

**[BAI DA-ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 18, S.
2008, June 06, 2008]**

**RULES AND REGULATIONS ON HUMANE HANDLING IN THE
SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS FOR FOOD**

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 8485, otherwise known as "The Animal Welfare Act of 1998" particularly section 6 (7) paragraph 2 and 3, provides that in any mentioned cases, the killing of animals shall be done through humane procedures at all times, which shall mean the use of the most scientific methods available as may be determined and approved by the DA Committee on Animal Welfare;

WHEREAS, DA AO No. 21B series of 1999 entitled Code of Conduct in the Slaughter of Animals for Food provides the basic guidelines in the humane handling and slaughter of food animals;

WHEREAS, the DA Committee on Animal Welfare created under RA 8485, is vested with powers to review and recommend the adoption of new procedures and technology pertaining to the humane handling and slaughter of food animals, and other procedures related to animal welfare concerns;

WHEREAS, DA AO No. 6, series of 1975 provides the regulations in the proper handling of animals prior to slaughter recognizing that improper handling has adverse effect on the quality of meat;

WHEREAS, the Department of Agriculture, thru its attached agencies and pursuant to RA 9296 or the Meat Inspection Code of the Philippines and its IRR, DA AO No. 28 series of 2005 particularly Section 8, 1 (a) and (b) thereof, is vested with powers to formulate and issue, and implement jointly with the appropriate local government units national policies, guidelines, rules and regulations and programs.

WHEREAS, the adoption of measures to ensure pure, wholesome, and safe supply of meat and meat products includes but not limited to the establishment of safety and quality standards of meat and meat products in consultation with the product standards setting agencies;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ARTHUR C. YAP, Secretary of Agriculture, considering the above cited premises, do hereby issue this Order prescribing the rules and regulations on the humane handling and slaughter of animals for food, amending DAAO 21B, series of 1999 entitled Code of Conduct in the A) Euthanasia for Pets/Companion Animals and B) Slaughter of Animals for Food.

SECTION 1. Scope - This Order shall apply to all animal establishments such as laughterhouses, poultry dressing plants, stockyards and holding areas which regularly handle animals for slaughter. It shall also apply to all persons, companies or entities naaqed in the handling and slaughter of animals for food and regulatory

officers involved in the supervision and regulation of these activities.

SECTION 2. Definition of Terms and Acronyms -

2.1 Definitions

As used in this Order, the following words, terms and phrases shall be construed to mean:

2.1.1 Animal welfare officer - a technical officer duly authorized or deputized by the Bureau of Animal Industry to conduct activities related to animal welfare concerns in general.

2.1.2 Captive bolt stunner - a type of stunner that uses the principle of kinetic energy to render food animals unconscious prior to slaughter.

2.1.3 Emergency slaughter - the immediate slaughter due to injury such as but not limited to bone fracture, heat stroke, danger of suffocation, etc. to eliminate continued suffering of animal

2.1.4 Food Animal Welfare Officer (FAWO) - a duly designated or appointed officer by the National Meat Inspection Service or the local government units tasked to perform functions in the implementation of the guidelines, rules and regulations related to welfare of food animals.

2.1.5 Free bullet-a projectile fired from any firearm; rifle or handgun

2.1.6 Holding pen - a required feature of a slaughterhouse to rest animals awaiting slaughter and where ante-mortem is conducted.

2.1.7 Humane slaughter - the slaughter of food animals that shall be done rapidly and away from public view and must occur with the least fear, anxiety, pain and distress to the animal.

2.1.8 Livestock - any domestic farm animal intended for food such as but not limited to horses, cattle, carabaos, sheep, goat and swine.

2.1.9 Poultry - any domestic bird intended for food such as but not limited to chicken, turkey, geese, duck, pigeon, and quail, including ostrich.

2.1.10 Religious slaughter-slaughter in accordance with the ritual requirement of a religious faith that prescribes a method of slaughter examples of which are halal, shechitah and kosher

2.1.11 Restrainer - a slaughterhouse equipment used to secure and restrict the body movements of the animal prior to stunning

2.1.12 Stunning - the act of putting an animal or a group of animals insensible to pain before sticking and bleeding

a. reversible - a type of stunning method where stunned animal may recover if not bled immediately, e.g. electrical stunning, captive bolt non

penetrative

b. irreversible - a type of stunning method where stunned animal will not recover, e.g. captive bolt penetrative

2.1.13 Sticking/bleeding - the severing of all major blood vessels leading to the brain to cause death

2.1-14 Suspect - any animal presented for slaughter showing physical or physiological abnormalities that may lead the authority to pass or condemn until final judgment can be ascertained and therefore requiring further inspection and/or examination

2.2 Acronyms

As used in this Order, the following acronyms shall mean:

2.2.1 BAI - Bureau of Animal Industry

2.2.2 DA- CAW - DA- Committee on Animal Welfare

2.2.3 DA-Department of Agriculture

2.2.4 LGU - Local Government Unit

2.2.5 NGO - Non Government Organization

2.2.6 NMIS - National Meat Inspection Service

2.2.7 PCMVLP - Provincial City and Municipal Veterinarians League of the Philippines

2.2.8 PCSP - Philippine College of Swine Practitioners

2.2.9 PVO - Provincial Veterinary Office

2.2.10 PCPP - Philippine College of Poultry Practitioners

2.2.11 PCVPH- Philippine College of Veterinary Public Health

SECTION 3. Slaughterhouse facilities for the Humane Handling of Food Animal, All meat establishments handling food animals for slaughter shall have the required facilities for humane handling.

3.1 Holding pens are necessary facilities in the establishment of slaughterhouses. The animal pens shall be near the slaughter hall but should not be located within. It shall be a separate building on account of problems of manure disposal, congestion and hygiene.

3.2 The required space for holding large animal is 2.23 m²/head and for small animal like hogs, it is 0.6 m²/head. However, for culled sows and boars, the space requirement is 1.0m²/head.

3.3. Holding pens should be roofed, properly drained and with non-slip floors.

3.4 Separation of different classes and types of slaughter animals as appropriate is required to avoid injury to one another. Range animals, especially if horned, may require further segregation.

3.5 Provision for adequate ventilation is necessary. In case of limited space where free flow of air is not possible, industrial fans and blowers shall be utilized.

3.6 Clean and adequate drinking water must be provided freely to slaughter animals

during the holding period.

3.7 To insure smooth traffic flow and to lessen stress and excitement during the moving of animals a one-way system is followed where animals enter at one end and leave at the opposite end.

3.8 Other facilities such as ramps, artificial light, weighing scale and showers must be so installed so that animals do not get excited with their use.

3.9 Feeding troughs or boxes must be available and feeds must be provided to animals which are not slaughtered within 12 hours after arrival in the slaughterhouse.

3.10 Adequate water for cleaning must also be provided to ensure that cleanliness of premises is maintained.

3.11 Lighting should be strategically located as to encourage animals to move forward.

3.12 The chutes and other animal passageways shall be so designed to promote the natural following behavior of animals. The walls of a single file chute shall be solid to avoid visual distraction from the outside.

3.13 All slaughterhouses shall be equipped with hog restrainers and large animal knocking box for appropriate restraint of animals during stunning.

SECTION 4 General Provisions in the Handling of Slaughter Animals - The meat establishment operator is responsible in ensuring the proper handling of slaughter animals and the reporting of such, within the premises of the establishment.

4.1 Slaughter animals must be loaded, unloaded and moved easily with minimal risk of injury to both animals and handler. The moving of animals must be under the supervision of a competent animal handler;

4.2 Meat establishment personnel handling livestock shall be regularly monitored by a Food Animal Welfare Officer to ensure that the handling of livestock is done humanely.

4.3 Animals of different species as well as animals of same species likely to cause injury to one another shall be physically separated.

4.4 The unloading and moving of slaughter animals shall be achieved with minimum stress or excitement to the animals.

4.5 The natural following behavior of animals shall be utilized to advantage as much as Possible.

4.6 The instruments allowed for moving animals are as follows:

4.6.1 canvas, soft plastic or leather flappers

4.6.2 soft polyethylene pipes or rattles

4.6.3 plastic brush

4.6.4 pig boards which shall be used for blocking only

4.7 The instruments that are prohibited for moving animals shall include:

4.7.1 bamboo clubs, sticks-cane or wood

4.7.2 electric prod

4.7.3 hard plastic hose

4.7.4 steel brush

4.7.5 ropes and whips

4.7.6 metal pipes

4.7.7 any sharp or pointed object

4.8 Slaughter animals within the meat establishment premises shall not be subjected to the following inhumane acts;

4.8.1 unnecessary, irritating noises

4.8.2 kicking

4.8.3 ear and tail twisting; lifting

4.8.4 eye, genital and anal poking

4.8.5 hot water splashing

4.8.6 knife, razor or blade incision to mark skin

4.8.7 drenching or forced oral administration of water

4.9 Gates shall not be used as an implement for forcing the animal along the chutes or into the knocking box.

4.10 Animals with extremely wide horns or those that cannot move freely shall not be introduced into the chute.

SECTION 5. Handling of Injured, Disabled or Suspect Animals - When a slaughter animal is injured, disabled or is a suspect and is unable to walk from a transport vehicle, shall be handled as follows:

5.1 The animal shall be removed from the transport vehicle as humanely as possible under the supervision of a competent handler.

5.2 An authorized officer of the competent meat inspection authority shall inspect and declare judgment on the animal's eligibility for emergency slaughter. If eligible and the injury or disability causes severe suffering to the animal, slaughter shall be done without avoidable delay.

5.3 Humane means of conveyance shall be made available to transport the animal to the sticking area. However, upon the directive of the inspector, sticking and bleeding of the animal may be done immediately in the conveyance prior to the unloading if the animal is unable to walk and in severe pain and proper transport to sticking area is not immediately available.

SECTION 6. Handling of Escaped Animals - The establishment operator shall ensure that animals that escape during unloading or from holding pens shall be handled humanely.

6.1 Escaped animals shall be retrieved by the use of humane handling methods.