



Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Office of Field Operations

Philadelphia District
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701 Market Street Suite
4100-A
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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Mr. Nicholas Phillips, Vice President of Operations
Gold Medal Packing (Est. M17965)
8301 River Road
Rome, New York 13440
nphillips@raiseamerican.com
danguzza@gmpveal.com
(315) 337-1911

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE

Dear Mr. Phillips,

This letter serves as official notification by the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) of our decision to place the suspension action at Gold Medal Packing, Establishment M17965, located at 8301 River Road, Rome, New York 13440 in abeyance. This letter follows verbal notification of the abeyance action, provided by Mr. Joseph Schein, Deputy District Manager (DDM) to Mr. Dave Anguzza, General Manager (Est. M17965) at approximately 1735 hours on Thursday, March 2, 2023.

The decision to institute the abeyance was made in accordance with the Rules of Practice, Title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations (9 CFR) Part 500.5 part (e).

In response to the Notice of Suspension (NOS), you submitted proposed corrective actions and preventative measures on March 02, 2023. On March 02, 2023, FSIS requested clarification on the responses. On March 02, 2023, you submitted responses to the clarification request which included corrective actions and program updates.

Your corrective and preventative measures include but are not limited to:

1. Counseling and Retraining of all kill floor personnel. Retraining occurred on March 2, 2023. A copy of the training log was provided and contained employee(s) attestation. Retraining consisted of the following:
 - a. How to determine Insensibility (Unconsciousness) in Cattle, Pigs, and Sheep in Slaughter Plants. (Revised June 2017)
 - b. FSIS Humane Handling Consciousness and stunning.
 - c. Recommended Animal Handling Guidelines & Audit Guide: A Systematic Approach to Animal Welfare (June 2017)
2. Only trained employees will be allowed to work in the slaughter process. This list will be kept by plant management and provided to IPP

- upon request. Training will continue to occur quarterly at a minimum and at a greater frequency based on any needs perceived by the auditing and monitoring team.
3. Secondary, Mandatory security stun – A secondary, security stun will be administered as a mandatory practice and will be included in the written Humane Handling program
 4. Employees will be under daily supervision and observation of an in-house auditor at the start of production, and after return from breaks in production at a minimum of 3 times per production shift. Monitoring to be performed by one of the following: Food Safety Manager, Plant Manager, Quality Control, or the Slaughter Supervisor. Monitoring will consist of observation at each step of slaughter prior to dressing:
 - a. Initial stun and sensibility check. Observation and documentation of 25 animals for proper administration of the initial stun, immediate check for signs of sensibility to ensure single shot efficacy
 - b. Security Stun. Observation and documentation of 10 animals for administration of proper security stun and placement followed by an additional sensibility check.
 - c. Shackle station. Observation and documentation 10 animals for of third sensibility check post stun after the calf drops from the restrainer onto the conveyer, prior to shackling
 - d. Railing and Bleeding. Observation and documentation of 10 animals for final Sensibility check by bleeder prior to administering the bleed.
 - e. Form GMP- Humane Handling Rev. 1 will be used to document the monitoring activities.
 5. Four heads will be randomly selected each calf slaughter day and split to determine angle and effectiveness of stun. Splitting of the heads will utilized as an effective training and evaluation tool.

FSIS has carefully reviewed your responses and made the decision to place the NOS in abeyance. FSIS has designed a Verification Plan (VP), and Inspection Program Personnel (IPP) will use it to monitor and verify that you have effectively implemented your proposed actions. The VP identifies your corrective actions based on your responses, the relevant regulatory requirements, the tasks IPP will use to conduct verification activities, and the time frames that you identified. IPP will continue to ensure all humane handling/stunning regulatory requirements of 9 CFR Part 313 are in regulatory compliance. We have attached a copy of the VP to assist you as a reference during the Agency's verification activities.

A final decision relative to this enforcement action will be determined based on your establishment's ability to execute and comply with your proffered corrective actions and all applicable regulatory requirements. Your establishment's failure to meet the conditions of this abeyance may result in additional regulatory and/or administrative actions in accordance with the Rules of Practice 9 CFR Part 500.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Mr. Joseph Schein, DDM, via electronic mail at joseph.schein@usda.gov or by telephone at (267) 355-9761. Additionally, you can contact the Philadelphia District Office at (800) 637-6681 or by fax at (215) 597-4217.

Sincerely,

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Date: 2023.03.03
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Mr. Jason Orlando
District Manager

**Gold medal Packing (EST M17965) Verification Plan
March 3, 2023**

ESTABLISHMENT ACTION PLAN	9 CFR REGULATION	HUMANE HANDLING VERIFICATION CATEGORY	FREQUENCY
<p>Only trained establishment personnel will be allowed to perform stunning. A list of these trained personnel will be kept on file and available for IPP review. <u>Note:</u> Training will continue to occur quarterly at a minimum and at a greater frequency based on any needs perceived by the auditing and monitoring team</p>	313.15	Category VIII – Stunning effectiveness	Upon implementation, March 3, 2023, and Each slaughter day.
<p>A secondary, security stun will be administered as a mandatory practice and will be included in the written Humane Handling program. Establishment personnel will perform the security stun after sensibility check from initial stun, check for shot placement, and observe for any signs of sensibility.</p>	313.15	Category VIII – Stunning effectiveness	Upon implementation, March 3, 2023, and Each slaughter day
<p>The in-house auditor (one of the following: Food Safety Manager, Plant Manager, Quality Control, or Slaughter Supervisor) will monitor (observe):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 25 animals for initial stunning effectiveness. 2) 10 animals for security stun. 3) 10 for signs of sensibility at shackle station. 4) 10 at sticking station for signs of sensibility. <p>This will be performed three (3) times daily and recorded on the Animal Stunning & Insensibility Record (Form GMP- Humane Handling Rev. 1)</p>	313.15	Category VIII – Stunning effectiveness	Upon implementation, March 3, 2023, and Each slaughter day
<p>Each production day, establishment personnel will randomly select four (4) heads and split to determine placement and effectiveness (observations of both the angle and result of the stun).</p>	313.15	Category VIII – Stunning effectiveness	Upon implementation, March 3, 2023, and Each slaughter (pneumatic stunning/calf) day

Humane handling verification every slaughter operation day to verify the adequacy and effectiveness of the establishment's compliance with the humane handling regulatory requirements of 9 CFR Part 313.

***Inspection Program Personnel will review all monitoring, verification, and corrective action records to verify procedures are being conducted as prescribed and at the specified frequency.**

Cc:

Ms. Melissa Moore, EARO, FSIS, OFO, Washington, DC

Mr. Jason Orlando, DM, FSIS, OFO, Philadelphia District Office

Mr. Joseph Priore, RD, FSIS, OIEA, Northeast Region

Mr. Joseph Schein, DDM, FSIS, OFO, Philadelphia District Office

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Official Files Establishment Folder – Est. M17965

FSIS - FO/Quarterly Enforcement Report