



P.O. Box 21484 | Washington, DC 20009 USA  
www.globalanimalpartnership.org

## Global Animal Partnership 5-Step™ Animal Welfare Rating Standards for Broiler Chickens

- All standards applicable to “All Steps” or to any range of Steps that include Step 1 are required and must be met for the farm to enter the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step Program. Higher Steps are elective after the basic requirements of Step 1 have been met.
- If a standard has not been met for all animals on the farm at the time of initial inspection, a Step rating will not be assigned until evidence is provided confirming that the standard has been met. For standards regarding indoor foraging areas that are not met at the time of initial inspection, a Step rating will not be assigned until evidence is provided confirming that either the standard has been met or plans have been developed to meet these standards going forward.
- If in a particular situation or circumstance, a standard as written might compromise the welfare of the animals in the producer’s care, the producer should contact the Global Animal Partnership-approved certifier with which they are working to request a variance.
- Producers must be in compliance with all local, regional, and national regulations and laws that relate to the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating standards.
- No standards in this document may supersede local, regional, or national regulations or laws.

**Step 1: No cages, no crowding**

**Step 2: Enriched environment**

**Step 3: Enhanced outdoor access**

**Step 4: Pasture centered**

**Step 5: Animal centered: Bred for outdoors**

**Step 5+: Animal Centered: Entire life on same farm**

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Farm Plan and Documentation</b> .....	<b>page 3</b>
<b>2. Source of Animals</b> .....	<b>page 6</b>
<b>3. Animal Health</b> .....	<b>page 7</b>
<b>4. Animal Management</b> .....	<b>page 9</b>
<b>5. Feed and Water</b> .....	<b>page 11</b>
<b>6. Outdoor Conditions</b> .....	<b>page 12</b>
<b>7. Housing</b> .....	<b>page 14</b>
<b>8. Insect, Rodent, and Predator Control</b> .....	<b>page 17</b>
<b>9. Catching</b> .....	<b>page 19</b>
<b>10. Movement and Transport of Animals</b> .....	<b>page 20</b>
<b>11. Appendix I: Lameness Evaluation</b> .....	<b>page 23</b>

# Section 1: Farm Plan and Documentation

## 1.1 Farm Plan

### 1.1.1 (All Steps)

Each farm must have a written plan that identifies practices implemented to ensure compliance with all applicable sections of the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating standards.

- A written farm plan must exist.
- It must be current and updated as needed to reflect any changes.
- It must address all relevant areas covered by these standards.
- The farm plan must reflect actual practices on the farm.

The completed Application/Workbook will suffice for this requirement.

**Producer Guidance:** Your farm plan should be a description of the goals and methods of your farming operation. By filling in the workbook and describing your actual practices, you may satisfy the requirements for this standard. The intent of this workbook is to assist you in putting down your practices in writing and can act as a “how-to” manual if someone has to step into your operation in an emergency. An important benefit of developing a farm plan is that often helps to focus the goals that you are trying to achieve. Importantly, writing down what is second nature to you will allow you, and others, to appreciate the good work that you do and the magnitude of what you know, do, and accomplish throughout the day, the month, and the year.

### 1.1.2 (Steps 5 – 5+)

In addition to the above, each farm plan must include:

- a. Evidence of an integrated all-farm approach with proactive measures in place that demonstrate an agricultural animal production system with primary emphasis on animal welfare.
- b. The primary producer must be able to demonstrate inherent strengths in animal husbandry based on a good understanding of interactions within an animal production system.

To qualify for Step 5 or 5+ status, all species of commercial animals raised on the farm must be raised to at least Step 1 standards. Within two years of approval at Step 5 levels, all commercial animals on the property must meet at least Step 4 requirements.

**Producer Guidance:** The two-year allowance to bring all commercial animals to Step 4 levels will be granted to the producer one time only. If the farm loses Step 5 status and re-applies, Step 4 status of all commercial animals will be required to re-establish the previous Step level.

### 1.1.3 (Steps 5 – 5+)

All domestic animals on the farm must be managed to the following requirements:

- Given an appropriate amount and type of feed to meet their nutritional requirements
- Kept in surroundings that do not cause them injury
- Provided with a comfortable resting area that protects them from extremes of temperature
- Kept in good health and given veterinary attention as required
- Dogs must not be tethered

**Producer Guidance:** “Domestic animals” refers to dogs, cats, horses, goats, cows, or any other animals maintained on the farm for non-commercial purposes, including both working animals and

pets. Leashes may be used with dogs when they are being moved about the farm or when temporarily removed from their runs for cleaning, but they may not be tied and left for long periods of time.

## 1.2 Animal Health Plan

### 1.2.1 (All Steps)

Each farm must plan for the health of the animals. Planning must include biosecurity measures.

## 1.3 Records and Documentation

### 1.3.1 (All Steps)

Each farm must maintain and provide the inspector full access to records sufficient to document compliance with all applicable Global Animal Partnership 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating standards. Informal records such as those written on calendars or notepads are acceptable but must be presented in an organized manner at inspection.

## 1.4 Emergency Procedures

### 1.4.1 (All Steps)

There must be procedures to follow in case of emergency. Anyone engaged in animal management must be aware of the emergency procedures and trained to take action should an emergency occur.

**Producer Guidance:** Emergency procedures might include contingency plans for natural disasters likely to occur in the area. Fire, emergency disease outbreak, emergency water shut off, and power failure should also be addressed. Instructions should be detailed enough to ensure the safety and well-being of animals and workers during an emergency.

## 1.5 Training

### 1.5.1 (All Steps)

Initial and ongoing training must be provided in a manner that is clearly understood by all individuals who carry out any animal management tasks covered by this program.

**Producer Guidance:**

- Training should expand awareness and recognition that animals feel pain and have the capacity to suffer.
- Training should provide an overview of the entire operation as well as specific training related to the tasks that will be required. Ongoing training should aim at keeping up to date with current animal husbandry techniques and the requirements of the Global Animal Partnership standards. Training can be experience-based or written.
- Training might cover, but is not limited to, the following topics:
  - a. Catching and handling
  - b. Recognition and assessment of lameness
  - c. Feeding protocols
  - d. Litter management
  - e. Assessment of foraging area/pasture conditions
  - f. Criteria for determining when euthanasia is necessary and approved euthanasia methods
  - g. Movement and transport of animals

## **1.6 Biosecurity Procedures**

### **1.6.1 (All Steps)**

Each farm must implement and maintain a biosecurity program. The program must include measures taken to avoid the introduction of disease from outside sources, such as incoming stock, visitors, and trucks or equipment.

## Section 2: Source of Animals

### 2.1 Source of Animals

#### 2.1.1 (All Steps)

The intentional use of genetically modified or cloned birds or their progeny is prohibited.

#### 2.1.2 Selection for Welfare Traits: Step Differentiation

##### 2.1.2 (Steps 2 – 3)

Strains of chickens must be chosen that are well-suited to the environment in which they are kept and must show evidence of the first three welfare-enhancing traits listed below.

##### 2.1.2 (Step 4)

Strains of chickens must be chosen that are well-suited to the environment in which they are kept and must show evidence of the first five welfare-enhancing traits listed below.

##### 2.1.2 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Strains of chickens must be chosen that are well-suited to the environment in which they are kept and must show evidence of all eight welfare-enhancing traits listed below.

#### Welfare-Enhancing Traits

1. Low rates of mortality in market birds (in accordance with Standard 4.2.1)
2. Good leg health in market birds
3. Low tendency toward breast blisters, hock burns, and foot ulcers in market birds
4. Cardiovascular health in market birds, including low incidences of Ascites and Sudden Death Syndrome
5. Culling rates that should not exceed the mortality rate for Step 4 (as outlined in Standard 4.2.1)
6. Minimally feed-restricted breeding stock
7. Market birds with the ability to perch
8. Low tendency to feather peck in both breeders and market birds

If there is a lack of supply for birds bred for certain of these welfare traits, the producer may apply to the Global Animal Partnership for variance.

#### 2.1.3 (Step 5+)

No chicks may be introduced from off-farm.

## Section 3: Animal Health

### 3.1 Medication Use

#### 3.1.1 (All Steps)

The therapeutic use of antibiotics, ionophores, or sulfa drugs is prohibited for market animals. If a market animal or flock must be treated with prohibited medications, that animal or flock must be identified and removed from the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step Animal Welfare program.

**Producer Guidance:** Vaccines are available to protect against coccidiosis. As well, good management, including careful pasture rotation, can prevent the likelihood of coccidiosis.

#### 3.1.2 (All Steps)

Sub-therapeutic (preventive) levels of antibiotics, ionophores, beta agonists, or sulfas are prohibited.

#### 3.1.3 (All Steps)

Records must be kept of all treatments, whether alternative remedies or medications, and the results of treatment. Records must be made available at inspection.

#### 3.1.4 (All Steps)

No medicines may be used in an extra-label manner unless prescribed by the farm's attending veterinarian. Any such medicine must have the prescribing veterinarian's label affixed over the manufacturer's label that outlines the prescribed method of usage, duration of administration and withholding time.

#### 3.1.5 (All Steps)

All medications must be discarded after the expiration date.

### 3.2 Treatment of Ill or Injured Animals

#### 3.2.1 (All Steps)

In the event a bird becomes ill or suffers accidental injury on the farm, it must receive immediate individual treatment designed to minimize pain and suffering. If the bird is suffering from a non-recoverable illness, injury, or condition, it must be promptly euthanized using an approved method.

#### 3.2.2 (All Steps)

If alternative treatments are used and are not successful, veterinary advice must be sought and any medication prescribed must be administered.

#### 3.2.3 (All Steps)

Birds must not be separated from the flock unless required for husbandry or veterinary procedures, or if the bird(s) is injured or sick, and is likely to recover if treated.

#### 3.2.4 (All Steps)

Any area used for sick or injured birds must meet all space requirements detailed in Section 7.

### 3.3 Lameness

#### 3.3.1 (All Steps)

Producers must conduct lameness evaluations of each flock during the final week prior to slaughter. During daily inspections, instances of lameness must be monitored and recorded.

**Producer Guidance:** If, during daily flock inspections, lameness is seen to be a serious problem, lameness evaluations should be carried out earlier than the final week prior to slaughter and more frequently. Lameness can be mitigated to some degree by diet and lighting programs. Periods of darkness provide the birds with sufficient rest, which is essential to maintain good muscular control. Ultimately, the best solution for lameness is careful selection of birds appropriate to the system.

#### 3.3.2 (All Steps)

Lame birds scoring 4 or 5 must be culled.

**Producer Guidance:** See Appendix I for lameness evaluation guidelines.

# Section 4: Animal Management

## 4.1 Animal Handling

### 4.1.1 (All Steps)

Chickens must not be mistreated in any way.

## 4.2 Flock Management

### 4.2.1 Flock Traceability: Step Differentiation

#### 4.2.1 (Steps 1 – 5)

The producer must demonstrate traceability of each GAP-rated flock from grow-out to slaughter.

#### 4.2.1 (Step 5+)

The producer must demonstrate traceability of each GAP-rated flock from hatchery to slaughter.

### 4.2.2 (All Steps)

Records must be kept of mortality levels and actions taken to address the causes of mortality. Mortality and culled birds must be recorded as separate categories.

Flood, disease outbreak, and other unusual circumstances that cause higher mortality must be noted in the mortality records.

### 4.2.3 Mortality Evaluation: Step Differentiation

#### 4.2.3 (Steps 1 – 3)

Mortality must be evaluated by the farmer for each flock.

- Mortality higher than 2% for indoor systems (averaged over the course of a year and excluding chicks that were dead upon delivery) must be addressed by implementing a program designed to reduce it below this level.

#### 4.2.3 (Steps 4 – 5+)

Mortality must be evaluated by the farmer for each flock.

- Mortality higher than 5% for outdoor systems (averaged over the course of a year and excluding chicks that were dead upon delivery for Steps 4 – 5) must be addressed by implementation of a program designed to reduce it below this level.

### 4.2.4 (All Steps)

If birds exhibit evidence of feather pecking, the cause must be addressed immediately. Records must be kept of observations and response to problems.

### 4.2.5 (All Steps)

All instances of hock burns and breast blisters must be recorded.

**Producer Guidance:** Prevention through proper litter management and constant observation is the most effective solution for these issues. Hock burns are defined as lesions caused by compromised litter that are the size of a match head or larger.

#### 4.2.6: Management of Hock Burn: Step Differentiation

Hock burns larger than the size of a match head must be managed as described below:

##### 4.2.6 (Step 1)

There must be a program in place to remedy hock burns when the incidence exceeds 15%.

##### 4.2.6 (Step 2)

There must be a program in place to remedy hock burns when the incidence exceeds 10%.

##### 4.2.6 (Step 3)

There must be a program in place to remedy hock burns when the incidence exceeds 5%.

##### 4.2.6 (Step 4)

There must be a program in place to remedy hock burns when the incidence exceeds 3%.

##### 4.2.6 (Step 5)

There must be a program in place to remedy hock burns when the incidence exceeds 2%.

##### 4.2.6 (Step 5+)

There must be a program in place to remedy hock burns when the incidence exceeds 0.5%.

**Producer Guidance:** Hock burns and breast blisters are highly correlated, and high levels of both indicate problems with litter quality. Hock burns can therefore be used as a sole indicator of welfare, and, if levels exceed those recommended for each step, a plan should be put in place to improve litter quality.

#### 4.2.7 (Steps 5 – 5+)

Group size must not exceed 500 birds.

### 4.3 Physical Alterations

#### 4.3.1 (All Steps)

The physical alteration of chickens is prohibited. These alterations include:

- a. Caponization
- b. De-spurring or toe clipping
- c. Beak trimming
- d. Dubbing

### 4.4 Provisions for Natural Behavior

#### 4.4.1 (All Steps)

Dust baths must be provided where not naturally available.

#### 4.4.2 (Steps 5 – 5+)

All chickens must be able to perch simultaneously.

**Producer Guidance:** Perches can take a number of designs. A minimum of 7 inches / 18 cm per bird is recommended.

## Section 5: Feed and Water

### 5.1 Water Availability

#### 5.1.1 (All Steps)

All birds must have free and continuous access to drinking water. In systems where birds can move between indoors and outdoors, water must be continuously accessible in both areas.

### 5.2 Feeding Requirements

#### 5.2.1 (All Steps)

The nutritional needs for the health of the birds must be met. Birds must have *ad-libitum* access to some form of feed during all daylight hours. Regulation of growth rate by restricting feed quantity is prohibited.

**Producer Guidance:** Nutrient density can be varied to regulate growth rate for the welfare of the birds, but the quantity of feed provided must be sufficient to satisfy the hunger of all birds.

#### 5.2.2 (All Steps)

Birds must be fed in a manner that enables all birds to eat their full ration.

**Producer Guidance:** There is not a specific requirement for the number of birds per feeder. If, during an inspection, the birds are found to be in competition for feed, the farm will be required to correct the imbalance.

#### 5.2.3 (All Steps)

Chickens fed whole grains must be provided with insoluble grit.

### 5.3 Feed Safety and Hygiene

**NOTE:** The requirements of these standards apply to both feed in storage and in feeders.

#### 5.3.1 (All Steps)

Feed must not be moldy, mildewed, or otherwise compromised in quality.

#### 5.3.2 (All Steps)

Feed must not be contaminated by rodents.

#### 5.3.3 (All Steps)

Feeders must be clean and free of foreign objects.

### 5.4 Additives or Ingredients in Feed or Water

#### 5.4.1 (All Steps)

Mammalian or avian by-products, with the exception of supplemental dairy-based probiotics, are prohibited.

## Section 6: Outdoor Conditions

### 6.1: Outdoor Environment

#### 6.1.1 Outdoor Access: Step Differentiation

##### 6.1.1 (Step 3)

From 4 weeks of age, all birds must have continuous access to an outdoor area that is equal to or greater than 25% of the total floor space of the house. During seasonal or weather conditions that pose a welfare risk and preclude outdoor access, all birds must have continuous access to an indoor foraging area that is equal to or greater than 25% of the occupied floor area of the house.

##### 6.1.1 (Step 4)

From 4 weeks of age, all birds must live continuously on pasture or in foraging areas during daylight hours. During seasonal or weather conditions that pose a welfare risk and preclude outdoor access, all birds must have continuous access to an indoor foraging area that is equal to or greater than 25% of the total occupied floor space of the house.

##### 6.1.1 (Steps 5 – 5+)

From 4 weeks of age, all birds must live continuously on pasture or in foraging areas during daylight hours. Birds can be confined to housing only during extreme weather conditions that pose a welfare risk. Seasonal housing is prohibited.

Indoor foraging areas (**Steps 3 – 4**) are structures such as solariums or sun porches that are additional to the occupied floor area of the house and provide natural light.

Outdoor foraging areas (**Steps 4 – 5+**) can include bushes, crops, trees, wooded areas, or a combination of these components. Seasonal conditions may require supplying supplemental foraging material.

Pasture areas must meet coverage requirements as described in subsection 6.1.3 below.

##### 6.1.2 (Steps 3 – 5+)

There must be sufficient openings from housing that no bird is restricted from outdoor access.

#### 6.1.3 Level of Pasture Cover: Step Differentiation

##### 6.1.3 (Step 4)

There must be at least 50% pasture cover in each occupied area.

##### 6.1.3 (Steps 5 – 5+)

There must be at least 75% pasture cover in each occupied area.

**Producer Guidance:** Pasture cover can include grasses, legumes, herbs, or a combination of these components.

##### 6.1.4 (Steps 4 – 5+)

Foraging areas must contain vegetative material and must encourage the birds' natural behavior.

## 6.2. Housing in Outdoor Systems

**NOTE:** If birds have outdoor access, even if the farm is qualifying for Step 1 or Step 2, the following standards must be met.

### 6.2.1 (All Steps)

Chickens must have continuous access to housing.

**Producer Guidance:** Structures that provide birds with protection from the elements and predation, whether mobile or permanent, meet this standard.

### 6.2.2 (All Steps)

The base of all housing that remains stationary for more than 3 days must be covered with friable litter.

### 6.2.3 (All Steps)

Litter must be a non-toxic, fibrous substance.

## 6.3 Outdoor Conditions

**NOTE:** If birds have outdoor access, even if the farm is qualifying for Step 1 or Step 2, the following standards must be met.

### 6.3.1 (Steps 3 – 5+)

Chickens must be provided with cover and/or blinds that 1) encourage them to range, 2) enable them to hide and isolate themselves from other birds, and 3) also provide protection from predators. There must be sufficient space for all birds to hide if threatened by predators.

**Producer Guidance:** Cover provides a horizontal barrier under which birds might hide from predators, while blinds are vertical barriers or screens behind which birds can hide from aggressive flock-mates. Cover may be natural, such as bushes and shrubs, and may also include artificial materials for both cover and blinds.

### 6.3.2 (Steps 3 – 5+)

Shade must be provided in all outdoor areas.

**Producer Guidance:** It is acceptable if the chicken's house or hut is also designated as shade if it has been adapted to improve airflow.

### 6.3.3 (All Steps)

All outdoor areas and structures accessible to the birds must be maintained in such a way that they do not pose risk of injury.

### 6.3.4 (All Steps)

Birds must be protected from contact with any potentially toxic substances.

**Producer Guidance:** All potentially toxic materials, such as paints or anti-corrosives, pest control substances, or lubricants, must be properly stored and used in a manner that prevents birds from coming into contact with them.

# Section 7: Housing

## 7.1 Brooding

### 7.1.1 (All Steps)

Placement of chicks must begin within 2 hours of delivery.

### 7.1.2 (All Steps)

Brooders must accommodate all chicks' thermal needs.

### 7.1.3 (All Steps)

Water and feed systems must be within the heated area.

## 7.2 Litter Requirements

### 7.2.1 (All Steps)

The floors of all houses must be completely covered with friable litter of sufficient quantity to provide comfort and protection to the birds.

### 7.2.2 (All Steps)

Litter must be a non-toxic, fibrous substance that promotes foraging.

**Producer Guidance:** The substance used for litter must not cause crop impaction.

## 7.3 Housing Conditions

### 7.3.1 (All Steps)

All housing must provide warmth for birds in cold weather and the ability to remain cool in hot weather.

**Producer Guidance:** The combination of humidity and temperature can produce heat stress when temperature alone would not cause difficulty. When conditions are particularly humid, the birds should be watched for signs of heat stress and relief provided if it arises.

### 7.3.2 (All Steps)

Air quality must be regularly assessed at the level of the birds using sensory evaluation or other appropriate methods.

**Producer Guidance:** Monitoring devices are not required unless the farm is found to have untenable levels of ammonia or the birds are suffering due to high levels of toxic gases.

**The following maximum levels are recommended for Steps 1 – 3:**

- ammonia: < 25ppm
- dust < 10mg per cubic meter

**The following maximum levels are recommended for Steps 4 – 5+:**

- ammonia: < 10ppm
- dust < 10mg per cubic meter

### 7.3.3 (All Steps)

Light intensity in housing during daylight hours must exceed 20 lux.

**Producer Guidance:** From the third day after placement, the birds should have periods of light and darkness that follow the diurnal, seasonal patterns. Artificial light should not extend the daytime period of light past 16 hours. There have been many studies that prove birds need rest from placement and thrive when provided with daily periods of light and darkness.

### 7.3.4 (Steps 2 – 4)

In housing, chickens must be provided with cover or blinds that enable them to hide and isolate themselves from other birds.

**Producer Guidance:** Cover provides a horizontal barrier under which birds might hide from predators, while blinds are vertical barriers or screens behind which birds can hide from aggressive flock-mates. Straw bales can provide hiding places. Materials for cover should be provided at different heights to enable chickens to retreat from the group if they choose.

### 7.3.5 Enrichments: Step Differentiation

#### 7.3.5 (Step 2)

Chickens must be provided with at least one enrichment to stimulate their natural behavior in their indoor environment.

#### 7.3.5 (Steps 3 – 4)

Chickens must be provided simultaneously with two or more enrichments to add complexity and variability to their indoor environments, and to stimulate their natural behavior.

Enrichments must be appropriate to the type of birds being housed, and the birds must interact with the enrichments.

**Producer Guidance:** For example, not all broiler chicken strains are able to perch when they are older than 3 weeks. As a result, perches would not qualify as an enrichment for those strains.

Enrichments do not include items or provisions essential to the birds' health and well-being. Dust bathing areas and litter are not to be considered as "enrichments." Enrichments might include:

- Straw or hay bales scattered throughout the environment
- Perches (considered a requirement at **Step 5**)
- Whole grains scattered at irregular times in the environment
- Brassicas (cabbages, whole Brussels sprout plants)

## 7.4 Space Requirements

### 7.4.1 (All Steps)

Chickens must be able to express natural behavior, including standing, spreading their wings, turning around, flapping their wings, and preening, without touching another bird.

## 7.5 Housing Safety, Sanitation, and Maintenance

### 7.5.1 (All Steps)

All equipment, fittings, fences, gates, openings, and protrusions must be maintained in good working order and in such a manner that they do not inflict injuries or pose risks to the birds or caretakers.

### 7.5.2 (All Steps)

Slatted floor may comprise no more than 25% of the total floor area.

### 7.5.3 (All Steps)

Birds must be protected from contact with any potentially toxic substances used for maintenance, sanitation, cleaning, or pest control.

**Producer Guidance:** All potentially toxic materials, such as sanitizers, pest control substances, and lubricants, must be properly stored and used in a manner that prevents birds from coming into contact with them.

### 7.5.4 (All Steps)

If electricity is required for ventilation, water, feeders, or lighting, a back-up power supply with power failure alarm must be available and periodically tested.

## Section 8: Insect, Rodent, and Predator Control

### 8.1 Insect and Parasite Control

#### 8.1.1 (All Steps)

The use organophosphates or any product containing organophosphates in any manner in which an animal might ingest or absorb them is prohibited.

### 8.2 Rodent Control

#### 8.2.1 (All Steps)

Birds must be protected from disease posed by rodents.

#### 8.2.2 (All Steps)

Exclusion of rodents from housing and feed storage areas or other non-lethal methods must be the first level of protection. Buildings must be constructed and/or maintained in such a manner as to prevent the intrusion of rodents.

#### 8.2.3 (All Steps)

Poisons for the control or elimination of rodents are permitted only after exclusion has failed.

**Producer Guidance:** Methods used to control rodents should be swift and efficient, and not cause unnecessary suffering. Currently, poison used to control or eliminate rodents is unavoidable in certain farming models, and it is acknowledged that poison does cause suffering. The ultimate goal is to prohibit its use entirely.

One of the unwanted side effects of using poisoned bait is that it can attract rodents to the area and exacerbate the problem. It is essential to design any baiting procedures to attract only rodents already posing a danger and to avoid attracting more rodents to the area.

### 8.3 Predator and Wild Bird Control

#### 8.3.1 (All Steps)

Chickens must be protected from predation and disease posed by wild birds.

#### 8.3.2 (All Steps)

Exclusion of predators and wild birds from housing and outdoor areas or other non-lethal methods must be the first level of defense.

#### 8.3.3 (All Steps)

Methods of control and/or elimination of predators or wild birds must be swift and efficient, and must not cause suffering.

#### 8.3.4 (All Steps)

Poisons for the control or elimination of predators or wild birds that are posing a risk to the chickens are prohibited.

### **8.3.5 (All Steps)**

Lethal means of predator control must target the offending animal(s) only.

## **8.4 Methods of Control**

### **8.4.1 (All Steps)**

All varieties of leg-hold traps, including egg traps, neck snares, conibear traps, glue boards, and drowning traps, are prohibited.

**Producer Guidance:** Box traps that capture animals alive without restricting them from movement are permitted.

### **8.4.2 Live Trap Monitoring: Step Differentiation**

#### **8.4.2 (Steps 1 – 4)**

Live traps without monitors must be checked at least daily. If live trap monitors are used, they must be acted upon within 24 hours of an alert.

#### **8.4.2 (Steps 5 – 5+)**

Live traps without monitors must be checked at least twice daily. If live trap monitors are used, they must be acted upon within 6 hours of an alert.

## Section 9: Catching

### 9.1 Catching

#### 9.1.1 (All Steps)

Chickens must be caught calmly and with a minimum of chasing.

**Producer Guidance:** Mechanized catching systems that are gentle to the birds may be used.

Incentive programs for employees can greatly reduce the rate of bruising and injury during catching and loading for transport, thereby significantly improving the welfare of the birds during this process. Catching crews should be large enough to complete this event quickly, to reduce the time birds are held in transport containers without access to food and water, and to avoid fatigue of the catching crew, which can result in careless handling. A designated individual monitoring the catching process can also help ensure the humane treatment of birds.

#### 9.1.2 (All Steps)

Birds must be handled gently and must not be injured during catching.

**Producer Guidance:** Premiums to the catching crew for low numbers of broken wings is an excellent way to encourage gentle handling.

#### 9.1.3 Catching Time of Day: Step Differentiation

##### 9.1.3 (Steps 1 – 3)

Birds must be caught in dim light to minimize the stress for the birds.

##### 9.1.3 (Steps 4 – 5+)

Birds must be caught during nocturnal darkness.

**Producer Guidance:** Light that is not visible to the chickens, such as red light, may be used.

#### 9.1.4: Catching Method: Step Differentiation

##### 9.1.4 (Step 5)

Catchers must not carry more than two birds in one hand.

##### 9.1.4 (Step 5+)

Chickens must be caught by the body with both hands and carried upright. Chickens must never be lifted or carried by the head, wing, tail, or leg.

### 9.2 Water and Feed Withdrawal

#### 9.2.1 (All Steps)

Water must be continuously available until catching begins.

#### 9.2.2 (All Steps)

Feed withdrawal cannot exceed 12 consecutive daylight hours prior to arrival at the slaughter plant.

## Section 10: Movement and Transport of Animals

**NOTE:** Transport pertains to transporting animals onto or off the farm. Movement pertains to moving animals within the farm.

### 10.1 Transport of Chicks

#### 10.1.1 (All Steps)

Chicks must be delivered within 24 hours of being removed from the hatchery.

#### 10.1.2 (All Steps)

Chicks must be transported in chick boxes with a floor space of not less than 4 in<sup>2</sup>/25.8 cm<sup>2</sup> per chick and no more than 100 chicks in a box.

**Producer Guidance:** Boxes should not be tilted more than 20° from the horizontal.

#### 10.1.3 (All Steps)

Boxes must have holes for ventilation and dry, absorbent floor pads.

#### 10.1.4 (All Steps)

If chicks are sent by next-day carrier, the vehicles must have the ability to maintain temperatures within the required range and the boxes must be prominently labeled “LIVE BIRDS.”

#### 10.1.5 (All Steps)

Mortality of chicks during transport must not exceed 0.5%.

### 10.2 Movement of Birds Within the Farm

#### 10.2.1 (All Steps)

Movement within the farm must not exceed 1 hour. If movement of birds exceeds 1 hour, all transport standards apply.

#### 10.2.2 (All Steps)

Crates used to move birds must be in good condition and must not cause injury to the birds.

**Producer Guidance:** Crates must not be broken or bent. Doors must be large enough for the birds to be easily loaded and removed from the crates.

#### 10.2.3 (All Steps)

Crates must be clean.

### 10.3 Condition of Birds at Transport

#### 10.3.1 (All Steps)

Transporting unhealthy, non-ambulatory, or injured birds is prohibited. Such birds must be euthanized on the same day that fit birds from the same placement are sent to slaughter.

## 10.4 Transport Duration: Step Differentiation

**NOTE:** When birds are crated during daylight hours, transport time is calculated from the first bird crated to the time the transport vehicle arrives at the plant. When birds are crated at night, transport is timed from the moment the truck begins to move or at dawn (or perceived dawn), whichever is earlier. Transport duration limits pertain to all transport of the birds after placement.

### 10.4.1 (Steps 1 – 3)

Transport must not exceed 8 hours. **NOTE:** If birds are crated at night, transport may not exceed 6 hours from the moment the truck begins to move, or from dawn or perceived dawn, whichever is earlier.

### 10.4.1 (Steps 4 – 5)

Transport must not exceed 4 hours.

### 10.4.1 (Step 5+)

Transport must not exceed 2 hours.

**Producer Guidance:** No bird may be subjected to a journey longer than the duration listed for the Step level unless that journey is specifically to improve or safeguard the welfare of the bird. Under no circumstances may a journey exceed the maximum duration listed for Step 1.

## 10.5 Transport and Loading of Market Birds

### 10.5.1 (All Steps)

Transport crates must be in good condition and must not cause injury to the birds.

**Producer Guidance:** Crates must not be broken or bent. Doors must be large enough for the birds to be easily loaded and removed from the crates.

### 10.5.2 (All Steps)

Transport crates must be thoroughly cleaned between each group of birds.

**Producer Guidance:** In temperatures below the freezing mark, crates can be brushed clean rather than washed with water.

### 10.5.3 (All Steps)

When weather is either very hot or very cold, accommodation must be made for the comfort of the birds during transport.

### 10.5.4 (All Steps)

Transport vehicles, if open, must be fitted with a ceiling or trailer cover to protect the birds during extreme weather.

**Producer Guidance:** Within one year of implementation of these standards, there must be demonstrable progress made toward upgrading trucks to meet this requirement. Within two years of implementation of these standards, half of the trucks must be compliant with this standard.

#### **10.5.5 (All Steps)**

Transport density must be below 12 lbs per ft<sup>2</sup> (50 kg per m<sup>2</sup>), and sufficient space must be given to avoid heat stress. Where welfare may be compromised, a decrease in density is required. Birds must have ventilation at all times.

### **10.6 Transport Personnel Responsibilities and Procedures**

#### **10.6.1 (All Steps)**

Personnel involved with transport must be licensed to drive the type of truck used for transport, thoroughly trained, and competent to carry out the tasks required of them.

#### **10.6.2 (All Steps)**

The driver is responsible for the birds during all aspects of loading, delivery, and unloading that are under his/her control.

#### **10.6.3 (All Steps)**

Transport records for each flock of birds, including loading start and end times, departure and arrival times, and reasons for any stops or delays en route, must be kept and made available for review.

#### **10.6.4 (All Steps)**

If the truck is scheduled to pick up birds at more than one farm, a separate bill of lading/delivery note must be kept for each farm.

#### **10.6.5 (All Steps)**

If a truck has birds from different properties and/or sources, the groups of birds must be segregated.

#### **10.6.6 (All Steps)**

If a truck is transporting birds of different species, they must be segregated during transport.

**Producer Guidance:** Birds of different species must not be transported in the same compartment. They can be transported on the same vehicle.

#### **10.6.7 (All Steps)**

There must be a clear, written procedure for the driver to follow that includes actions and contact numbers to ensure the highest welfare of the birds in case of an accident or emergency en route.

**Producer Guidance:** These should include actions that can be taken by the driver and a clear point at which he/she should call for assistance. The driver must have an emergency number that will reach the staff field agent or farmer who can initiate logistical actions that could include getting a replacement truck to the scene, getting a crew to the scene to reload the birds, and designating a person responsible for euthanizing or separating injured birds.

## Appendix I: Lameness Evaluation

1. Corral 25 birds against one wall of the barn using a partition—typically a long piece of cardboard approximately 2-feet high.
2. Allow a small opening between the partition and the wall so one corralled bird at a time rejoins the flock.
  - Gentle nudging may be required to encourage some birds to move.
  - Always approach birds from behind to encourage movement, never from the side, as their quick stepping could be mistaken for lameness.
  - Once the bird is moving, the nudging should stop, and the observer should back away to assess the bird's gait for scoring (see gait score chart below).
  - It may be helpful to have assistance from barn personnel who encourage the birds to move.
3. Assess and score each bird's mobility from the side so the observer can watch for curling of the foot as well as the length of stride. Birds should never be assessed and/or scored from above.
4. Once all birds have been assessed and scored from one location, move the partition to another part of the barn and repeat the procedure 3 more times so that 100 birds are assessed and scored.
5. Determine percentages of birds classified in each gait score category to assess overall flock mobility.

Gait Score	Description
0	Normal. Foot curls when the bird picks it up. Gait is smooth with even steps. The bird is well-balanced and capable of running and executing quick turns.
1	Gait is uneven at times; foot may or may not curl when the bird picks it up. Difficult to identify location of lameness.
2	Gait is uneven; foot does not curl when the bird picks it up. The bird has an irregular, shortened stride, as well as poor balance, and may occasionally be seen using its wing(s) to help balance while walking. The bird will remain in a standing position for longer than 15 seconds when undisturbed.
3	Similar to gait score of 2, but the bird will remain lying down unless forced to move (by gentle nudging by observer or assistant). When the bird does move, it typically uses its wings for balance while walking. The bird will lie down after several steps. The bird will not stand for longer than 15 seconds when undisturbed, but will stand within 5 seconds of being encouraged to move (by gentle nudging).
4	The bird is reluctant to move and moves only when forced (by gentle nudging). The bird will use its wings to help it move. Wings will extend to the ground (acting like a crutch to help the bird move). The bird will take only a few steps and then lie down before attempting to move again. The bird will not stand on both feet within 5 seconds of being encouraged (by gentle nudging).
5	The bird is unable to move or will shuffle on the ground if forced to move (by gentle nudging). The bird is not capable of taking one step.

