

Poultry Antemortem Inspection

Objectives

1. Describe the proper procedure for conducting antemortem inspection on a poultry lot.
2. List at least three reasons why poultry antemortem inspection is conducted differently than red meat antemortem inspection.
3. From a list of responsibilities, determine which are plant management's and which are inspection's.
4. List the sources of authority for conducting poultry antemortem inspection.
5. Describe in writing the lighting and condemn container requirements for antemortem inspection of poultry.
6. List at least five symptoms of disease that might be observed on antemortem inspection.
7. Discuss the humane slaughter requirements for poultry.
8. Properly execute the antemortem portion of FSIS Form 9061-2 (Poultry Condemnation Certificate).
9. Describe the proper action by inspection when live poultry are removed from the official plant premises for the following reasons:
 - The plant feels that inspection is condemning an excessive number of poultry carcasses on postmortem inspection.
 - The plant suspects a reportable disease present in the poultry.
 - The plant suspects a biological residue present in the poultry.
 - The plant wishes to send live poultry to another plant for slaughter for the purpose of split-lot correlation between the inspection forces of two plants.
10. Define "positive control" of poultry condemned during antemortem inspection.
11. List at least three acceptable methods the plant can use to dispose of poultry condemned on antemortem inspection.
12. Compare the required disposal of poultry condemned for biological residues to the required disposal of poultry condemned for other reasons.
13. Render an antemortem disposition according to FSIS rules, guidelines, and procedures when given a description of antemortem findings.
14. State who may officially perform antemortem inspection.

15. Describe the procedures that must be followed when poultry suspected of having a contagious disease transmissible to humans are detected during antemortem inspection.
16. State whether poultry condemned on antemortem inspection may enter any part of the official establishment.
17. Describe the procedures that must be followed when poultry affected by a biological residue are detected during antemortem inspection.
18. List four non-disease factors that may affect the condition of poultry presented for inspection.

Poultry Antemortem Inspection

Antemortem means "before death." The Act and Regulations require that antemortem inspection be performed on poultry presented for slaughter.

Antemortem inspection of poultry is performed on a lot basis. The plant or establishment designates the size of the lot. Generally a lot is made up of birds from a single house of poultry grown on a particular farm, but it may be as large as several houses of poultry. Lot size designation depends upon the criteria used by plant management.

Scientific studies have established the basis for conducting antemortem inspection of poultry. The observation of poultry while they are in coops or batteries, before or after their removal from trucks near the point where live poultry are hung on the line, meets the antemortem inspection requirement. By observing several birds from each lot, the FSIS inspector meets this requirement.

Such inspections help insure that only poultry that could be acceptable as human food enter the plant.

If a bird is alive, it will be hung on the line. If it is dead, the bird must be condemned and maintained under positive control until disposed of properly. Positive control means:

- under direct observation by inspection personnel
- denatured or decharacterized by chemical agents
- secured in a properly marked container by a government lock or seal

Antemortem inspection requirements for poultry are different from those for red meat animals. The following are examples that illustrate the differences.

- Age -- A poultry lot goes to slaughter at an early age (6-8 weeks). Red meat animals are much older.
- Genetics -- A poultry lot is closely related to the same parentage. Red meat animals have greater variation.
- Nutrition and Health Management -- A poultry lot is under the same influence of feed, vaccinations, and environment from the hatchery to the slaughter plant.

Poultry antemortem inspection is performed on a lot basis because of the way the PPIA, and Poultry Regulations are written. The fact that the origins of the Meat Act and the Poultry Act are different has something to do with the different methods of inspection. The original Meat Act basically had its beginnings in the early 1900's and was precipitated by public opinion and Upton Sinclair's book *The Jungle*. The original Poultry Act was not passed until the 1950's. Both the times and public opinion had changed considerably.

Some of the major differences between poultry and red meat antemortem inspection are as follows:

- An antemortem bird-by-bird inspection of poultry is not a feasible task. Therefore, inspection on a lot basis was established.
- There is no legal restraint on live poultry brought onto the official premises. Plants can remove live poultry from the premises whenever they desire.
- U.S. suspect or condemn tags are not used in poultry antemortem inspection.
- An official U.S. suspect pen is not required in poultry antemortem inspection.
- In red meat U.S. suspects have their body temperatures taken, but poultry antemortem inspection does not involve taking body temperatures.
- Red meat dead on arrivals are slashed and denatured. Slashing poultry antemortem condemnations is not required.
- Biological residue condemnations in poultry must be burned or buried.
- Observation of humane slaughter is not required for poultry since there is not a Federal humane poultry slaughter law. However, if condemned live poultry are to be killed, they must be killed humanely.
- Official recordkeeping procedures are different in poultry. Antemortem condemnations are reported in two categories: dead on arrival or live birds condemned.

Antemortem inspection must be performed before daily slaughter operations begin and as often as necessary during the shift, as determined by the veterinarian in charge. The plant or establishment is required to provide adequate facilities, equipment, and necessary supplies for FSIS to perform this inspection. Condemn barrels must be leakproof and clearly marked.

Symptoms of disease that may be observed on antemortem inspection include:

- Swelling around the head and eyes
- Edema of the wattles
- Gasping and sneezing
- Off-colored diarrhea
- Skin lesions
- Lameness
- Torticollis or wry neck (neurological)
- Bone or joint enlargement

- Dermatitis

Some non-disease factors that may affect the condition of poultry presented for inspection are as follows:

- Season of the year
- Heat
- Humidity
- Freezing rain
- Distance hauled to the plant
- Number of birds in a coop
- Time withdrawn from feed and water prior to slaughter

Antemortem inspection can be performed officially by either a food inspector or a veterinarian. However, if a food inspector suspects that a live lot of poultry has a contagious disease that might be transmissible to humans, the food inspector must notify a veterinary inspector. If the veterinarian decides that further handling of the poultry will create a health hazard, such poultry may be released for treatment under the control of appropriate State or Federal officials. If treatment is not practical, all birds found to be or suspected of being affected with the disease must be condemned on antemortem. Birds condemned on antemortem for any reason may not be brought into any department of the plant but must be disposed of according to Regulations.

In summary, antemortem inspection of poultry can be a valuable aid to the inspection team in the poultry plant. These are some points to remember.

- Antemortem inspection is performed before the start of operations on the day of slaughter on each lot of birds.
- After the start of operations, the veterinarian in charge determines the frequency of antemortem inspection.
- Live birds, even if diseased, may be removed from the official premises. In case of a reportable disease (like ornithosis/chlamydiosis) is involved or suspected, contact your supervisor.
- Birds (alive or dead) that are condemned on antemortem must be counted, weighed, and denatured by plant personnel. This information is reported on FSIS Form 9061-2 (Poultry Condemnation Certificate) for each lot.
- Condemnations must be maintained under positive control until proper disposal.

12. Given the following descriptions of antemortem findings, render an antemortem disposition according to FSIS rules and regulations.

a. Birds that are coughing and sneezing and have swollen sinuses

- _____ pass for regular slaughter
- _____ withheld from slaughter
- _____ slaughtered as suspects
- _____ condemned on antemortem

b. Birds with obvious signs of a disease transmissible to humans

- _____ pass for regular slaughter
- _____ withheld from slaughter
- _____ slaughtered as suspects
- _____ condemned on antemortem

c. Birds with diarrhea and dirty feathers

- _____ pass for regular slaughter
- _____ withheld from slaughter
- _____ slaughtered as suspects
- _____ condemned on antemortem

d. Birds that are suspected of containing a biological residue

- _____ pass for regular slaughter
- _____ withheld from slaughter
- _____ slaughtered as suspects
- _____ condemned on antemortem

13. Identify the true statements by placing an "X" in the box provided.

- A. DOA birds must be identified, counted, weighed, and their number reported on the FSIS Form 9061-2 (Poultry Condemnation Certificate).
- B. Poultry must be humanely slaughtered according to the provisions of the Humane Slaughter Act.
- C. Poultry suspected of having biological residues may be returned to the grower under certain conditions.
- D. Each poultry antemortem lot must be identified with a pen card.
- E. Antemortem inspection shall only be performed on lots identified for slaughter by the establishment.
- F. Poultry shall not receive antemortem inspection until they are removed from the truck.
- G. Dead on arrival birds must be left in the coops for on-the-farm disposal.
- H. Antemortem inspection is required in each official establishment that slaughters birds.
- I. Poultry suspected of having biological residues may be slaughtered at the official establishment and sold for pet food.
- J. Live poultry affected with a disease that is transmissible to humans may be released for treatment.
- K. The primary purpose of antemortem inspection is to be able to inform plant management when sick birds arrive.
- L. Live poultry that were used in a chemical company experiment must be approved for slaughter by the Administrator.
- M. Antemortem inspection is official only when an FSIS veterinarian performs it.
- N. Antemortem inspection is optional in plants that export poultry.
- O. Live birds that are condemned and killed on antemortem inspection must be killed in a humane manner.

14. Properly execute the antemortem portion of FSIS Form 9061-2 (Poultry Condemnation Certificate) from the data furnished by the plant on FSIS Form 6510-7 below.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE				
POULTRY CONDEMNATION CERTIFICATE				4801727
DISTRIBUTION: original and first copy to Plant Management, one copy to Grower, and one copy to Establishment file.				
DATE INSPECTED	PLANT NO.	CLASS OF POULTRY	NO. HEAD IN LOT*	LOT NOS. (Provided by plant management)
ANTE-MORTEM INSPECTION			NO. DEAD ON ARRIVAL* (Plant)	CONDEMNED ON ANTE-MORTEM INSPECTION
			NO. HEAD*	TOTAL WEIGHT* (include dead on arrival)
				Lb.

(This is the top portion of FSIS Form 9061-2.)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE POULTRY LOT INFORMATION (FROM RECORDS OF OFFICIAL ESTABLISHMENT)			FORM APPROVED OMB NO. 0583-008	DATE PROCESSED
			The response to this information request is voluntary. The information is needed to make daily reports of the amount and disposition of Poultry Products processed or handled. FSIS uses the information to compute percentages of condemnations, workload assignments and Market News Reporting (9 CFR 381.180)	9-29-00
DAY'S RUN <input type="checkbox"/>	LOT NO(S) 1			
CLASS YOUNG CHICKENS			NO. HEAD IN LOT 7,069	
CERTIFIED CHILLED (RTC Weight) 19,062		CERTIFIED FROZEN (RTC Weight) -----	LIVE WEIGHT 26,705	
DEAD ON ARRIVAL		CONDEMNED WEIGHT		
NO. HEAD 42	WEIGHT 126	CARCASSES	PARTS	
PLANT NO. P-38	SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PLANT OFFICIAL John Lately			
FSIS FORM 6510-7 (9/87)				

Poultry Regulations 381.70-381.75

Comment: Inserted this section of the regs.



Subpart J--Ante Mortem Inspection

Sec. 381.70 Ante mortem inspection; when required; extent.

(a) An ante mortem inspection of poultry shall, where and to the extent considered necessary by the Administrator and under such instructions as he may issue from time to time, be made of poultry on the day of slaughter in any official establishment.

(b) The examination and inspection of ratites will be on the day of slaughter, except:

(1) When it is necessary for humane reasons to slaughter an injured animal at night or on a Sunday or holiday, and the FSIS veterinary medical officer cannot be obtained; or

(2) In low volume establishments, when ante mortem inspection cannot be done on the day of slaughter, and the birds to be slaughtered have received ante mortem inspection in the last 24 hours, provided the establishment has an identification and control system over birds that have received ante mortem inspection.

Sec. 381.71 Condemnation on ante mortem inspection.

(a) Birds plainly showing on ante mortem inspection any disease or condition, that under Secs. 381.80 to 381.93, inclusive, would cause condemnation of their carcasses on post mortem inspection, shall be condemned. Birds which on ante mortem inspection are condemned shall not be dressed, nor shall they be conveyed into any department of the official establishment where poultry products are prepared or held. Poultry which has been condemned on ante mortem inspection and has been killed or died otherwise shall under the supervision of an inspector of the Inspection Service, be disposed of as provided in Sec. 381.95.

(b) Dead-on-arrival ratites and ratites condemned on ante mortem inspection will be tagged "U.S. Condemned" by an establishment employee under FSIS supervision and disposed of by one of the methods prescribed in Sec. 381.95.

(c) All seriously crippled ratites and non-ambulatory ratites, commonly termed "downers," shall be identified as "U.S. Suspects."

(d) Ratites exhibiting signs of drug or chemical poisoning shall be withheld from slaughter.

(e) Ratites identified as "U.S. Suspects" or "U.S. Condemned" may be set aside for treatment. The "U.S. Suspect" or "U.S. Condemned" identification device will be removed by an establishment employee under FSIS supervision following treatment if the bird is found to be free of disease. Such a bird found to have recovered from the condition for which it was treated may be released for slaughter or for purposes other than slaughter, provided that in the latter instance permission is first obtained from the local, State, or Federal sanitary official having jurisdiction over movement of such birds.

(f) When it is necessary for humane reasons to slaughter an injured ratite at night or Sunday or a holiday, and the Agency veterinary medical officer cannot be obtained, the carcass and all parts shall be kept for inspection, with the head and all viscera except the gastrointestinal tract held by the natural attachment. If all parts are not so kept for inspection, the carcass shall be condemned. If on inspection of a carcass slaughtered in the absence of an inspector, any lesion or other evidence is found indicating that the bird was sick or diseased, or affected with any other condition requiring condemnation of

the animal on ante mortem inspection, or if there is lacking evidence of the condition that rendered emergency slaughter necessary, the carcass shall be condemned. Ratites that are sick, dying, or that have been treated with a drug or chemical and presented for slaughter before the required withdrawal period, are not covered by emergency slaughter provisions.

Sec. 381.72 Segregation of suspects on ante mortem inspection.

(a) All birds, except ratites, that on ante mortem inspection do not plainly show, but are suspected of being affected with, any disease or condition that under Secs. 381.80 to 381.93 of this Part may cause condemnation in whole or in part on post mortem inspection, shall be segregated from the other poultry and held for separate slaughter, evisceration, and post mortem inspection. The inspector shall be notified when such segregated lots are presented for post mortem inspection, and inspection of such birds shall be conducted separately. Such procedure for the correlation of ante mortem and post mortem findings by the inspector, as may be prescribed or approved by the Administrator, shall be carried out.

(b) All ratites showing symptoms of disease will be segregated, individually tagged as "U.S. Suspects" by establishment personnel under FSIS supervision with a serially numbered metal or plastic leg band or tag bearing the term "U.S. Suspect," and held for further examination by an FSIS veterinarian. Depending upon the findings of the veterinarian's examination, these birds will either be passed for regular slaughter, slaughtered as suspects, withheld from slaughter, or condemned on ante mortem. Those ratites affected with conditions that would be readily detected on post mortem inspection need not be individually tagged on ante mortem inspection with the "U.S. Suspect" tag provided that such ratites are segregated and otherwise handled as "U.S. Suspects." All ratites identified as "U.S. Condemned" shall be tagged by establishment personnel, under FSIS supervision, with a serially numbered metal or plastic leg band or tag bearing the term "U.S. Condemned."

Sec. 381.73 Quarantine of diseased poultry.

If live poultry, which is affected by any contagious disease which is transmissible to man, is brought into an official establishment, such poultry shall be segregated. The slaughtering of such poultry shall be deferred and the poultry shall be dealt with in one of the following ways:

(a) If it is determined by a veterinary inspector that further handling of the poultry will not create a health hazard, the lot shall be slaughtered separately, subject to ante mortem and post mortem inspection pursuant to the regulations.

(b) If it is determined by a veterinary inspector that further handling of the poultry will create a health hazard, such poultry may be released for treatment under the control of an appropriate State or Federal agency. If the circumstances are such that release for treatment is impracticable, a careful bird-by-bird ante mortem inspection shall be made, and all birds found to be, or which are suspected of being, affected with a contagious disease transmissible to man shall be condemned.

Sec. 381.74 Poultry suspected of having biological residues.

When any poultry at an official establishment is suspected of having been treated with or exposed to any substance that may impart a biological residue that would make their

edible tissues adulterated, they shall, at the option of the operator of the establishment, be processed at the establishment and the carcasses and all parts thereof retained under U.S. Retained tags, pending final disposition in accordance with Sec. 381.80, of this part, and other provisions in subpart K; or they shall be slaughtered at the establishment and buried or incinerated in a manner satisfactory to the inspector. Alternatively, such poultry may be returned to the grower, if further holding is likely to result in their not being adulterated by reason of any residue. The Inspection Service will notify the other Federal and State agencies concerned of such action. To aid in determining the amount of residue present in the poultry, officials of the Inspection Service may permit the slaughter of any such poultry for the purpose of collecting tissues for analysis of the residue. Such analysis may include the use of inplant screening procedures designed to detect the presence of antimicrobial residues in any species of poultry.

Sec. 381.75 Poultry used for research.

(a) No poultry used in any research investigation involving an experimental biological product, drug, or chemical shall be eligible for slaughter at an official establishment unless the operator of such establishment, the sponsor of the investigation, or the investigator has submitted to the Inspection Service, or the Veterinary Biologics unit of Veterinary Services, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the Department or the Environmental Protection Agency, or the Food and Drug Administration of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, data or a summary evaluation of the data which demonstrates that the use of such biological product, drug, or chemical will not result in the products of such poultry being adulterated, and the Administrator has approved such slaughter.