



United States Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and Inspection  
Service  
Office of Field Operations  
Jackson District Office  
713 S Pear Orchard Rd,  
Suite 402  
Ridgeland, MS 39157

July 31, 2019

**Via Email: [bneale0714@gmail.com](mailto:bneale0714@gmail.com)  
and USPS Certified Mail  
# 7017 0660 0000 7888 3883**

Mr. Ben Neale, Owner  
Light Hill Meats, Est. M46240  
3851 Cornersville Highway  
Lynnville, TN 38472

### **NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE**

Dear Mr. Neale:

On July 24, 2019, a "Notice of Suspension" was issued to suspend the assignment of inspectors for your federal slaughter activities at Light Hill Meats, Est. M46240. This action was based on your establishment's failure to handle livestock humanely according to 9 CFR Part 313.

On July 26, 2019, you submitted your first response with written corrective actions and preventive measures to meet the requirements of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. The Jackson District Office analyzed your response and advised you that the proffered corrective actions and preventive measures were not adequate. Specifically, you were informed that you should provide all training materials for the stun operator, provide a written SOP to ensure that a security shot will always be administered, documentation of trainings to include signatures and or initials and dates of when the training took place, the weapon to be used on specific size of the animal to ensure the first stun is efficient.

On July 29, 2019, you submitted your second response with written corrective actions and preventive measures to meet the requirements of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. The Jackson District Office analyzed your response and informed you that your response was not adequate. Specifically, the Jackson District Office requested additional information regarding your "Slaughter Effective Stun Monitoring Form", whether each employee is given a folder containing a handbook and other documents, video links and charts on Humane Handling according to your "Training Procedure for Kill Floor Employees", will each employee sign and date a log of receipt of the handbook, whether the employee is to sign a statement of having both received and understood the entirety of the handbook, whether there will be a signed and dated log by management and employee attesting to the 30 days of observation of kills, whether there will be an attestation log signed and dated asserting to the 30 days completion of the employees assisting with all operations on the kill floor except the actual kill, whether there be a log attesting/certifying after each employee completing their 30 days of practice shots on carcass heads that have already been removed from the animal, what time will the employee be allowed to start the actual stunning/kill of the animals,

## **NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE**

Light Hill Meats, Est. M46240

Mr. Ben Neale, Owner

July 31, 2019

Page 2 of 4

and whether there will be a justification statement or log as to when the time has been met with justifications statements as to how or why management determines the employee's readiness.

On July 30, 2019, you provided your third response. The Jackson District Office analyzed your response and determined that the response adequately addressed the identified issues. On July 30, 2019, at 12:25 PM CDT, the Deputy District Manager telephoned you and verbally notified you that the corrective actions and preventive measures you proffered were adequate to meet the requirements to place Light Hill Meats, Est. M46240, under a "Notice of Suspension Held in Abeyance." This letter formally informs you of this action. Specifically, you stated that the "Training Procedure for Kill Floor Employees" will be completed with the slaughter log by the end of the day, an employee readiness statement is to be signed and dated stating training has been completed and the employee and supervisor are comfortable with the progression of responsibilities, the employees 30 day observation of kills documents will be kept in the training manual, the employee assisting with all operations on the kill floor except the actual kill documents will be kept in the training manual, the signed and dated attestation log asserting the 30 days completions will be kept in the training manual, the log attesting/certifying each employee start practice shots on carcass heads that have already been removed from the animal are being done prior to 30 days for all your employees that work on the kill floor, the employee will be ready to commence independent stunning at the end of the 30 days of training however, you stated that it may be longer if the employee or supervisor are not comfortable with performance (i.e., mis-stuns on custom, lack of concern and interest in learning, attitude, etc.) and you stated that this will be a part of the employee readiness statement, and you provided the employee observation logs.

A copy of the FSIS Verification Plan is attached to assist you in understanding the nature and importance of the Agency's verification activities. The FSIS Verification Plan is designed to verify that your establishment fully implements the revisions to its humane handling of animals and other corrective actions and preventive measures stated in your July 26, 29, and 30, 2019, responses and that these revisions and corrective actions and preventive measures are effective in ensuring future regulatory compliance. The FSIS Verification Plan identifies your corrective actions, the regulatory requirement(s), and the PHIS Task under which FSIS officials will verify the implementation and effectiveness of your proffered action plan.

Please be further advise that this suspension of inspection at your establishment will remain in Abeyance pending verification by FSIS that your proposed corrective actions and preventive measures have been implemented and are effective in ensuring future regulatory compliance. Agency personnel will begin immediate verification of your corrective actions and preventive measures.

It is important for you to understand that FSIS has the responsibility to initiate action if your establishment fails to operate in accordance with the regulations, or conditions occur that do not comply with the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. In these situations, FSIS personnel will take regulatory control of product or other appropriate action.

Please be advised that as a federally inspected establishment, you are expected to comply with the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, and all applicable regulations and other requirements concerning the preparation, sale, and transportation of meat products. Failure to comply with these requirements or to effectively implement the measures addressed in your responses, dated July 26, 29, and 30, 2019, could result in the immediate suspension of inspection at your establishment or other appropriate action(s).

**NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE**

Light Hill Meats, Est. M46240

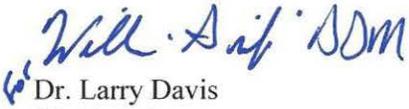
Mr. Ben Neale, Owner

July 31, 2019

Page 3 of 4

If you have any questions about this action, please contact the Jackson District Office at (601) 965-4312.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Will. Davis. SDM".

Dr. Larry Davis  
District Manager  
Jackson District Office