

DELIVERABLE

D.2.1.3. – IDENTIFICATION OF GAP OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING MISSING/NOT VALIDATED INDICATORS, STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS AFTER WATERBATH STUNNING OF BROILERS AND TURKEYS.

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1. Introduction

This document is part of the **sub-activity 2.1** “*Relevant animal welfare indicators*” and concerns to the priority area related to the state of consciousness after waterbath stunning of broilers and turkeys. Here, the possible gaps of knowledge and ‘open norms’ are identified and discussed.

Definitions

Legal requirement: a requisite of the EU legislation to be assessed during the official controls.

Example: Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 16, Paragraph 4: “The frequency of the checks shall take into account the main risk factors, such as changes regarding the types or the size of animals slaughtered, or personnel working patterns and shall be established so as to ensure results with a high level of confidence.”

Gap of knowledge: lack of technical and scientific information of the indicators or its method.

Open-norm: requirement in the EU legislation which does not unambiguously translate into qualitative or quantitative criteria that can be used to check/verify compliance.

2. Methodology used

The information has been retrieved from questionnaires sent to the Competent Authorities (CAs) or from workshops that had taken place during a meeting between EURCAW-Poultry-SFA and Competent Authorities in September 2020 in Nice (France): State of consciousness after waterbath stunning of broilers and turkeys.

3. State of consciousness after waterbath stunning of broilers and turkeys

The bird’s welfare assessment at the slaughterhouse includes all processes from the arrival of birds until their death. This can be grouped in three main phases: 1) pre-stunning (*i.e.*, unloading from the truck, lairage, handling and removing of birds from crates or containers and shackling); 2) stunning and 3) bleeding. The legal requirements below focus on bird’s welfare assessment associated to the waterbath stunning and bleeding phases in broilers and turkeys.

3.1. Legal requirement: “*Animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations*” (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 3, Paragraph 1)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.2. Legal requirement: “*The loss of consciousness and sensibility shall be maintained until the death of the animal*” (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 4, Paragraph 1)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.3. Legal requirement: *“The waterbath shall be designed in such a way that the level of immersion of the birds can be easily adapted”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Annex II, Point 5.6.)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.4. Legal requirement. *“The electrodes in waterbath stunning equipment shall extend the full length of the waterbath. The waterbath shall be designed and maintained in such a way that when the shackles pass over the water they are in continuous contact with the earthed rubbing bar”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Annex II, Point 5.7.)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.5. Legal requirement. *“The whole length of the shackle line up to the point of entry into the scald tank shall be easily accessible in case animals have to be removed from the slaughter line”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Annex II, Point 5.3.)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.6. Legal requirement. *“Access to the waterbath stunning equipment shall be available to allow the bleeding of birds that have been stunned and remain in the waterbath as a result of a breakdown or delay in the line”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Annex II, Point 5.9.)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.7. Legal requirement. *“Waterbath stunning equipment shall be fitted with a device which displays and records the details of the electrical key parameters used. These records shall be kept for at least one year.”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Annex II, Point 5.10.)

There is no information regarding the frequency of calibration.

3.8. Legal requirement. *“Business operators shall ensure that persons responsible for stunning or other nominated staff carry out regular checks to ensure that the animals do not present any signs of consciousness or sensibility in the period between the end of the stunning process and death.”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 5, Paragraph 1)

There is a lack of definition in what is a regular check.

3.9. Legal requirement. *“Those checks shall be carried out on a sufficiently representative sample of animals and their frequency shall be established taking into account the outcome of previous checks and any factors which may affect the efficiency of the stunning process.”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 5, Paragraph 2)

There is no specifications on the frequency of the checks. Furthermore, so far there is no sampling protocol to evaluate stunning efficiency at slaughterhouse.

3.10. Legal requirement. *“When the outcome of the checks indicates that an animal is not properly stunned, the person in charge of stunning shall immediately take the appropriate measures as specified in the standard operating procedures drawn up in accordance with Article 6(2)” (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 5, Paragraph 3.)*

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.11. Legal requirement. *“Business operators shall ensure that (...) slaughter operations (...) are only carried out by persons holding a certificate of competence for such operations (...), demonstrating their ability to carry them out in accordance with the rules laid down in this Regulation.” (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 7)*

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.12. Legal requirement. *“(...) The checks (...) shall include (...) indicators designed to detect signs of unconsciousness and consciousness or sensibility in the animals; indicators designed to detect the absence of signs of life in the animals slaughtered (...) in accordance with Article 4(4); criteria for determining whether the results shown by the indicators referred to in point (b) are satisfactory; the circumstances and/or the time when the monitoring must take place; the number of animals in each sample to be checked during the monitoring; appropriate procedures to ensure that in the event that the criteria referred to in point (c) are not met, the stunning or killing operations are reviewed in order to identify the causes of any shortcomings and the necessary changes to be made to those operations.” (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 16, Paragraph 2.)*

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.13. Legal requirement. *“Business operators shall put in place a specific monitoring procedure for each slaughter line.” (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 16, Paragraph 3)*

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.14. Legal requirement. *“The frequency of the checks shall take into account the main risk factors, such as changes regarding the types or the size of animals slaughtered, or personnel working patterns and shall be established so as to ensure results with a high level*

of confidence.” (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 16, Paragraph 4)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.15. Legal requirement. *“For the purpose of paragraphs 1 to 4 of this Article 16, business operators may use monitoring procedures as described in the guides to good practice referred to in Article 13. Community guidelines concerning monitoring procedures in slaughterhouses may be adopted in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 25(2).”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 16, Paragraph 5 and 6)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.

3.16. Legal requirement. *“Member States shall encourage the development and dissemination of guides to good practice to facilitate the implementation of this Regulation.”* (Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 13, Paragraph 1)

There are no gaps of knowledge or open norms for this requirement.