



United State
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

Office of
Field Operations

Chicago District Office
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Lombard, IL 60148
Office (630) 620-7474
Fax (630) 620-7599

January 7, 2020

**ELECTRONIC COPY PROVIDED
AND DELIVERED BY COURIER**

Mr. Tom Dewig, Owner
Dewig Bros. Packing Co.
Est. M17419
100 Maple Street
Haubstadt, IN 47639

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION

Dear Mr. Dewig:

This letter confirms verbal notification provided to Mr. Dean Dewig, Plant Manager, by Dr. Karnail Mudahar, Deputy District Manager, on January 7, 2020, at approximately 0754 hours CST, of the Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) decision to suspend the assignment of inspection program personnel from your slaughter process at Dewig Bros. Packing Co., establishment M17419, located at 100 Maple Street in Haubstadt, Indiana. This action is based on your establishment's failure to effectively implement humane methods of slaughtering and handling animals in a manner that complies with the regulatory requirements prescribed by the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) and the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA). Your establishment is in violation of Title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations (9 CFR) Section 313.15(a)(1). The Rules of Practice, 9 CFR 500.3(b), specify that FSIS may issue a suspension without providing prior notification if an establishment is handling or slaughtering animals inhumanely.

Background and Authority

The Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 603 Section 3(b)) states, "*for the purpose of preventing the inhumane slaughtering of livestock, the Secretary shall cause to be made, by inspectors appointed for that purpose, an examination and inspection of the method by which cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses, mules, or other equines are slaughtered and handled in connection with slaughter in the slaughtering establishments inspected under this Act. The Secretary may refuse to provide inspection to a new slaughtering establishment or may cause inspection to be temporarily suspended at a slaughtering establishment if the Secretary finds that any cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses, mules, or other equines have been slaughtered or handled in connection with slaughter at such establishment by any method not in accordance with Sections 1901 to 1906 of Title 7 until the establishment furnishes assurances satisfactory to the Secretary that all slaughtering and handling in connection with slaughter of livestock shall be in accordance with such a method.*" In addition, under prohibited acts 21 U.S.C. 610 sec 10 (b), "*No person, establishment or corporation shall, with the respect to any cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses, mules, and other equines, or any carcasses, parts of carcasses, meat or meat food products of any such animals slaughter or handle in connection with slaughter any such animals in any manner not in accordance with sections 1901 to 1906 of Title 7.*"

The Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, 7 USC 1901, states, "*The Congress finds that the use of humane methods in the slaughter of livestock prevents needless suffering; results in safer and better working conditions for persons engaged in the slaughtering industry; brings about improvement of products and economies in slaughtering operations; and produces other benefits for producers, processors, and consumers which tend to expedite an orderly flow of livestock and livestock products in interstate and foreign commerce. It is the policy of the United States that the slaughtering of livestock and the handling of livestock in connection with slaughter shall be carried out only by humane methods.*"

The Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, 7 USC 1902, states, "No method of slaughtering or handling in connection with slaughtering shall be deemed to comply with the public policy of the United States unless it is humane." When an egregious situation has been observed and identified, FSIS can refuse to render inspection and indefinitely withdraw inspection from an establishment provided the establishment is afforded the right to an administrative hearing.

Under the authority of the above Acts, FSIS has prescribed rules and regulations required for establishments producing meat and poultry products, including the requirements pertaining to the humane slaughter of livestock, as required by 9 CFR 313, and other matters. FSIS has also developed Rules of Practice regarding enforcement, within in 9 CFR 500. The Rules of Practice describe the types of enforcement action that FSIS may take a withholding action and/or suspension, with or without prior notification, and for filing a complaint to withdraw a Grant of Federal Inspection.

Findings/Basis for Action

On January 7, 2020, at approximately 0700 hours CST the Consumer Safety Inspector (CSI) observed an establishment employee attempt to stun a steer in the knock box with a captive bolt gun. After the first stunning attempt, the animal remained standing and moved his head. The device was reloaded and deployed a second time with the same result; the animal remained standing and moved his head. The captive bolt gun was again reloaded and deployed for a third stunning attempt. The animal immediately dropped after this third shot and was rendered insensible. A security stun was then placed with the captive bolt gun. The head was examined and four distinct holes in the skull were noted. Establishment management was informed of the incident.

The occurrence of this inhumane handling incident as described is egregious and a violation of the humane handling requirements as prescribed by 21 U.S.C. 603, Section 3 (b) of the FMIA, and 7 U.S.C. 1901 and 1902 of the HMSA of 1978.

You have failed to meet the requirements of 9 CFR 313.15(a)(1) which states, "*The captive bolt stunners shall be applied to the livestock in accordance with this section so as to produce immediate unconsciousness in the animals before they are shackled, hoisted, thrown, cast, or cut. The animals shall be stunned in such a manner that they will be rendered unconscious with a minimum of excitement and discomfort.*"

Summary and Conclusion

On September 9, 2004, FSIS published "Humane Handling and Slaughter Requirements and the Merits of a Systematic Approach to Meet Such Requirements" in the Federal Register Notice (54 Fed. Reg. 54625). On August 15, 2011, FSIS released FSIS Directive 6900.2 Revision 2, entitled, "Humane Handling and Slaughter of Livestock." Additionally, on October 23, 2013, FSIS introduced new guidance, titled "FSIS Compliance Guide for a Systematic Approach to the Humane Handling of Livestock." Within the guidance material is information intended to better ensure the humane treatment of livestock presented for slaughter. The guidance material provides a set of practices designed to minimize excitement, discomfort, and accidental injury regarding the humane handling of livestock to include the four components of a robust systematic approach to humane handling.

Although your establishment has previously developed and implemented a systematic approach to humane handling that was considered robust, you have failed to effectively implement your program consistently in a manner that demonstrates a continued history of sustained compliance with the humane handling regulations. Specifically, on October 22, 2019, a Notice of Intended Enforcement (NOIE) was issued for a heifer that had regained consciousness while it was shackled and hoisted. The decision to issue a Notice of Suspension (NOS) is based on your current status of operating within the deferral period of an NOIE. The issuance of this NOS effectively closes the NOIE.

Please provide this office with a written response to address the regulatory issues identified within this letter. At a minimum, your corrective actions should address the following:

1. Identify the specific reason(s) why the events described occurred.
2. Describe the specific action(s) that will be implemented to eliminate the cause of the incident and prevent future recurrences.
3. Describe the specific future monitoring activity or activities that your establishment will employ to ensure the actions implemented are effective.
4. Provide any supporting documentation and records maintained and associated with your proposed corrective actions and preventive measures.

Your proposed corrective actions and preventive measures should include any times and/or dates for completion of these proposed activities.

Please be advised that you have the right to appeal this matter. If you wish to appeal this action, contact:

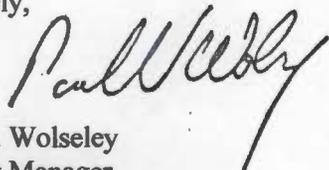
Michael Watts
Executive Associate for Regulatory Operations
USDA, FSIS, OFO
Room 3168 - South Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250
Telephone: (202) 205-0194

In addition, you may also request a hearing regarding this determination pursuant to FSIS' Rules of Practice (9 CFR Part 500). The Rules of Practice were published in the Federal Register, Vol. 64, No. 228, on November 29, 1999. As specified in Section 500.5(d), should you request a hearing, FSIS will file a complaint that will include a request for an expedited hearing. If you wish to request a hearing regarding this determination, you should contact:

Scott C. Safian, Director
Food Safety and Inspection Service
Office of Investigation, Enforcement and Audit
Enforcement and Litigation Division
Stop Code 3753, PP3, Cubicle 9-205
355 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20024-3221
Telephone: (202) 418-8872
Fax: (202) 245-5097

If you have questions regarding this matter, you may contact (b) (6) (b) (6)
(b) (6); (b) (6); or you may contact this office
at (630) 620-7474 or by fax at (630) 620-7599.

Sincerely,



Paul V. Wolseley
District Manager
Chicago District