2017
Animal Care and Handling Guidelines: 
Key Changes

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Transportation Audit
Measured When Trucks Arrive at Plants

• Core Criteria 1: Transportation policy and preparedness for receiving animals
• Core Criteria 2: Set-up, Loading and Alignment of Trailer
• Core Criteria 3: Timeliness of Arrival and Animal Unloading
• Core Criteria 4: Falls
• Core Criteria 5: Electric Prod Use
• Core Criteria 6: Condition of Animal
• Core Criteria 7: Willful Acts of Abuse/Egregious Acts
Key Change: Documented Training

• Added to Core Criteria #1: *Does the plant have documented employee training for livestock receiving?*

  • Criteria = 14 points
    – Must score 12 to be acceptable
Key Change: Acceptable Level of Prodding

• Acceptable level of prodding at unload reduced to 10 percent
  – Previously was 25 percent
Key Change: Body Condition & Mobility

• Noted that body condition MAY impact mobility, but doesn’t always.
  – In previous editions we suggested the low body condition scores always correlated with low mobility
Key Change: Euthanizing on Trucks and in the Yards

Euthanizing Animals on Trucks or In the Yards

When an animal has to be euthanized on a vehicle or in the yards and a secondary step such as bleeding is not used to ensure death, extra care must be taken to ensure that it does not recover sensibility. All signs of return to sensibility that are specified on page 57 must be absent.

In addition, it is strongly recommended that plant personnel perform one of the following actions to ensure death: 1) security knocking with either captive bolt or firearm; or 2) pithing by inserting a thin metal or plastic rod into the hole made by the captive bolt to further damage the brain. (Pithing must never be used on animals that will be used for food.) The plant should recheck the animal before moving or disposing to ensure that euthanasia was effective.
Other Transportation Clarifications

• An animal’s head or back should not touch the top of the trailer

• Unless there is a true emergency, trucks should not be warehoused at off site location to prevent back-ups
Plant Audit

- Core Criteria 1: Effective Stunning
- Core Criteria 2: Bleed Rail Insensibility
- Core Criteria 3: Falling
- Core Criteria 4: Vocalization
- Core Criteria 5: Electric Prod Use
- Core Criteria 7: Access to Water
Key Change: Egregious Acts

• Expanded definition of egregious acts to include purposeful driving off high ledges, platforms or off a truck without a ramp.
Key Change: Driving Tools

• Added guidance about the proper use of vibrating prods
  – Need to wear down pointed tip
  – Apply to back, rump or shoulders
  – Never use to strike or jab an animal

• Added that vibrating prods can be used successfully with pigs.
Key Change: Pens

• Added Secondary Question: “Do the holding pens appear overcrowded?”
  – Previously, the audit only asked about crowd pens
Key Change: Stunning

• Included findings of French research on insensibility

• Discussed signs of a possible return to consciousness as a transition phase before full consciousness

• Added important chart

Assessing Unconsciousness in Livestock During Slaughter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely Unconscious: ALL of the following signs are ABSENT</th>
<th>Unconscious But Beginning Transition Back to Consciousness: ONE OR MORE of the following signs are PRESENT</th>
<th>Definitely Conscious: ANY of the following signs are PRESENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Menace reflex that occurs when a hand is waved in front of the eye without touching  
  • Eyelash reflex in response to touch  
  • Corneal reflex*  
  • Rhythmic breathing where the ribs move in and out at least twice | • Eyelash reflex in response to touch  
  • Rhythmic breathing where the ribs move in and out at least twice  
  • Corneal reflex* | • No loss of posture/animal standing  
  • Righting reflex on the rail  
  • Vocalization  
  • Spontaneous, unprovoked blinking  
  • Menace reflex that occurs when a hand is waved in front of the eye without touching  
  • Eye pursuit of a moving object |

Unconscious: No Action Needed  
Unconscious: Re-stun Immediately  
Conscious: Re-stun Immediately

*For cattle, a finger may be used to test the corneal reflex. Because pigs and sheep have small eyes, a small blunt object like a pencil eraser or something similar may be used.
Key Change: CO2 Stunning

• Recommended that plants that use CO2 with short exposure time or that use head only electric should audit insensibility prior to bleed and on the rail
Key Change: Captive Bolt Stunning

• Increased the acceptable stunning score from 95 to 96 percent
  – An excellent score continues to be 100 percent
QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION?