpose, an examination and inspection of the method by which amenable species are slaughtered and handled in connection with slaughter in the slaughtering establishments inspected under this chapter. The Secretary may refuse to provide inspection to a new slaughtering establishment or may cause inspection to be temporarily suspended at a slaughtering establishment if the Secretary finds that any cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses, mules, or other equines have been slaughtered or handled in connection with slaughter at such establishment by any method not in accordance with the Act of August 27, 1958 (72 Stat. 862; 7 USC 1901-1906) until the establishment furnishes assurances satisfactory to the Secretary that all slaughtering and handling in connection with slaughter of livestock shall be in accordance with such a method.

livestock, the Secretary of Agriculture will assign inspectors to examine and inspect the methods by which livestock are handled and slaughtered in connection with slaughter in establishments subject to inspection (21 USC 603(b)). Therefore, establishments are required to meet the humane handling and slaughter requirements in the regulations the entire time they hold livestock in connection with slaughter.

On September 9, 2004, FSIS announced that livestock slaughter establishments should implement and maintain a systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter to best assure compliance with the HMSA, FMIA, and implementing regulations ([69 Federal Register 54625](#)). A systematic approach is a

comprehensive way of evaluating how livestock enter and move through an establishment.

Implementing a systematic approach is not a regulatory requirement.

FSIS presents the systematic approach as the best way to ensure that establishments meet the requirements of the HMSA, FMIA, and implementing regulations.

The 2004 notice outlined four recommended steps establishments should take to develop and maintain a systematic approach. When using the recommended systematic

approach, establishments would take into account any new conditions in the establishment that warrant changes to facilities or existing handling or slaughter procedures. The four steps are presented in the section entitled Systematic Approach versus Robust Systematic Approach (page 6).

In August 2011, FSIS issued [FSIS Directive 6900.2 Humane Handling and Slaughter of Livestock – Revision 2](#). The directive included instructions for inspectors to determine whether livestock slaughter establishments have a robust systematic approach to humane handling. Establishments may choose to adopt a robust approach, although it is not required.

For FSIS to consider a systematic approach to be robust, the Agency expects that the systematic approach will include a written animal handling program and program records. The records need to be available for FSIS review.

If an establishment develops and implements a robust systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter, FSIS would consider this when determining enforcement actions following an egregious inhumane treatment event.

Overview of Humane Handling and Slaughter of Livestock

Humane handling and slaughter of livestock prevents needless suffering; results in safer and better working conditions within the slaughtering industry; improves products and slaughtering operations; and produces other benefits for producers, processors, and consumers.

IS POULTRY SLAUGHTER INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMATIC APPROACH?

No, however, the PPIA (Poultry Products Inspection Act) and Agency regulations (9 CFR Part 381.65(b)) do require that live poultry be handled in a manner that is consistent with good commercial practices, and that they not die from causes other than slaughter ([Good Commercial Practices and the Federal Register Notice](#)). (Note: The Federal Register Notice referenced here includes guidelines rather than regulatory requirements.)

KEY DEFINITION

Egregious inhumane treatment:

An egregious situation is any act or condition that results in severe harm to animals ([FSIS Directive 6900.2 Revision 2](#)).

Humane handling requirements involve handling facilities and equipment, personnel practices, and slaughter equipment. Handling facilities and equipment are addressed in [9 CFR 313.1](#). Personnel practices are addressed in [9 CFR 313.2](#). Slaughter equipment is addressed in [9 CFR 313.5](#), [9 CFR 313.15](#), [9 CFR 313.16](#), and [9 CFR 313.30](#).

FSIS Verification of Establishment Humane Handling Activities

FSIS veterinarians and other trained Inspection Program Personnel (IPP) perform humane handling verification activities when establishments slaughter animals, or when animals are on inspected premises (FSIS Directive 6900.2 Revision 2). To verify compliance with 9 CFR Part 313, IPP make verification observations during the course of their inspection duties.

FSIS records the time spent performing verification activities in the Humane Activities Tracking System (HATS). The nine HATS categories (see text box) address all of the regulations covering the humane handling and slaughter of livestock. IPP verify specific facility, handling, or slaughter requirements for each of the categories. The table in [Attachment 1](#) identifies each HATS category and the verification activities IPP perform.

WHAT ARE THE HATS CATEGORIES?

- I. Inclement Weather
- II. Truck Unloading
- III. Water and Feed Availability
- IV. Ante-mortem Inspection
- V. Suspect and Disabled
- VI. Electric Prod/Alternative Object Use
- VII. Slips and Falls
- VIII. Stunning Effectiveness
- IX. Conscious Animals on the Rail

Systematic Approach versus Robust Systematic Approach

A **systematic approach** to humane handling and slaughter takes the regulatory requirements in [9 CFR Part 313](#) and organizes them into a logical approach, marked by attention to detail, regular implementation, and tailoring to the operation of the establishment. Developing a systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter is the first step in ensuring that the establishment complies with the applicable humane handling and slaughter requirements.

FSIS believes that the following four elements represent a systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter of livestock.

Under a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO HUMANE HANDLING AND SLAUGHTER, establishments should

1. Assess the ability of their livestock handling and slaughter practices to minimize distress and injury to livestock.
2. Design facilities and implement handling practices that minimize distress and injury to livestock.
3. Periodically evaluate facilities and handling methods to ensure that they continue to minimize distress and injury to livestock.
4. When necessary, modify facilities and handling methods to ensure that they continue to minimize distress and injury to livestock.

KEY INFORMATION

How do I demonstrate that I have a systematic approach?

The basic (non-robust) systematic approach does not include a written program or records. FSIS evaluates an establishment's systematic approach through observation of operations and discussion of humane handling with establishment personnel. The four elements of the systematic approach cover several topics. This set of questions can help determine whether the establishment has a systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter.

To demonstrate working knowledge of humane handling issues, establishments should be able to discuss their approach to humane handling and slaughter by answering these questions.

- What situations may result in livestock excitement, discomfort, or accidental injury?
- What situations may result in stunning problems?
- Is the livestock handling facility designed for the movement and holding of livestock?
- Does the establishment implement the livestock handling practices as designed?
- How often are livestock handling methods evaluated?
- How do you evaluate the stunning methods?
- How do you deal with problems with livestock handling and stunning practices?
- How do you know your actions have solved or lessened the problem?
- How and with what information do you train employees?

A **robust systematic approach** to humane handling and slaughter adds to the four elements by incorporating three additional features (Table 1). Those three features are:

1) WRITTEN PROCEDURES:

- Describes procedures that the establishment will effectively implement to stay in compliance with the regulations.
- Describes actions the establishment will take when it fails to implement the program as written or fails to prevent a noncompliance.

2) WRITTEN RECORDS:

- Maintains records that demonstrate that the program is implemented as written.
- Maintains records that demonstrate the program will effectively prevent identified potential noncompliances.

3) FSIS REVIEW:

- Written procedures and records are both made available for FSIS review upon request.

FSIS believes that developing a written plan is a step toward a robust systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter because a written plan can effectively address the four aspects of a systematic approach.

The Sample EST 38 Humane Handling and Slaughter Plan ([attachment 3](#)) provides basic features of a written program with records. The following table identifies the differences between the systematic approach and the robust systematic approach.

| Table 1: Systematic Approach versus Robust Systematic Approach | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | Assessment | Design Facilities and Practices | Periodic Evaluation | Modification (as needed) | Written Procedures | Written Records | FSIS Review |
| Systematic Approach | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| Robust Systematic Approach | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

FSIS Response to Egregious Inhumane Treatment

When humane handling or slaughter noncompliance occurs, [9 CFR 500.2\(a\)\(4\)](#) authorizes FSIS to take a regulatory control action, and [9 CFR 500.3\(b\)](#) authorizes FSIS to suspend inspection without prior notification (Notice of Suspension).

Although FSIS is authorized to suspend inspection without prior notification, FSIS may exercise enforcement discretion by providing an establishment prior notification (Notice of Intended Enforcement, [9 CFR 500.4](#)) and an opportunity to implement necessary corrective actions to achieve humane handling compliance.

FSIS Directive 6900.2 (Revision 2) instructs FSIS personnel on how to respond to egregious inhumane treatment. The action FSIS personnel will take when egregious inhumane treatment occurs is likely to vary depending on whether the following conditions exist in the establishment:

- The establishment does not have any recent humane handling related enforcement actions.
- The establishment has consistently been meeting the humane handling regulatory requirements.
- The establishment has been operating under a written animal handling program that is a robust systematic approach and the establishment has made the written program accessible to IPP.
- The establishment has demonstrated the robustness of the program to IPP by effectively and consistently implementing all aspects of its program.

In establishments without a robust systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter, or when not all of the conditions (a. through d.) provided above exist, FSIS instructs IPP to take the following action:

- In the case of humane handling or slaughter noncompliance with egregious inhumane treatment, the inspector in charge recommends issuance of a Notice of Suspension.

In establishments maintaining a robust systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter, and when the conditions (a. through d.) provided above exist, FSIS instructs inspection program personnel to take the following action.

- In the case of humane handling or slaughter noncompliance with egregious inhumane treatment – the inspector in charge recommends issuance of a Notice of Intended Enforcement rather than a Notice of Suspension.

NOTE: 9 CFR Part 500 – Rules of Practice defines **suspension** as “an interruption in the assignment of program employees to all or part of an establishment,” and 9 CFR Part 500.3 (b) gives FSIS the authority to impose a suspension without providing establishments prior notification for handling or slaughtering animals inhumanely; that is, the stunning and slaughter of livestock stops while under a suspension.

FSIS may “impose a suspension after an establishment is provided prior notification and the opportunity to demonstrate or achieve compliance” (9 CFR Part 500.4). FSIS acts on this authority by issuing a Notice of Intended Enforcement. Establishment’s in receipt of a Notice of Intended Enforcement are afforded time (up to 3 days) to demonstrate or achieve compliance. If the establishment does not demonstrate or achieve compliance in 3 days, FSIS issues a Notice of Suspension.

Creating a Robust Systematic Humane Handling and Slaughter Plan

Step 1: Conduct an assessment

✓ FSIS believes that an assessment is the best first step toward a robust systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter. FSIS considers an assessment robust if it takes into consideration the establishment's entire humane handling and slaughter infrastructure.

An assessment of humane handling and slaughter determines whether any component of the establishment's infrastructure has the potential to result in inhumane handling or slaughter of livestock. The Code of Federal Regulations ([9 CFR Part 313](#)) describes three general categories of infrastructure, 1) livestock facilities, 2) personnel practices, and 3) slaughter equipment.

- Livestock facilities include the following components.
 - Vehicles and trailers used to transport livestock.
 - Facilities and equipment through which livestock pass as they move from transport vehicles or trailers to holding facilities, between holding facilities, and from holding facilities to restraining devices.
 - Facilities used to hold livestock temporarily.
 - Facilities and equipment used to restrict livestock movement during slaughter.
- Personnel practices address the knowledge, skills, and abilities of any person handling livestock on the official premise.
- Slaughter equipment includes the equipment used to render livestock insensible to pain and induce death. The Humane Methods of Slaughter Act describes two methods of slaughter found to be humane.
 - Render insensible to pain by a single blow³ or gunshot⁴ or by electrical stunning,⁵ chemical exposure⁶ or other means⁷.
 - Slaughter in accordance with the ritual requirements of a religious faith.

To facilitate an assessment, FSIS is providing a sample assessment tool for humane handling and slaughter in [Attachment 2](#) of this document. The tool contains all humane handling requirements as statements. The assessor decides if each statement is true, false, or does not apply to the establishment. The assessor should check "True" if the item does not have the potential to result in inhumane handling or slaughter of livestock. The assessor should check "False" if the item has the potential to result in inhumane handling or slaughter of livestock.

³ [9 CFR 313.15](#) describes the approved use of captive bolts

⁴ [9 CFR 313.16](#) describes the approved use of gunshot

⁵ [9 CFR 313.30](#) describes the approved use of electrical stunning

⁶ [9 CFR 313.5](#) describes the approved use of carbon dioxide gas

⁷ 9 CFR 313 does not allow other methods of humane slaughter; however, [9 CFR 303.1\(h\)](#) authorizes FSIS to permit experimentation with new technologies. Compliance assistance with new technologies is available at [New Technologies](#).

Step 2: Create a written plan

✓ FSIS believes that developing a written plan is the best second step toward a robust systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter because a written plan can effectively address the four aspects of a systematic approach. Without access to the written plan, FSIS will not be able to verify effective implementation of a program that the establishment believes reflects a robust systematic approach.

Establishments address each item checked “False” in step one in a written plan.

FSIS considers a written plan robust if it addresses each component of handling and slaughter at the establishment that could result in inhumane handling or inhumane slaughter of livestock. Establishments may consider the following elements important when developing a written plan (Attachment 3) for humane handling and slaughter:

- A list of establishment humane handling and slaughter equipment and facilities identified as having the potential to result in inhumane handling or slaughter of livestock. (Attachment 2)
- A list of procedures and monitoring frequencies sufficient to maintain humane handling and slaughter process control and prevent inhumane handling or slaughter. (Attachment 4)
- A list of standards for maintaining facilities. (Attachment 2)
- A list of corrective actions that address noncompliances and process control.
- Provides for routine verification of implementation of the plan and reassessment and update of the plan.

Step 3: Create a recordkeeping system

✓ FSIS believes that developing a recordkeeping system (Attachment 4) is the best third step toward a robust systematic approach to humane handling and slaughter. FSIS considers a recordkeeping system robust if it promotes accuracy and provides for accountability. Establishments may consider the following elements important features of a record keeping system:

- Documents all monitoring, corrective action, verification, and reassessment activities.
- Prevents unauthorized access, destruction, alteration, or removal of records.
- Provides ready access and information sharing.

Attachment 1: HATS Categories and FSIS verification Activities

| Category | FSIS Verification | Regulations |
|--|---|---|
| I. Inclement Weather | Verify how the establishment adapts its facilities and holding practices to inclement weather to ensure the humane handling of animals. | 9 CFR 313.1 and 313.2 |
| II. Truck Unloading | Verify that the establishment's livestock handling facilities are in proper repair during livestock unloading activities. | 9 CFR 313.1 and 313.2 |
| III. Water and Feed Availability | Verify the accessibility of water and feed to livestock. | 9 CFR 313.2 |
| IV. Ante-mortem Inspection | Verify the establishment's procedures for humanely handling livestock during ante-mortem inspection of livestock. | 9 CFR 313.1 and 313.2 |
| V. Suspect and Disabled | Verify that the establishment handles US Suspect and disabled livestock humanely. | 9 CFR 313.1 and 313.2 |
| VI. Electric Prod, Alternative Object Use | Verify that the establishment humanely and effectively moves livestock without excessive prodding or the use of sharp objects. | 9 CFR 313.2 |
| VII. Slips and Falls | Verify that the establishment prevents livestock from slipping and falling due to inadequate footing or improper handling practices. | CFR 313.1 and 313.2 |
| VIII. Stunning Effectiveness | Verify the establishment's procedures to appropriately and effectively administer stunning methods that are rapid and effective and that produce unconsciousness in the animals before the animal is shackled, hoisted, thrown, cast, or stuck. | 9 CFR 313.5, 313.15, 313.16, and 313.30 |
| IX. Conscious Animals on the Rail | Verify, after stunning, that livestock remain unconscious before and after they are shackled, hoisted, thrown, cast, or stuck. | 9 CFR 313.5, 313.15, 313.16, and 313.30 |

Attachment 2: Sample Assessment Tool for Humane Handling and Slaughter

The sample assessment tool is a starting point. Not all of the parameters listed will apply to all establishments. Some establishments may have additional parameters.

| Sample Assessment Tool for Humane Handling and Slaughter Check "True" if the item does not have the potential to result in inhumane handling and/or slaughter of livestock Check "False" if the item has the potential to result in inhumane handling and/or slaughter of livestock Check "N/A" if the item does not apply to the establishment | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------|------------|
| FACILITIES | True | False | N/A |
| TRANSPORTATION OF LIVESTOCK: TRANSPORT VEHICLES | | | |
| Transport vehicles are free from protruding objects. | | | |
| Transport vehicles are free from sharp metal of any kind. | | | |
| Transport vehicles are free from loose boards. | | | |
| Transport vehicles are free from splintered planking. | | | |
| Transport vehicles are free from broken planking. | | | |
| Transport vehicles are free from openings that can trap livestock's head. | | | |
| Transport vehicles are free from openings that can trap livestock's feet. | | | |
| Transport vehicles are free from openings that can trap livestock's legs. | | | |
| Transport vehicles provide good footing. | | | |
| | | | |
| FACILITY RAMPS | | | |
| Ramps ⁸ are in good repair. | | | |
| Ramps are free from protruding objects. | | | |
| Ramps are free from sharp metal of any kind. | | | |
| Ramps are free from loose boards. | | | |
| Ramps are free from splintered planking. | | | |
| Ramps are free from broken planking. | | | |
| Ramps are free from openings that can trap livestock's head. | | | |
| Ramps are free from openings that can trap livestock's feet. | | | |
| Ramps are free from openings that can trap livestock's legs. | | | |
| Ramps provide good footing. | | | |
| Ramps arranged to minimize sharp corners. | | | |
| Ramps arranged to minimize direction reversal of driven animals. | | | |
| | | | |
| FACILITY DRIVEWAYS | | | |
| Driveways ⁹ are in good repair. | | | |
| Driveways are free from protruding objects. | | | |
| Driveways are free from sharp metal of any kind. | | | |
| Driveways are free from loose boards. | | | |
| Driveways are free from splintered planking. | | | |
| Driveways are free from broken planking. | | | |
| Driveways are free from openings that can trap livestock's head. | | | |
| Driveways are free from openings that can trap livestock's feet. | | | |
| Driveways are free from openings that can trap livestock's legs. | | | |
| Driveways provide good footing. | | | |
| Driveways arranged to minimize sharp corners. | | | |
| Driveways arranged to minimize direction reversal of driven animals. | | | |
| | | | |

⁸ The term "ramp" in 9 CFR 313, describes any facility used to transfer livestock from transport vehicles to ground level. Ramps can be fixed structures or mobile equipment.

⁹ The terms "driveway," "alley," and "pathway" in 9 CFR 313 are synonymous. They describe a facility used to move livestock from transport vehicles to holding pens, between holding pens, and from holding pens to restraining devices. The livestock industry routinely uses other terms to describe these facilities.

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| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| FACILITY HOLDING PENS | | | |
| Holding pens ¹⁰ are in good repair. | | | |
| Holding pens are free from protruding objects. | | | |
| Holding pens are free from sharp metal of any kind. | | | |
| Holding pens are free from loose boards. | | | |
| Holding pens are free from splintered planking. | | | |
| Holding pens are free from broken planking. | | | |
| Holding pens are free from openings that can trap livestock's head. | | | |
| Holding pens are free from openings that can trap livestock's feet. | | | |
| Holding pens are free from openings that can trap livestock's legs. | | | |
| Holding pens provide good footing. | | | |
| Holding pens arranged to minimize sharp corners. | | | |
| Holding pens arranged to minimize direction reversal of driven animals. | | | |
| Covered holding pens provided for US Suspects. | | | |
| FACILITY GATES | | | |
| Gates ¹¹ are in good repair. | | | |
| Gates are free from protruding objects. | | | |
| Gates are free from sharp metal of any kind | | | |
| Gates are free from loose boards. | | | |
| Gates are free from splintered planking. | | | |
| Gates are free from broken planking. | | | |
| Gates are free from unnecessary openings that can trap livestock's head. | | | |
| Gates are free from unnecessary openings that can trap livestock's feet. | | | |
| Gates are free from unnecessary openings that can trap livestock's legs. | | | |
| FACILITY RESTRAINING DEVICES | | | |
| Restraining devices ¹² are in good repair. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from sharp objects. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from protruding sharp metal of any kind. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from protruding objects. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from exposed bolt ends. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from loose boards. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from splintered planking. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from broken planking. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from exposed wheels. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from exposed gears. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from openings that can trap livestock's head. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from openings that can trap livestock's feet. | | | |
| Restraining devices are free from openings that can trap livestock's legs. | | | |
| Restraining devices comfortably accommodate the livestock restrained. | | | |
| OTHER DEVICES | | | |
| Use of Video or Other Electronic Monitoring or Recording Equipment | | | |

¹⁰ The term "holding pen" describes a facility used to hold livestock temporarily. Livestock enter and exit holding pens from driveways.

¹¹ The term "gates" means devices designed to mechanically move or drive livestock, and devices designed to keep livestock in motion or compartmentalized. "Gates" describe devices used to limit the movement of one or more livestock. Gates can be manual or mechanical. They can move horizontally, vertically, or pivot on a central axis. The livestock industry routinely uses other terms to describe these devices.

¹² The terms "restraining device," "restraining mechanism," "chute," "stunning area," and "compartment" in 9 CFR 313 are synonymous. They describe a facility used to restrict livestock movement during stunning. The livestock industry routinely uses other terms to describe these facilities.

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| Personnel Practices | True | False | N/A |
|--|------|-------|-----|
| Personnel minimize excitement of livestock during movement. | | | |
| Personnel minimize excitement of livestock when using electric prods. | | | |
| Personnel minimize excitement of livestock when using canvas slappers. | | | |
| Personnel minimize excitement of livestock when using other equipment. | | | |
| Personnel minimize excitement when using stunning equipment. | | | |
| Personnel are trained and the training is documented and reviewed periodically | | | |
| Personnel minimize discomfort of livestock during movement. | | | |
| Personnel minimize discomfort of livestock when using electric prods. | | | |
| Personnel minimize discomfort of livestock when using canvas slappers. | | | |
| Personnel minimize discomfort of livestock when using other equipment. | | | |
| Personnel minimize discomfort when using stunning equipment. | | | |
| | | | |
| Personnel prevent injury of livestock during movement. | | | |
| Personnel prevent injury of livestock when using electric prods. | | | |
| Personnel prevent injury of livestock when using canvas slappers. | | | |
| Personnel prevent injury of livestock when using other equipment. | | | |
| Personnel prevent injury when using stunning equipment. | | | |
| | | | |
| Personnel move livestock at a normal walking speed. | | | |
| Personnel provide livestock in holding pens with access to water. | | | |
| Personnel provide livestock held longer than 24 hours with access to feed. | | | |
| Personnel provide livestock held overnight with sufficient room to lie down. | | | |
| Personnel separate non-ambulatory disabled livestock from normal animals. | | | |
| Personnel set electrical prods to lowest effective voltage, not to exceed 50 V AC. | | | |
| Personnel do not drag conscious livestock. | | | |
| Personnel do not use pipes to drive livestock. | | | |
| Personnel do not use sharp objects to drive livestock. | | | |
| Personnel do not use pointed objects to drive livestock. | | | |
| | | | |
| Personnel are knowledgeable and effective in humane handling methods | | | |
| Personnel are knowledgeable and effective in humane slaughter methods | | | |
| | | | |
| Personnel transporting livestock comply with 28 Hour Rule | | | |
| | | | |
| Stunning (General) | True | False | N/A |
| Livestock restraint allows the stunner operator to stun accurately. | | | |
| Stunning equipment designed for livestock slaughtered. | | | |
| Single application of stunning method renders livestock insensible to pain ¹³ . | | | |
| Livestock are insensible to pain immediately after stunning method applied. | | | |
| | | | |
| Livestock are unconscious and insensible to pain before shackling. | | | |
| Livestock are unconscious and insensible to pain before hoisting. | | | |
| Livestock are unconscious and insensible to pain before throwing. | | | |
| Livestock are unconscious and insensible to pain before casting. | | | |
| Livestock are unconscious and insensible to pain before cutting. | | | |
| | | | |
| Livestock remain unconscious and insensible to pain throughout shackling. | | | |
| Livestock remain unconscious and insensible to pain throughout hoisting. | | | |
| Livestock remain unconscious and insensible to pain throughout throwing. | | | |
| Livestock remain unconscious and insensible to pain throughout casting. | | | |

¹³ The term “insensible to pain” is synonymous with surgical anesthesia and unconsciousness.

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| | | | |
|--|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Livestock remain unconscious and insensible to pain throughout cutting. | | | |
| Livestock remain unconscious and insensible to pain throughout bleeding. | | | |
| | | | |
| Stunning equipment operator is skilled. | | | |
| Stunning equipment operator is attentive. | | | |
| Stunning equipment operator is aware of their responsibility. | | | |
| Stunning equipment operator is trained. | | | |
| Stunning equipment operator is experienced. | | | |
| | | | |
| Stunning (Carbon Dioxide) | True | False | N/A |
| Carbon dioxide does not induce death in calves and sheep. | | | |
| Only sheep, calves and swine are slaughtered with carbon dioxide. | | | |
| All carbon dioxide delivery devices are in good repair. | | | |
| Concentration of carbon dioxide gas delivered is uniform. | | | |
| Rate of carbon dioxide gas delivery is sufficient. | | | |
| Rate of carbon dioxide gas delivery is uniform. | | | |
| Mixing of carbon dioxide gas and air within the chamber is adequate. | | | |
| Carbon dioxide gas delivered is free from noxious or irritating gases. | | | |
| Atmospheric air delivered is free from noxious or irritating gases. | | | |
| All carbon dioxide monitoring devices are in good repair. | | | |
| Sampling of carbon dioxide gas within the chamber is continuous. | | | |
| Samples of carbon dioxide gas collected are representative from within the chamber. | | | |
| Monitoring of carbon dioxide gas concentration within the chamber is continuous. | | | |
| Recordings of carbon dioxide gas concentration are graphical. | | | |
| Monitoring of carbon dioxide gas exposure time within the chamber is continuous. | | | |
| Recordings of carbon dioxide gas exposure time are graphical. | | | |
| All carbon dioxide delivery and recording devices are available for inspection by FSIS. | | | |
| An exhaust system prevents non-uniform carbon dioxide concentrations in chamber. | | | |
| An exhaust system prevents carbon dioxide contamination of the ambient air. | | | |
| | | | |
| Stunning (Captive Bolt) | True | False | N/A |
| Captive bolt stunners that inject compressed air into the cranium not used to stun cattle. | | | |
| Captive bolt stunning equipment is in good repair. | | | |
| Compressed air delivered at constant pressure. | | | |
| Air pressure monitoring devices are accurate. | | | |
| Air pressure monitoring devices operate constantly. | | | |
| Air pressure monitoring devices are easy to read. | | | |
| Air pressure gauges are conveniently located. | | | |
| Captive bolt stunning equipment equipped with safety features. | | | |
| Operator accurately directs the captive bolt to produce immediate unconsciousness. | | | |
| Operator selects appropriate captive bolt stunner for size of livestock. | | | |
| | | | |
| Stunning (Gunshot) | True | False | N/A |
| Firearms maintained in good repair. | | | |
| Operator uses hollow pointed or frangible iron plastic composition bullets; powdered iron missiles | | | |
| Operator accurately directs the bullet to produce immediate unconsciousness. | | | |
| Operator selects appropriate caliber bullet for size of livestock. | | | |
| | | | |
| Stunning (Electrical) | True | False | N/A |
| Suitable timing, voltage and current control devices are used. | | | |
| Electrical stunning equipment is in good repair. | | | |
| Duration, voltage, and current monitoring devices are accurate. | | | |

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|---|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Duration, voltage, and current monitoring devices are easy to read. | | | |
| Duration, voltage, and current monitoring devices are conveniently located. | | | |
| Duration, voltage, and current monitoring devices are available for FSIS inspection. | | | |
| Operator selects appropriate electrical stunner settings for size of livestock. | | | |
| Operator accurately places the electrical stunner to produce immediate unconsciousness. | | | |
| | | | |
| Ritual Slaughter | True | False | N/A |
| Ritual slaughter performed by the religious authority (or duly-appointed designee) | | | |
| Ritual slaughter performed in accordance with standard set by the religious authority. | | | |
| No additional dressing cuts are made until livestock are insensible to pain. | | | |

Attachment 3: Sample EST 38 Humane Handling and Slaughter Plan

Description of our business:

We are a small, family-owned business producing specialty pork products. We typically slaughter one day per week. We raise all of the pigs we slaughter on our near-by family farm and transport them to the official establishment on the day of slaughter in a family-owned livestock trailer. We hold no live swine at the official establishment longer than 10-12 hours. The rear gate of the livestock trailer doubles as the off-loading ramp. We slaughter only healthy swine and sell all unhealthy swine to a local livestock dealer.

Animal Handling Plan:

Live pigs off-load from the livestock trailer directly into one of two open-air holding pens. The pens connect by a gate to a common covered alleyway that leads to the restrainer. All holding pen and alleyway floors are waffled and sloped to facilitate drainage. Holding pens have water troughs. Interior and exterior fence construction is comprised of commercial hog fence panels and gates fastened to metal posts set in concrete. We herd swine with polyethylene sorting panels purchased locally. The restrainer is a manual device. We use electrical stunning to produce cardiac arrest. We have a back-up hand-held captive bolt in case the electrical stunning equipment become inoperable. We purchased the restraining and stunning devices through a local supplier. We operate the electrical stunner and captive bolt according to the operator's manuals that came with the equipment. Each stunned pig is shackled, hoisted, cut, and bled before we slaughter the next pig.

Assessment/Reassessment:

We based our initial assessment on the tool (attachment 2) in the FSIS Compliance Guide for a Systematic Approach to the Humane Handling of Livestock. We will reassess our plan as needed based on our monitoring results. We will document any reassessment, and summarize all changes to our plan and records, on the back of our monitoring record.

Procedures, monitoring frequencies, and target values:

We will list our procedures, monitoring frequencies, and objectives on the monitoring record.

Documentation:

We will record monitoring results on our monitoring record. We will create a record for each day we slaughter pigs. "Whenever the response to a monitoring question is "no" or at other times when a humane handling problem is identified, we will take immediate action to resolve it and document that action on the back of the monitoring record. Responses will follow these principles: 1.) If an animal is severely injured or in distress, we will immediately humanely euthanize; 2.) We will immediately halt or modify our operations when necessary to ensure all animals are handled humanely and not subject

Does this example address FSIS' basic expectations for the written part of a Robust Systematic Humane Handling plan?

Yes, this example is a good place to start the development of a plan. You may find over time the basic approach expands to include additional safeguards you put in place. You can access FSIS assistance using this sample through [askFSIS](#) or by telephone at 1-800-233-3935.

to injury or distress; 3.) We will make any necessary repairs to facilities at the earliest possible opportunity.

Within 30 days, one of the owners will review the monitoring record, verify any corrective actions, review any reassessment, and record the date verified on the monitoring record. We will maintain all completed monitoring records in the owner's office for one year and then we will destroy them. We will make monitoring records available to FSIS in a timely manner.

Attachment 4: Sample EST 38 Humane Handling Monitoring Record

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| EST 38 Humane Handling Monitoring Record for (enter date): | |
| Inspect livestock trailer first week of each month | Circle Yes or No |
| Free from protruding objects and sharp edges. | Yes/No |
| Free from openings that can trap pig's head, feet, or leg. | Yes/No |
| Provides good footing. | Yes/No |
| Inspect pens, alleys, and gates first week of each month | |
| Free from protruding objects and sharp edges. | Yes/No |
| Free from openings that can trap pig's head, feet, or leg. | Yes/No |
| Provide good footing. | Yes/No |
| Inspect restrainer first week of each month | |
| Free from protruding objects and sharp edges. | Yes/No |
| Free from openings that can trap pig's head, feet, or leg. | Yes/No |
| Accommodates the size of pig. | Yes/No |
| Monitor handling of pigs each day we slaughter | |
| All pigs moved at walking pace with minimal excitement and discomfort. | Yes/No |
| All pigs restrained and stunned with minimal excitement and discomfort. | Yes/No |
| No pigs injured during movement, restraining, and stunning. | Yes/No |
| Trough watering devices turned on. | Yes/No |
| Monitor operation of stunner each day we slaughter | |
| Stunning equipment works properly on each pig. | Yes/No |
| Stunning equipment is properly placed on each pig. | Yes/No |
| All pigs remain insensible to pain after single application of stunner. | Yes/No |
| All pigs remain insensible to pain throughout shackling, hoisting, cutting, and bleeding. | Yes/No |

References

Humane Methods of Slaughter Act ([7 USC, Chapter 48](#))

Federal Meat Inspection Act ([21 USC, Chapter 12](#))

Humane Slaughter of Livestock Regulations ([9 CFR, Part 313](#))

Rules of Practice Regulations ([9 CFR, Part 500](#))

Federal Register Notice: Humane Handling and Slaughter Requirements and the Merits of a Systematic Approach to Meet Such Requirements ([69 FR 54625-54627](#))

Humane Handling and Slaughter of Livestock ([FSIS Directive 6900.2](#))

Humane Handling of Livestock and Poultry - [An Educational Guidebook Based on FSIS Policies](#)

Dr. Temple Grandin's Website (<http://www.grandin.com/>)

28 Hour Rule ([Title 49, Section 80502 of the US Code](#))