



Nourishing Today
Sustaining Tomorrow

2025 Animal Welfare Metrics & Guidance for Chicken



Report data for the prior calendar year (2024). Metrics in this focus area will be displayed based on the designation of slaughter or further processor and type of protein for each establishment.

Resources provide information to assist in meeting the metric or to help define criteria for the metric. Resources may be a known standard, policy, practice, program, and/or recognized best practice.

Foundational Metrics (Baselines)

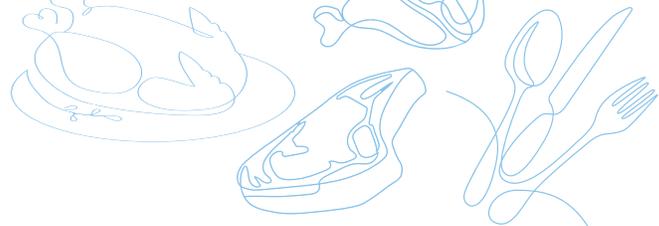
For the statements below, enter a number representing how many of the establishments you are reporting for that would answer "Yes." Example: Reporting for 3 establishments and all are yes type 3. If metric applies to 1, type 1. If none, type 0.

B1. Demonstrate alignment with applicable animal welfare transport programs. (SLAUGHTER)

Yes: The Company knows the applicable animal welfare transport programs. Policies and/or procedures are in place based on program guidance. If regulatory action is taken, such as USDA taking an action of NOIE or Suspension, as long as corrective actions are put in place and action is lifted in response an establishment could answer yes.

Resources:

- U.S. Poultry Handling and Transportation Certification
<https://www.uspoultryhandling.org/certMeet.cfm>
- Canadian Livestock Transport for Poultry
https://campus.animalhealthcanada.ca/catalog_detail.php?courseid=1442
- Canada's Guidance Document Repository (GDR) - Livestock and poultry transport in Canada
<https://inspection.canada.ca/animal-health/terrestrial-animals/humane-transport/livestock-and-poultry-transport-in-canada/eng/1363748532198/1363748620219>
- International Poultry Welfare Alliance (IPWA) Broiler Guide – Transportation of poultry to slaughter facilities (page 50 – 57)
https://poultrywelfare.org/files/IPWA%20Broiler%20Chickens%20Guide%20V10_PUBLIC.pdf



Achievement Metrics

When answering these achievement metrics to indicate yes, type the number of establishments for which you are reporting that would say yes. Within the achievement metrics, we use a commit, track, deliver, made public framework. This framework is to show the company's or establishment's progression as it relates to meeting this metric and possibly going above and beyond the metric (deliver/made public).

In general, across all focus areas unless clarified under the metric, the following will be the guiding definitions for commit, track, deliver, made public, not applicable, and choose not to report.

- **Commit (C)** - Means internally the company has stated a commitment to the metric.
- **Track (T)** - Means internally the company has a mechanism for measuring/recording/reporting information supporting this metric.
- **Deliver (D)** - Means the company is meeting the internal goal(s) or commitment(s) pertinent to this metric. For some metrics, Deliver may refer to using the information to identify opportunities for improvement and demonstrate a gap closure or going above and beyond meeting the metric.
- **Made Public (P)** - At the company level, information regarding this metric has been published, printed, or posted publicly displaying the company's commitment to this metric externally. Examples: posted on the company website; included in an ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) report; etc.
- **N/A** - Not Applicable
- **Not Reporting (NR)** - Choose not to report on this metric.

Definitions (unless otherwise clarified in the metric):

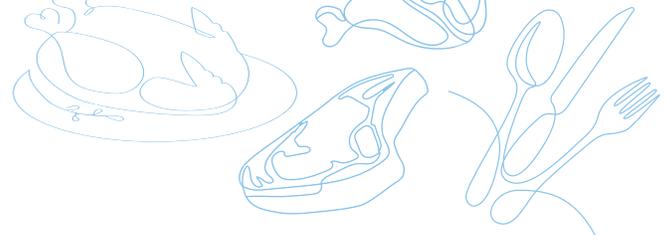
- **Supplier:** who the Establishment receives a product and/or service from.
- **Customer:** who the Establishment sells a product and/or service to.

The question mark (?) after each metric provides guidance on how to report for each individual metric. If there is nothing specific to that metric for interpretation assistance, then the definitions of commit, track, deliver, and made public as written above prevail.

Example: If you are reporting for 3 establishments, the max number you can input is 3.

- If 3 of 3 of the establishments have committed to the metric, enter 3.
- If only 2 of 3 establishments are tracking the metric, enter 2.
- If only 1 establishment has delivered on the metric, enter 1.
- If the answer is no for all establishments reported on, enter zero.

Reminder: In the reporting module, you will only see metrics relating to the protein AND whether an establishment was designated as a slaughter and/or processing facility. If an establishment is incorrectly displaying as slaughter or further processor contact your Company Verifier. They can make changes to the establishment type under Company Setup. Below look for SLAUGHTER or FURTHER PROCESSOR (see A8 & A9) after each metric.



C	T	D	P	NA	NR
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A1. A written company program for animal welfare during transport and slaughter is in place. (SLAUGHTER)

- **Commit** - A written company program is in place with a method in place to ensure adherence to the program and initiate corrective actions for deviations. Will likely include measures to communicate the program to and resolve concerns with internal and/or third-party transporters.
- **Track** - A process is in place to monitor adherence to the company program. Monitoring should cover all production shifts.
- **Deliver** - Monitoring demonstrates adherence to the company program and reconciliation of corrective actions for deviations.
- **Made Public** - Examples: Information about the company animal welfare program is available on a website, shared upon request, part of a supplier program, in a sustainability report, etc.
- **N/A** - If selected, a text box will ask why this metric isn't pertinent to the establishment(s) and/or company.

Note: Best practice is that the program has standards for and monitors time of transport, dead-on-arrivals (DOAs), cage condition, cage density, and initiates corrective actions when performance does not meet standard.

Resource:

- National Chicken Council (NCC) - Animal Welfare Guidelines and Audit Checklist for Broilers https://www.nationalchickencouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/NCC-Broiler-Welfare-Guidelines_Final_Dec2022-1.pdf

A2. A goal has been established with a pre-determined passing score for the company on animal transport and live animal handling and slaughter audits. (SLAUGHTER)

Note: You may have an audit that includes transport and slaughter metrics, if so, just use the transport metrics from the comprehensive audit to answer this metric.

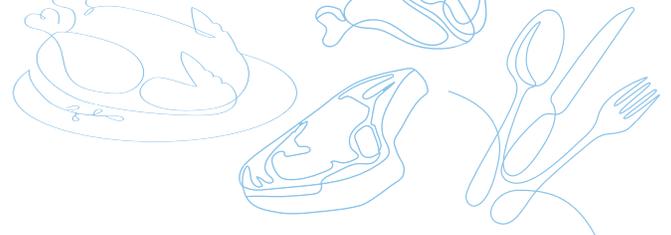
- **Commit** - A goal has been established to conduct and pass an accredited third-party audit annually at the slaughter establishment(s).
- **Track** - A passing third-party audit conducted annually at the establishment(s).

Note: This metric contributes to the:

- Meat Institute's packer-processor [Animal Welfare Goals](#)
- [Protein PACT goal](#): Providing the best animal care
- **Deliver** - During the entire calendar year, the establishment(s) does not fail a third-party audit or if there was a failure, the establishment passed the re-audit with sufficient corrective actions in place. An establishment does not deliver on this metric if the audit failure was because of observed acts of abuse.
- **Made Public** - Examples: Information about the company animal welfare program is available on a website, shared upon request, part of a supplier program, in a sustainability report, etc.
- **N/A** - If selected, a text box will ask why this metric isn't pertinent to the establishment(s) and/or company.

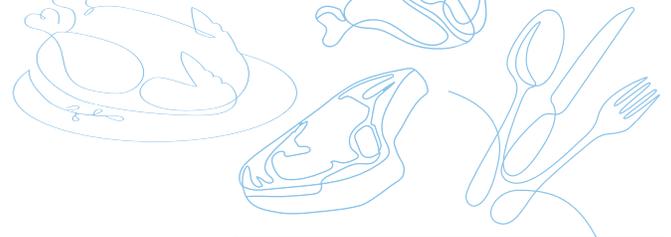
Resource:

- NCC Animal Welfare Guidelines and Audit Checklist for Broilers https://www.nationalchickencouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/NCC-Broiler-Welfare-Guidelines_Final_Dec2022-1.pdf



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ANIMAL TRANSPORT	A3. Participates in country- and species-specific transportation programs. (SLAUGHTER)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commit – Company has identified & committed to participating in country- & species-specific transportation programs, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » USA: Poultry Handling and Transportation (PHT) » Canada: Canadian Livestock Transport (CLT) – Poultry » Supplier(s) could utilize an independent program (could be internal or by a third-party) that is comparable to an industry standard and/or meets the intent of the metric but would need to be verified by the company. ● Track – Company has a program in place to verify transporters are trained in the identified program(s). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Programs can be verified by an affidavit, letter of guarantee, or third-party audit. » Note: This metric contributes to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meat Institute’s packer-processor Animal Welfare Goals - Protein PACT goal: Providing the best animal care ● Deliver – The program is implemented to ensure ALL transporters have current training prior to delivery with program components that include approving or verifying compliance of training. ● Made Public – Examples: Information about the company animal welfare program is available on a website, shared upon request, part of a supplier program, in a sustainability report, etc. ● N/A – If selected, a text box will ask why this metric isn’t pertinent to the establishment(s) and/or company. <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● USA: Poultry Handling and Transportation (PHT) https://www.uspoultry.org/programs/poultry-health/animal-welfare/ ● Canada: Canadian Livestock Transport (CLT) – Poultry https://campus.animalhealthcanada.ca/
LIVE ANIMAL HOLDING & SLAUGHTER	A4. Implements a comprehensive Animal Welfare Program based on the National Chicken Council (NCC) Guidelines. (SLAUGHTER)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commit – A written program is in place with a monitoring component to measure adherence to the program and initiate corrective actions for deviations. The program addresses aspects of animal welfare as outlined in the Guidelines, available here: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » National Chicken Council (NCC) Animal Welfare for Broiler Chickens https://www.nationalchickencouncil.org/policy/animal-welfare/ » Note: A program that has been designated as robust by Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) would likely meet the criteria. ● Track – Internal monitoring is conducted regularly to measure adherence to the program. Monitoring should cover all production shifts. ● Deliver – Monitoring demonstrates adherence to the program and timely reconciliation of corrective actions for deviations. ● Made Public – Examples: Information about the company animal welfare program is available on a website, shared upon request, part of a supplier program, in a sustainability report, etc. ● N/A – If selected, a text box will ask why this metric isn’t pertinent to the establishment and/or company.



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A5. At a minimum, annually passes an accredited third-party National Chicken Council (NCC) Animal Handling Audit conducted by a certified auditor. (SLAUGHTER)

- **Commit** - A goal has been established to conduct and pass an accredited third-party audit annually at the slaughter establishment(s).
- **Track** - A passing third-party audit is conducted annually at the establishment(s).
 - » A certified auditor could be trained through PAACO or a similar program.

Note: This metric contributes to the:

- Meat Institute's packer-processor [Animal Welfare Goals](#)
- [Protein PACT goal](#): Providing the best animal care
- **Deliver** - The establishment(s) does not fail an audit during the entire calendar year.
- **Made Public** - Examples: Information about the company animal welfare program is available on a website, shared upon request, part of a supplier program, in a sustainability report, etc.
- **N/A** - If selected, a text box will ask why this metric isn't pertinent to the establishment and/or company.

Resources:

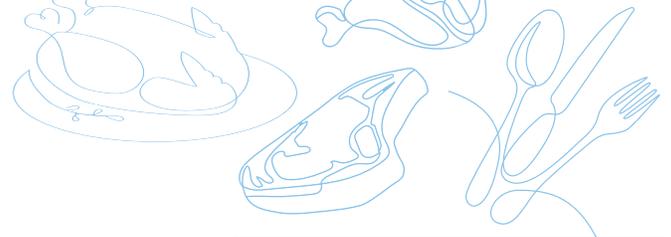
- » National Chicken Council Animal Handling Audit https://www.nationalchickencouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/NCC-Broiler-Welfare-Guidelines_Final_Dec2022-1.pdf
- » PAACO Certification <https://animalauditor.org/>

A6. Have an employee(s) on staff or consultant that maintains animal handling and welfare training based on the National Chicken Council (NCC) Welfare Guidelines for Broilers. (SLAUGHTER)

- **Commit** - A goal has been set to employ at least one designated certified auditor for the company who evaluates training of animal behavior or equivalent.
- **Track** - Records are kept to document whether the individual(s) has and maintains third-party certification.
- **Deliver** - If the establishment meets Track, the establishment meets Deliver.
- **Made Public** - Examples: Information about the company animal welfare program is available on a website, shared upon request, part of a supplier program, in a sustainability report, etc.
- **N/A** - If selected, a text box will ask why this metric isn't pertinent to the establishment and/or company.

Resources:

- National Chicken Council <https://www.nationalchickencouncil.org/policy/animal-welfare/>
- PAACO <https://animalauditor.org/>



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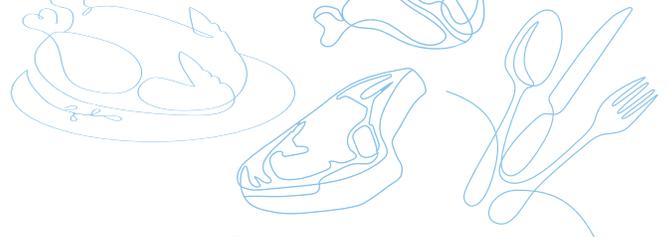
A7. Maintains a written company animal welfare policy that requires direct live animal suppliers implement an animal welfare program that includes employee training and specific standards for animal care. (SLAUGHTER)

Reminder: This metric and A8 are similar. A7 is for establishments that slaughter. A8 is for establishments that further process.

- **Commit** – A company policy is in place to source from direct (immediate) live animal suppliers (example: someone outside your integrated supply chain I.E., poults/live bird providers) that implement animal welfare programs, such as:
 - » USA:
 - National Chicken Council Animal Welfare Program <https://www.nationalchickencouncil.org/policy/animal-welfare/>
 - » Canada:
 - Animal Care Assessment Framework <https://www.nfacc.ca/animal-care-assessment>
 - Chicken Farmers of Canada’s Animal Care Program <https://www.chickenfarmers.ca/high-animal-care-standards/>
 - » Supplier(s) could utilize an independent program (internal or comparable) that meets the industry standard and/or the intent of the metric but would need to be verified by the company.
- **Track** – A program is in place to verify suppliers are implementing the program.
 - » Programs can be verified by an affidavit, letter of guarantee, or third-party audit.

Note: This metric contributes to the:

- Meat Institute’s packer-processor [Animal Welfare Goals](#)
- [Protein PACT goal](#): Providing the best animal care
- **Deliver** – All suppliers provide proof of implementation prior to delivery.
- **Made Public** – Examples: Information about the company animal welfare program is available on a website, shared upon request, part of a supplier program, in a sustainability report, etc.
- **N/A** – If selected, a text box will ask why this metric isn’t pertinent to the establishment and/or company.



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A8. Maintains a written company animal welfare policy that requires direct suppliers (slaughter establishments) to implement a comprehensive Animal Welfare Program based on the National Chicken Council (NCC) Guidelines. (FURTHER PROCESSORS)

Reminder: This metric and A7 are similar. A7 is for establishments that slaughter. A8 is for establishments that further process.

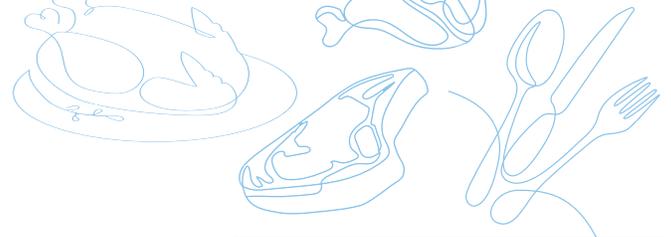
- **Commit** – A policy is in place to source from direct (immediate) suppliers that implement a comprehensive Animal Welfare Program (see Resources below).
 - » Supplier to be defined as a slaughter establishment.
 - » Aim of this metric: Raw material suppliers implement a comprehensive Animal Welfare Program.
- **Track** – A program is in place to verify suppliers who slaughter implement a comprehensive animal welfare program AND that suppliers who don't slaughter but provide meat products have an animal welfare policy in place. Letters of guarantee or affidavits would suffice.

Note: This metric contributes to the:

- Meat Institute's packer-processor [Animal Welfare Goals](#)
- [Protein PACT goal](#): Providing the best animal care
- **Deliver** – All suppliers provide proof of implementation prior to delivery.
- **Made Public** – Examples: Information about the company animal welfare program is available on a website, shared upon request, part of a supplier program, in a sustainability report, etc.
- **N/A** – If selected, a text box will ask why this metric isn't pertinent to the establishment and/or company.

Resources:

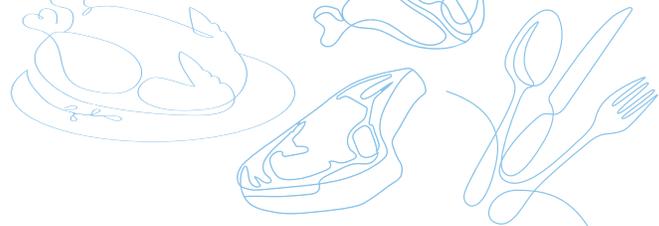
- NCC Guidelines <https://www.nationalchickencouncil.org/policy/animal-welfare/>
- Free Range/Organic Guidelines (options that could be in addition to NCC Guidelines as part of a company animal welfare program)
 - USDA Guidelines for Organic Certification of Poultry <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Poultry%20-%20Guidelines.pdf>
- American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) Antimicrobial Stewardship <https://www.aaap.info/assets/Positions/AAAP%20Antimicrobial%20Stewardship.pdf>



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A9. Participates in species-specific stakeholder initiatives (e.g., industry welfare committees) to improve animal well-being. (SLAUGHTER) (FURTHER PROCESSORS)

- **Commit** - Company has identified and committed to participating in species-specific stakeholder initiatives, such as:
 - » Meat Institute Animal Welfare Committee
 - » National Chicken Council Animal Welfare Committee
 - » American Association of Avian Pathologist (AAAP) Animal Welfare Committee
 - » International Poultry Welfare Association (IPWA)
 - » Association of Veterinarians in Broiler Production
 - » US Roundtable for Sustainable Poultry & Eggs (USRSPE)
 - » Breeder Companies
 - » Or similar at a regional or state level.
- **Track** - Records are kept documenting regular participation such as attendance; working on subcommittees or task forces; and/or knowledge contributions at meetings, conferences, etc.
- **Deliver** - Company engages in any of the following activities to advance continuous improvement in animal welfare: Works with an external animal welfare advisor/committee; Conducts/invests in projects dedicated to advance animal welfare (e.g., technology and innovation);
 - » If selected, a text box for more information will appear. By providing information on project investments – new research and innovations this keeps the Meat Institute’s Animal Welfare Staff in the loop.
- **Made Public** – Posting participation on social media; having conversations with customers (e.g., restaurants, retailers, etc.) about animal welfare related topics; conversing with fellow packer/processor colleagues in the animal welfare space to stay informed on the latest information and innovations.



Meat Institute's Packer-Processor Animal Welfare Goals

By year's end of 2025, 100% of members who handle animals will pass third party animal transport and handling audits. (A2 Track; A5 Track) AND all members will require all suppliers to implement [an animal welfare program that includes] employee training and species-specific standards for animal care (A7 Track; A8 Track).

Success of this metric will be collected during the 2026 reporting window gathering industry data from our slaughter and processing companies' 2025 calendar year operations.

General Meat Institute Resources for Animal Welfare:

- Meat Institute's Animal Welfare Page & Committee info https://www.meatinstitute.org/Animal_Welfare
- Meat Institute Animal Handling Guidelines and Audit https://www.meatinstitute.org/Animal_Welfare/Guidelines_and_Audits
- Meat Institute's Animal Welfare Policy Templates for Packers and Processors https://www.meatinstitute.org/2024_Animal_Welfare_Templates_ProteinPACT
- American Humane Farm Program American Humane Certified™ Broiler Chickens Animal Welfare Standards Audit Tool <https://www.americanhumane.org/app/uploads/2021/08/Broiler-Chickens-Audit-Tool.pdf>
- IPWA Broiler Guide – see pages 22 and 23 about processing measurements on shackling, stunning, and slaughter effectiveness. https://poultrywelfare.org/files/IPWA%20Broiler%20Chickens%20Guide%20V10_PUBLIC.pdf

2024 to 2025 Metric Updates

- Resource Links
- Protein PACT language