

# **2007 Animal Handling Guidelines and Audit Guide**

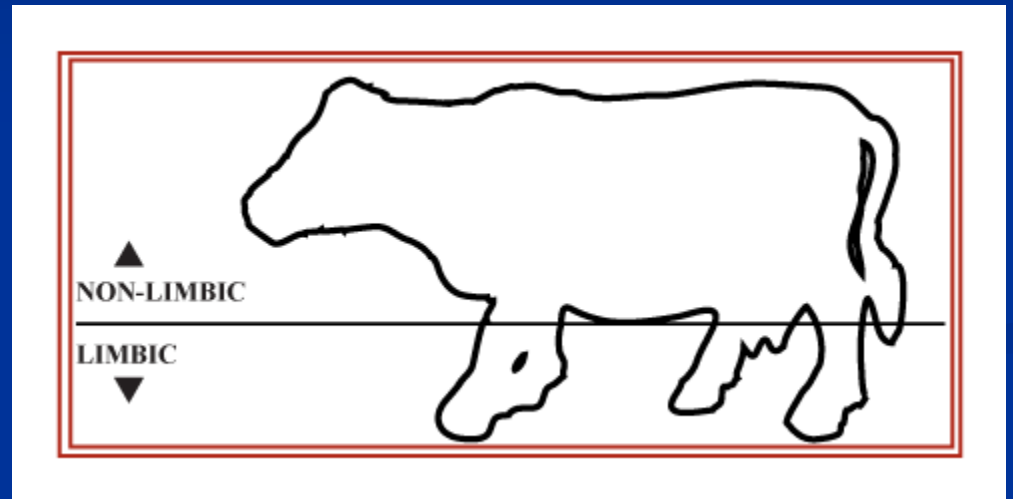
**Animal Handling Conference  
for the Food Industry  
March 29, 2007**

# Process

- Animal Welfare Committee members suggested changes based upon field experience
- Committee reviewed and discussed over a period of five months
- Guidelines were edited, audit forms adjusted

# Key Change #1: Slipping and Falling

- Definition of slip:
  - When a portion of the leg other than the foot touches the ground or a foot loses touch with the ground in a non-walking manner
- Definition of fall:
  - When an animal loses an upright position suddenly in which a part of the body other than the limbs touches the ground.



# Key Change #2: Auditing Slips/Falls at Unloading

- New audit point/same criteria
  - In large plants where multiple vehicles are continuously unloaded, 100 cattle, pigs or sheep should be scored.
  - Cattle: unloading observed until 100 cattle from three different trucks are scored.
  - Pigs and Sheep: where large truck holds >100 animals, observe two vehicles, 50 from each truck.
  - All species: equal number from each deck scored.

# Key Change #2: Auditing Slips/Falls at Unloading, Contd.

- Small plants without continuous unloading: score single vehicle.
- If no vehicle arrives, mark audit form unloading not observed.
- Scoring
  - Excellent: no slipping or falling
  - Acceptable: < three percent slip; < one percent fall
  - Not acceptable: > three percent slip; > one percent fall
  - Serious problem: five percent falling down or 15 percent or more slipping.

# Key Change #3: Squeals vs. Grunts

- Score squeals, not grunts
  - USDA: squeal is an extended sound of high amplitude and high frequency produced with an open mouth, indicative of high excited, fear or pain.

# Key Change #4: Provoked vs. Unprovoked Pig Vocalization

- Score provoked, not unprovoked
  - When cause cannot be determined, count as unprovoked.
- Six major causes of pig vocalization
  - Electric prod use
  - Sharp edges
  - Sores or poor body condition
  - Pressure from the hold-down rack
  - Sides of a v-restrainer moving at different speeds
  - Hitting or poking livestock

# Clarification: Loading Density in CO<sub>2</sub>

## ■ Added language

- Pigs should not be overcrowded, but gondolas or other conveyances should not be under-filled.
- Roughly 0.019ft<sup>2</sup> should approximately determine the maximum number of animals loaded.
- Pigs should not be on top of one another
  - For gondola measuring 9'5" wide, approximate target would be:
    - 240 lbs and less = 8 head
    - 240-275 = 7 head
    - 275-320 = 6 head
    - 320-385 = 5 head

# Clarification: When to Count Pig Vocalizations

- Score pig squeals after the posterior part of the hind end is past the restrainer entrance.
  - V conveyor restrainer – on the outer circumference of the slats where they turn around the sprocket
  - Center track conveyor restrainer – The entrance point is located at the point where the conveyor emerges from the housing and is exposed. In the unlikely event that a pig squeals because both legs and feet get on one side of the center track, the squeal will be counted.

# Clarification: When to Count Pig Vocalizations, Contd.

- Score pig squeals after the posterior part of the hind end is past the restrainer entrance.
  - Stun box – The entrance point is located on the inside surface of the tailgate.
  - Group floor stunning – The entrance point is the gate where the pigs enter the stunning pen. Score after the pigs enter and the gate is closed.
  - CO<sub>2</sub> – count in the final loading pen where gates move pigs into a gondola or other conveyance.

# Clarification: Cattle Vocalizations

- Vocalizing animals in the crowd-pen and lead-up chute are scored only during active handling when the handler is moving the animals.
- All vocalizations inside the restrainer, stun box or religious slaughter box are counted.

# Clarification: Willful Acts of Abuse

- Added phrase “but are not limited to” in definition
  - Willful acts of abuse include BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO dragging a conscious animal, intentionally applying products to sensitive parts of the animal like the eyes, ears, nose or rectum, deliberate slamming of gates on livestock, driving livestock on top of one another or hitting or beating animal. In sheep operations, lifting an animal by the wool or throwing a sheep also is an act of abuse.

# Clarification: Access to Water

- All livestock should have access to clean water in holding pens.
  - Added: Each pen should have a water trough, water nipples (in the case of pigs) or other water source. If livestock are non-ambulatory, plants should provide shallow water pans, buckets or water sources within easy reach of livestock.

# FAQs By Auditors and Auditees

- If one cow is prodded three times, is that one prod use or three?
- If an animal is knocked and then a second knock is used because there is a sensibility concern, is that a second knock or an insensibility issue?

# FAQs By Auditors and Auditees

- If animals are already hoisted, can they be knocked a second time as a routine procedure during audit?
- If I use an electric prod as a driving tool, but don't energize it, will you count contact with the animal as prod use in an audit?

# FAQs from Auditors and Auditees

- How do I properly assess pen density?
- Additional questions from the audience?

**Thank you!**

**Guidelines Coming Soon!**

**[www.animalhandling.org](http://www.animalhandling.org)**