

Auditor Guidelines for Conducting the NTF Production Audit

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. If a complex or company-wide audit is to be completed, it should be agreed to during the pre-audit discussion on how the whole audit score will be determined (Example: Multiple grow-out facility scores will be averaged to get one grow-out score for the complex).

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 (Brood, Grow/Finish)**

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. Some farms may be ineligible for auditing due to infectious disease under order of the company veterinarian. 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 feeder 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. **Ventilation (5.3):** Ammonia level assessment/measurement method will be agreed to during the pre-audit communication.
- V. **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.
- VI. **On Farm Euthanasia (6.2):** Do not inspect flocks that are within two weeks of processing (to prevent injury to birds). Walk through the flock at a careful pace that minimizes birds' flapping and jumping. It is recommended that the auditor walks behind the caretaker or company representative. Stay within 10-15 feet of the side walls, typically between a feed line and the side wall, and make a complete loop around the inside of the poultry house. Special attention should be paid to sidewalls, exhaust fans, and any dark areas. Birds injured since the last daily flock inspection should not be counted. If auditor cannot determine if a bird is recently injured, do not count that bird.

The following sliding scale is used to score each poultry house observed. To calculate the Euthanasia criterion score for the audit, average all the houses' scores. However, if any individual poultry house receives a zero, that results in automatic audit failure.

- a. 70 points: No birds observed that require euthanasia. Caretaker and/or company representative can demonstrate or describe correct euthanasia process
- b. 50 points: 1 bird/4000 birds or fewer observed that require euthanasia. Caretaker/company representative can demonstrate or describe correct euthanasia process.

- c. 30 points: 1 bird/3000 birds or fewer observed that require euthanasia. Caretaker/company representative can demonstrate or describe correct euthanasia process.
- d. 10 points: 1 bird/2000 birds or fewer observed that require euthanasia. Caretaker/company representative can demonstrate or describe correct euthanasia process.
- e. 0 points: Greater than 1 bird/2000 observed that require euthanasia **OR** Caretaker/company representative **cannot** demonstrate or describe correct euthanasia process. A score of zero on this criterion results in an automatic audit failure.

VII. **Lighting Program (6.3):** Turkeys can become agitated or excited during complete darkness and may sometimes pileup on each other and smother some of the flock. To reduce this risk some facilities may use a reduced or very low level of light as opposed to complete darkness. This is an acceptable lighting program.

VIII. **Gait Scoring (6.5):** This item is to be scored as pass or fail (50 or zero). Gait scoring should be done between 10-14 weeks for light hens, 14-18 weeks for heavy hens, and 10-16 weeks for toms. Gait scoring should not be done on flocks within two week of processing, and in heavy toms greater than 16 weeks of age to minimize potential injury to the birds. Brood barns should not be gait scored. Gait scoring is to be done by walking about 1/3 of the barn within 10 -15 feet of the side walls, typically between a feed line and the side wall. Turkeys that are candidates for euthanasia or should have been euthanized are not to be included in the gait score count. Flocks with written diagnosis of a disease that causes lameness, such as turkey arthritis reovirus, from a veterinarian of record should not be gait scored.