



United States Department of Agriculture

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Food Safety and  
Inspection Service

Office of Field  
Operations

Atlanta District Office

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Atlanta, GA. 30303  
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**Certified mail**

September 25, 2020

Mr. Terrell Hollis, Plant Manager  
Georgia Small Ruminant Research and Extension Center  
Research College of Agriculture  
Est. M21741  
1005 State University Drive  
Fort Valley, GA 31030

**NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE**

Dear Mr. Hollis:

On September 22, 2020 the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issued a Notice of Suspension (NOS) withholding the marks of inspection and suspending the assignment of slaughter inspection program personnel for livestock slaughter at Georgia Small Ruminant Research and Extension Center, M21741, in Fort Valley, GA. This action was based on your establishment's failure to handle livestock humanely according to 9 CFR Part 313.

On September 22, 2020, you submitted written corrective actions and preventive measures in an effort to meet the requirements of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. Based on your assessment, you determined that the bolt of the handheld captive bolt did not penetrate deep enough into the skull of the large older intact male hog. Your corrective actions included: the company will not accept any large (over 300 lbs.) male or female hogs for slaughter; the company will access the size of the animal before it is unloaded from the owners trailer; the company will have the backup captive bolt gun within arm's reach when stunning livestock; and the company will continue to implement your humane handling program.

On September 23, 2020, during a telephone conversation with the District Veterinary Medical Specialist (DVMS), the difference between proper shot placement for swine versus bovine was discussed. During the conversation you acknowledged that some of the points of entry into the hog's head were off target.

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Subsequently, you revised and resubmitted your corrective actions to include: retraining of stunning employees in the proper shot placement for stunning swine; the company provided copies of the document used to retrain your employees; the company provided a record documenting the employees who were retrained; the company will monitor and document results for stunning effectiveness of 100% of the hogs slaughtered during the abeyance period; the company will have the backup captive bolt gun within arm's reach when stunning livestock; the company will not accept any large (over 300 lbs.) male or female hogs for slaughter; and the company will access the size of the hog before it is unloaded from the owners trailer.

On September 24, 2020, you were verbally notified that these corrective actions and preventive measures met the requirements to place Georgia Small Ruminant and Research Center, Est. M21741, in a Notice of Suspension Held in Abeyance (NOSHA).

Please be further advised 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 and preventing the inhumane treatment of animals. Agency personnel will begin immediate verification of your corrective actions and preventive measures.

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 stated in your responses, and that these revisions and corrective actions 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 proposed action plan.

Please be reminded that as a federally inspected establishment, you are expected to comply with FSIS regulations and to take appropriate actions to prevent the inhumane handling of animals. 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. Please be advised that failure to comply with these regulatory requirements or failure to effectively implement your proposed corrective actions and preventive measures could result in the immediate suspension of inspection at your establishment or other appropriate action.

If you have any questions, please contact the Atlanta District Office at 404-562-5900.

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Sincerely,

**PHYLLIS**  
**ADAMS**

Digitally signed by  
PHYLLIS ADAMS  
Date: 2020.09.25  
13:05:03 -04'00'

Dr. Phyllis Adams  
District Manager

cc: Phil Bronstein, AA/OFO  
Hany Sidrak, DAA/OFO  
Michael Watts, EARO/OFO  
Scott Safian, ELD/OIEA  
Larry Hortert, RD/CID/OIEA

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