

# Poultry Welfare Standard v6 July 2019

This document should be read, actioned and signed in conjunction with the following reference documents.

- **Audit Standard for Poultry Slaughter Houses**
- **Whitbread Animal Welfare Policy**
- **Whitbread Poultry Raw Material Specifications (Chicken, Turkey and Duck)**
- **Outcome Measure Requirements for Poultry**

## **1. Selection of Animals**

- 1.1 Producers and catching teams must only select fit and healthy animals for travel. When selecting animals for transport the following need to be considered:
- Body Condition and weight
  - Clinical evidence of disease or parasitism.
  - Injuries or other physical defects.
  - Cleanliness
- 1.2 All withdrawal periods must have been observed; specifically the removal of in-feed coccidiostats where a withdrawal period is indicated
- 1.3 The number of occasions on which partial depopulation occurs must be minimised and a policy must be in place for the management of remaining birds during and post-thinning activities to include:
- Strategies to minimise disturbance
  - Access to feed and water
  - Litter management
- 1.4: Catching teams must be able to identify animals which are suitable for transport and not load individuals which are already compromised or would become so in transit. There must be suitably trained personnel available to immediately dispatch any compromised birds *in situ* .
- 1.5 Water must be available until catching commences
- 1.6 Feed must not be withdrawn in excess of 12 hours before slaughter
- 1.7 Both Manual and Auto Catch systems are acceptable. Where manual catching birds must be caught by weight/species appropriate method and never held by wings or neck alone. Additional species-specific constraints include:
- Ducks and geese must **never** be lifted or carried by the head, wing, tail or leg

- Ducks and geese **may** be lifted by the neck, when also supported under the breast and only carried for short distances by these method
- Turkeys must **never** be single leg caught or carried by this method of holding
- Broiler birds should be double leg caught. Single leg catching is only acceptable for birds weighing less than 3kg and no more than 6 birds should be carried at one time.

## 2. Procurement of Livestock

- 2.1: The origin of stock and the farming method for all poultry reared must be recorded at intake to abattoir.
- 2.2 No cloned livestock or progeny are acceptable
- 2.3: Supplying farms must be certified to a nationally recognised Animal Welfare scheme (e.g. Global Gap, IKB, Red Tractor and QS) by the end of 2020. This must include any separate sites used for initial bird placement, where applicable i.e. brood-and-move operations (turkey and duck only).
- 2.4: Schemes must lay down clear standards for stockmanship, housing, nutrition, welfare, management of outdoor systems, animal health, handling and transportation, and environmental issues.
- 2.5: Schemes must include pre-approval inspection, and farms must be audited on a regular basis, preferably at least once per year. Audit results must be recorded.
- 2.6: Day old birds should be obtained from known sources. Hatcheries must be similarly certified to a nationally recognised Animal Welfare scheme (e.g. Global Gap, IKB, Red Tractor and QS) by the end of 2020.

## 3. Transport to point of slaughter

- 3.1: Only fit animals must be transported as per the guidance outlined EU Transport Best Practice Guidelines for Poultry <http://animaltransportguides.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Animal-Transport-Guides-Poultry-2017.pdf>. Due to the typical transport conditions for poultry there can be no provision to allow the transport of slightly injured or otherwise compromised birds as transport containers do not facilitate additional safeguards for individual birds
- 3.2: All transportation of animals should be in accordance with relevant legislation. As a minimum, catching and transport operations for all poultry species must be consistent with legislative requirements as outlined in **Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005**

- 3.3 It is the responsibility of the consignor to employ a reputable and experienced contractor to transport livestock.
- 3.3: The following criteria should be addressed:
- 3.3.1: All catching teams and drivers must be adequately trained and adopt practices to load and drive animals with their well-being as a priority.
  - 3.3.2: Catching should take place under subdued lighting conditions but with provision for lighting for key activities (e.g. forklift operations).
  - 3.3.3: The vehicle and transport containers must be fit for purpose and in particular the interior of the transport containers should contain no projections or edges capable of injuring the animals.
  - 3.3.4: Transport containers must not be overloaded and stocking density must be adjusted in response to environmental conditions.
  - 3.3.5: Stocking density must never exceed bird weight specific limits
    - **< 1.6 kg:** 180 – 200 cm<sup>2</sup>/kg
    - **1.6 – 3.0 kg:** 160 cm<sup>2</sup>/kg
    - **3.0 – 5.0 kg:** 115 cm<sup>2</sup>/kg
    - **> 5.0 kg:** 105 cm<sup>2</sup>/kg
  - 3.3.6: Verification of stocking rates must be carried out on a risk assessed basis when using automated catching systems
  - 3.3.7: All transport containers must be securely anchored in transit
  - 3.3.8: Vehicles should be cleaned and disinfected between successive deliveries.
  - 3.3.9: Timing of transportation should be planned to minimise travel and waiting times. Journey times should not exceed 8 hours from start of loading to end of unloading. Poultry may not be part of multi-site pick ups.
  - 3.3.10: Vehicles must provide animals with adequate ventilation, whilst maintaining protection from adverse weather conditions. Side curtains must be available to protect birds from extremes of weather.

## 4. Husbandry

- 4.1: All persons handling animals must be able to demonstrate competency based upon recorded formal training. Records of the relevant training are to be maintained.
- 4.2: Stockpersons must be able to:
- 4.2.1: Recognise signs of normal behaviour and abnormal behaviour
  - 4.2.2: Recognise signs of distress; signs of common diseases & digestive disorders.

- 4.2.3: Apply the principles of sound animal nutrition.
- 4.2.4: Assess mobility by a recognised gait scoring system e.g. Bristol Scoring
- 4.2.5 Assess animal welfare using species specific criteria e.g. nostril clogging (waterfowl), hockburn (broilers), pododermatitis (all species)

4.3: The provision of environmental enrichment is key to animal management. Species specific enrichment is encouraged e.g perches (broilers), pecking objects (broilers and turkeys), water provision that facilitates dabbling and preening behaviours (waterfowl)

4.4: Any animals which are identified as being injured following transportation should be slaughtered immediately in order to avoid undue suffering and distress.

## **5. Feed and Water**

5.1: All livestock must have ready access to a wholesome diet which is appropriate for their age and body condition, so that it satisfies the nutritional requirements of the animal.

5.2 Ducks and geese may not be subject to gavage feeding

5.3 Animal Feed may not contain any animal or avian proteins or any other product not permitted by local or European law, or Whitbread. Restrictions apply as follows:

- a) Antibiotic and hormonal growth promoters cannot be used.
- b) Blood products cannot be used.
- c) The use of all animal proteins, except for fish meal, is prohibited in poultry feeds.
- d) Fishmeal must be registered and from a sustainable source.
- e) Fishmeal must not be used in withdrawal feed
- f) Coccidiostats may be used and product specific withdrawal periods must be observed

5.4 Where livestock are raised in outdoor production systems, this land must be kept free of any debris which could present a hazard to animals. Provision must also be made to minimise predator challenge

5.5 Meat birds must not be raised in caged systems

5.6 Where genetically modified animal feed is used this must be declared on the finished product specification and the feed specification supplied to farm.

5.7 Animals must have ready access to sufficient fresh clean water. Water trough space and/or nipple/plasson availability must be suitable for the number of animals and shall be adequate to enable ready access for a number of animals to drink at the same time.

- 5.8 Provision must be made to ensure an emergency supply of suitable drinking water in the event of failure of the normal supply (e.g. due to freezing, drought, etc.).

## **6. Medicines and Health**

- 6.1: Hospital pens may not be used for broiler birds. Sick or injured birds must be dispatched by a weight appropriate method without delay.
- 6.2 Where hospital pens are used (turkeys, ducks or geese) these must be managed so that birds:
- Have access to feed and water
  - Receive daily inspection
  - Not responding to treatment are dispatched by a weight appropriate method without delay.
- 6.3 Manual cervical dislocation can only be used for birds weighing < 3kg. Assisted methods are required for birds between 3-5kg. A mechanical means must be used for birds weighing in excess of 5kg. Methods which crush the spine or vertebrae are not permitted
- 6.3 Clinically unsubstantiated prophylactic use of medication is not permitted. Where known disease challenges are such that a population of animals is at significant risk of developing clinical disease then targeted use of medication is permissible if the rationale is fully documented e.g. within a Veterinary Health Plan. Sites must additionally develop an overarching reduction strategy for antibiotic use.
- 6.3: No mutilations are permitted in broiler birds
- 6.4 No mutilations are permitted in any ducks or geese that involve physical injury to wing tissue including:
- dewinging
  - pinioning
  - notching
  - severing tendons
  - carrying out any other operation that mutilates wings
- 6.5 The following are permissible in turkeys providing they are carried out at day old (in the hatchery). A further beak trim is permissible on farm up to 10 days of age
- beak trimming
  - desnooding (removing the fleshy extension on the forehead of turkeys)
  - de-toeing
  - dubbing (removing the comb or wattle from birds)
- 6.5.1 There must be no live plucking or forced moulting of birds

## **7 Identification and traceability**

- 7.1: Poultry must be traceable to farm of origin

## **8 Emergency procedures**

- 8.1: A casualty procedure must be in place. Compromised birds must not be live hung but neck dislocated on detection by suitably trained personnel.

## **9 Staff Training**

- 9.1: Personnel monitoring Critical Control Points shall have received appropriate training and the competency of these staff shall be verified.

## **10 Principles of Implementation**

In order for suppliers to effectively implement this policy, Whitbread requires them to:

- 10.1 Communicate this policy throughout their own supply chain
- 10.2 Provide documentary evidence confirming accreditation to a farm assurance system
- 10.3 Ensure Whitbread representatives, including third party auditors are given uninhibited access to sites used to produce Whitbread goods and that all documentation is accurate and complete
- 10.4 Accurately and transparently communicate when these standards are not being met or are unlikely to be met and when support is required to meet these standards
- 10.5 In collaboration with farmers and suppliers, ensure that legal compliance on animal welfare standards is maintained at all times

In order to ensure the policy is effectively implemented throughout the supply chain and to drive continuous improvement, Whitbread will commit to:

- 10.6 Communicate this policy to all suppliers and seek formal acceptance and commitment to its implementation
- 10.7 Require all suppliers to report their level of compliance to this policy and the corrective actions being taken towards improvement
- 10.8 Maintain an internal system to record and monitor the level of compliance to the policy
- 10.9 Review the animal welfare policy on an annual basis and whenever necessary and appropriate.
- 10.10 Cease trading with suppliers demonstrating persistent disregard for the animal welfare policy

**Signed:**

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**Title:**

**Date:**

I declare that I have received and acknowledge in full Whitbread Plc's Poultry Welfare Standard and agree to work with Whitbread towards full compliance.  
**On behalf of:** *(Company name)*

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