

# Auditor Guidelines for Conducting the NTF Animal Care Turkey Breeder Audit Tool

## I. Definitions:

- a. **Auditor:** Person(s) performing the audit
- b. **Auditee:** Company being audited
- c. **Audit Sponsor:** Organization that owns the audit tool and is responsible for revisions and clarification.
- d. **Audit Customer:** The company/organization that is requiring the auditee to be audited.

II. **Pre-audit communication** between the auditor and auditee is mandatory to reduce confusion and potential conflict during the audit. This can be done electronically or by phone. Err on the side of over communication. If there are multiple locations, the auditor must ensure that all facility managers are informed of the audit plan. Be sure to address the following items:

III. **Auditor Expectations.** It is assumed that an auditor will have a basic knowledge of turkey production and behavior. The welfare of the animal is the first priority.

IV. **Facilities to audit.** Given that most operations have multiple production facilities and may raise hens and toms on separate farms, the auditor and auditee must discuss and agree on:

- a. **Number of farms**
- b. **Which farms to visit**
- c. **Which houses to observe on the farm**
- d. **Which type of houses (Toms, Hens, Replacement breeders)**

In some cases the audit sponsor and/or the audit customer may need to be consulted for direction on the above items prior to the audit. Regardless, company biosecurity and management requirements must be adhered to. Showers are a common requirement in turkey breeder facilities. Be sure to get driving directions and don't rely on GPS addresses in rural areas. Confirm the local time zone.

## Audit Tool Guidance for Specific Criteria

I. **Emergency Response Plan, Health, Biosecurity (3.1, 3.2, 3.3):** Every company will have its unique requirements and situations regarding these items. It is the auditor's responsibility to verify that these items are addressed at the production level and that the company requirements are being met so that the turkey health

and welfare are ensured. It is not the auditor's job to determine if the plans are adequate. To verify an emergency contact list is up-to-date, the auditor should verify personnel involved in the audit and current management are on the roster.

- II. Access to Water and Feed (4.1, 4.2)** – There are many variations in the turkey industry as to type and numbers of feeders and drinkers. The facility/company should provide guidance for the numbers of each to provide adequate access. The auditor should focus on his/her observations that the turkeys are not hungry or thirsty by crowding the feeders and drinkers. Bird behavior should not indicate birds do not have adequate access to food or water. This can also be verified by normal or expected growth rates.
- III. Pest Control (5.2)** – Verify that the company/facility has a pest control program though either a written program or records of a pest control service. Confirm on farm implementation by observing baiting or bait stations as indicated by the program. The auditor is not to judge if the pest control program is adequate.
- IV. Litter Moisture (5.4)** – The auditor should be aware that in hot weather, fogging/sprinkler systems may be used to reduce heat stress. Litter may become damp or caked but the cooling benefits far outweigh the welfare impact of damp litter conditions.
- V. Breeder Roaming space (7.3)** – The roaming space is defined as the whole barn or a portion of the barn, or pens in which certain groups of turkeys are held.
- VI. Flock Evaluation scoring (7.4)** – 60 points is the total possible score and each affected bird is a 3 point deduction. If 20 birds or more out of 100 birds are affected, then the score would be zero. If 2 birds are affected out of 100 birds, then the score would be 54. If one bird has more than one type of lesion, it is counted as only one bird. Only eye lesions that are severe enough to compromise the turkey's ability to access feed and water should be scored as deductions. The auditor should also be aware that as turkey breeders normally lose feathers as they progress through the laying cycle. The auditor should not handle any turkeys; the flock evaluation is visual observation of lesions.
- VII. Recovery Pen (7.5)** – The purpose of this item is to ensure that sick or injured turkeys in the recovery pen are likely to recover are being monitored, cared for, and/or treated. Auditors will not decide if the treatment is adequate. Turkeys in the recovery pen(s) are not to be counted in the 100 bird evaluation
- VIII. Bird Handling (7.7)** – Ideally, the handling activities to be observed are planned in advance. However, schedules can often change so the auditor should be prepared to revise the audit plan at the opening meeting or during the audit if necessary. Be cognizant of employee breaks, the activities' start and finish times, etc. so the opportunity to observe the activity is not missed. Approximately 15-20 minutes of observation should be sufficient time to observe an activity. The auditor must also

be aware that there are differences among companies as to how certain activities are conducted. For example, some companies will use a ramp or a pit to do insemination, others may just use a catching pen and inseminate on the floor. When inspecting the facility and equipment for injury potential, only deduct points for areas where birds are visibly being injured or highly likely to be injured. The purpose of auditing these activities is to ensure that birds are not being mistreated or injured during these activities.