



Chicken Standards: Lairage and Slaughter

Version 2.01 - Effective 1st October 2011

SLAUGHTER / LAIRAGE (SL)

Welfare requirements must be met during lairage and slaughter. Staff competency is key to ensuring that animals are managed to good standards of welfare as provided for in current EU, UK and regional legislation and Codes of Practice.

SL.1		Each processing plant must have a trained Poultry Welfare Officer (PWO) who must oversee the unloading, lairaging and slaughter of birds. (CB.SL.1) (CP.SL.1)
SL.2		Each processing plant must develop and implement a bird welfare policy. (CB.SL.2) (CP.SL.2)
		This policy must cover written procedures that safeguard the welfare of the birds, and the responsibilities of staff. The policy must be communicated to all relevant staff and reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
SL.3		Regular checks including a check on arrival must be made on birds in the lairage to ensure their comfort and safety. (CB.SL.3) (CP.SL.3)
SL.4		The birds must be placed in the lairage as soon as possible. (CB.SL.4) (CP.SL.4)
SL.5		The lairage must provide protection in adverse weather. (CB.SL.5) (CP.SL.5)
		Appropriate action to be taken to avoid temperature stress in the birds.
SL.6		Lairage time must be as short as possible and must not exceed 6 hours. (CB.SL.6) (CP.SL.6)
	<i>Updated</i>	
SL.7		Lairage staff must be trained in the welfare of the birds, including induction and refresher courses. (CB.SL.7) (CP.SL.7)
SL.8	K	Birds must be treated humanely before slaughter. (CB.SL.8) (CP.SL.8)
		Injured birds should be humanely culled immediately upon detection. They should not be attached to the line

SL.9	K	Processing plants must provide cleaning and sanitation provisions for crates and transporters. (CB.SL.9) (CP.SL.9)
		All crates must be disinfected after cleaning with a Defra-approved disinfectant.
SL.10		Managers must ensure that staff have access to, and receive guidance on, all the relevant regulations, guides and codes listed in the relevant Appendix, including these standards. (CB.SL.10) (CP.SL.10)
SL.11	K	Shackling must be carried out by staff who are both competent and trained. (CB.SL.11) (CP.SL.11)
SL.12		Birds must be hung onto the shackle line by both legs. (CB.SL.12) (CP.SL.12)
SL.13		Appropriate measures must be taken to prevent wing flapping and head raising before stun, e.g. the use of a breast bar. (CB.SL.13) (CP.SL.13)
SL.14		Appropriate measures must be taken to match the line speed to staff ability to hang birds on line without causing unnecessary distress to the birds. (CB.SL.14) (CP.SL.14)
SL.15	R	It is recommended that the shackling area uses subdued or blue lighting. (CB.SL.15) (CP.SL.15)
SL.16		Care must be taken to ensure birds cannot escape from the holding / hanging area or fall from the shackle line. (CB.SL.16) (CP.SL.16)
		Any escaped birds should be recaptured immediately and taken to the hanging on area or, if injured, immediately humanely destroyed.
SL.17		Contingency plans must be made to deal with occasions when unavoidable delays may occur and it is not possible to process birds. (CB.SL.17) (CP.SL.17)
		Specifically , if the slaughter line is stopped, birds between the point of shackling and the killer must be removed and placed in crates, any birds which have already been stunned must be humanely killed, The length of time birds remain on the shackle line must comply with legislative requirements.
SL.18		A system must be in place to monitor hockburn incidence, pododermatitis, bruising, and Dead on Arrivals. (CB.SL.18) (CP.SL.18)
SL.19	K	Birds must be stunned and slaughtered or killed humanely in compliance with all relevant codes of practice and legislation. (CB.SL.19) (CP.SL.19)
SL.20		Processing plants must provide documented performance parameters for the stunning equipment, line and slaughter equipment. (CB.SL.20) (CP.SL.20)
SL.21		Procedures must be available for process controls, back-up procedures, maintenance, and monitoring procedures. Records must be kept and be available for inspection. (CB.SL.21) (CP.SL.21)
SL.22	K	The efficiency of the stunning and slaughter/killing process, must be regularly checked by a vet or licensed slaughterman. (CB.SL.22) (CP.SL.22)

SL.23	K	Effective stunning must be carried out by an approved method. (CB.SL.23) (CP.SL.23)
		<p>Approved methods are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stunning bath • Dry stunner • Hand-operated stunner • Controlled atmosphere stunning. <p>Appropriate to the size of bird, adequately calibrated, maintained and supervised during its operation.</p>
SL.24	K	Stunning and slaughter and killing equipment must be checked prior to each kill and problems preventing effective stun rectified prior to the start of slaughter. (CB.SL.24) (CP.SL.24)
SL.25	K	Birds must be stunned within 2 minutes of shackling. (CB.SL.25) (CP.SL.25)
SL.26	K	Manual or back-up neck cutting must be provided so that stunned birds that miss the automatic neck cutting equipment are humanely slaughtered by a licensed slaughterman. (CB.SL.26) (CP.SL.26)
SL.27	K	No more than 15 seconds must elapse between stunning and neck cutting. (CB.SL.27) (CP.SL.27)
SL.28	K	Chickens must not be immersed in a scalding tank or plucked until at least 90 seconds have elapsed since the major blood vessels in their necks have been severed. (CB.SL.28) (CP.SL.28)
SL.29	K	There must be complete effective severance of carotid arteries and jugular veins in both sides of the neck through the use of a ventral cut. (CB.SL.29) (CP.SL.29)