

## Commonly Asked Questions from Small and Very Small Plants on Slaughter Poultry

### Q1: What are the regulatory requirements regarding the chilling of giblets and necks?

A1: Giblets must be chilled to 40° F or below within 2 hours from the time they are removed from the inedible viscera [9 CFR 381.66(c)(4)]. Giblets as defined in 9 CFR 381.1 do not include necks and therefore, necks do not have separate chilling requirements. If the neck is still attached to the carcass, the carcass requirements are followed. If the neck is separated from the carcass, establishments should consider the chilling time and temperature for separated necks in their hazard analysis. 9 CFR 381.66(b)(2) may be used as part of the support for decisions made about chilling times and temperatures for necks.

### Q2: Can the temperature of eviscerated and non-eviscerated poultry carcasses be allowed to exceed 55 ° F?

A2: No. Eviscerated and non-eviscerated carcasses are required to be chilled to 40° F immediately after slaughter following the time requirements for weight of carcass in 381.66(b)(2). During further processing, they may rise to a maximum of 55° F, provided the temperature is promptly lowered to 40° F or less, or they are placed in a freezer.

### Q3: Is there a requirement for chiller overflow?

A3: No. There is no longer a regulatory requirement for gallons of water per bird. Establishments are required to ensure that the chiller water is kept in sanitary condition, to meet the pathogen reduction standard for *Salmonella* in 9 CFR 381.94(b), and to comply with the retained water requirements in 9 CFR 441.10.

### Q4: When is the process considered to be out of control in Finished Product Standards testing in SIS, NELS, and NTIS slaughter systems per 9 CFR 381.76(b)(3)(iv)(c)?

A4: The process is deemed to be out of control, and noncompliance is documented, when FSIS initiates Finished Product Standards testing, the subgroup absolute limit is exceeded, and either:

- all of the last 5 prechill tests are **at or below** the start number, and the plant's subsequent retest fails [Note: If the plant's retest equals tolerance or less, random testing is resumed. [9 CFR 381.76(b)(3)(iv)(d)(2)(i)], or
- any of the last 5 prechill tests result in a **CUSUM above the start number**. [9 CFR 381.76(b)(3)(iv)(d)(2)(ii)]

See 9 CFR 381.76(b)(3)(iv)(d)(4) "Actions to be taken when the CUSUM reaches the action number" for applying prechill criteria at the postchill location when the process is determined to be out of control.

### Q5: Are kidneys and reproductive organs required to be removed from mature fowl?

A5: There is no regulatory requirement for the removal of kidneys and reproductive organs from mature fowl, unless the carcass is affected by airsacculitis or other pathology involving the kidneys. If so, the kidneys should be removed per 9 CFR 381.84.

The establishment should address the potential chemical food safety hazard associated with the kidneys in their hazard analysis. There are grow-out regions with high heavy metal concentrations, Cadmium, etc., which might create a hazard associated with kidney tissue.