

USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Office of Field
Operations

Atlanta District Office

100 Alabama St., SW.
Suite 3R90
Atlanta, GA. 30303
Phone: 404-562-5900
Fax: 404-562-5877
Toll Free:
800-282-7005

July 28, 2023

CERTIFIED MAIL

Circle F Farms Meat Processing
M1155
324 Azalea Road
Baxley, GA 31513
(b) (6) [@woodyfolsom.com](mailto:(b) (6)@woodyfolsom.com)
(912) 218-0042

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE

Dear Mr. Woody Folsom:

On July 25, 2023, 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 Circle F Farms Meat Processing, Est. M1155 located at 324 Azalea Road, Baxley, GA 31513. This action was based on your establishment's failure to handle livestock humanely according to 9 CFR Part 313.

On July 25, 2023, you submitted written corrective actions and preventive measures to meet the requirements of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. Based on your assessment, you determined that: the cow had to be shot four (4) times. Your corrective actions and preventive measures included: retraining employees about shot placement using pictures in the 9 CFR 316 as a guide; you will assess the animal size and caliber of firearm used to make sure you have appropriate size firearm; and based on your SSOP you regularly use a .22 magnum and have a 9mm as back-up.

On July 25, 2023, FSIS determined that the proffered corrective actions and preventive measures submitted were not adequate to properly address the inhumane handling incident and clarification was requested. Specifically, FSIS requested: clarification regarding why the cow had to be shot (stunned) four (4) times; provide a copy of the material used to retrain your employees in proper shot placement; provide a copy of the record used to document retraining of establishment employees in proper shot placement; describe specific monitoring activities planned to ensure future compliance; provide a copy of the record that would be used to document monitoring activities;

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE

Mr. Woody Folsom, Owner

Circle F Farms Meat Processing, Est. MI 155

July 28, 2023

Page 2

clarify what measures/method will be used to "assess" the animal in the chute when determining which firearm to use when stunning the animal; explain why the establishment employee did not follow the SSOP regarding the use of a .22 magnum firearm and a 9mm back-up; clarify if the establishment will have a secondary (back-up) stunning device available, for immediate access, on the kill floor; and clarify the establishments immediate planned corrective actions following an ineffective stun.

On July 26, 2023, you submitted your second response to provide clarification to your proffered corrective actions. Your response included: an explanation of the cow being shot four (4) times; you provided a copy of the material used to retrain your employees in proper shot placement; a record documenting proper shot placement training had occurred was provided but it did not include the names, or signatures of the employees retrained; stunning effectiveness would be monitored and documented on every fifth animal slaughtered; cows with a live weight of 1,000lbs. or more will be stunned with a firearm larger than a .22 magnum rifle; the supervisor will make sure the stunning SSOP will be followed; a 9mm handgun will be readily available on the kill floor when animals are stunned; and in the event of an ineffective stun a security shot will be taken in a timely manner.

On July 26, 2023, FSIS determined that your second response of proffered corrective actions and preventive measures submitted was not adequate to properly address the inhumane handling incident and further clarification was requested. Specifically, FSIS requested; clarification regarding why the cow had to be shot (stunned) four (4) times; provide a copy of the record used to document retraining of establishment employees in proper shot placement to include the employees' names and signatures or initials; provide a monitoring frequency of stunning effectiveness that reflects your low volume of slaughter; and to clarify your terminology when referring to a re-stun vs. a security stun.

On July 26, 2023, you submitted your third response to provide clarification to your proffered corrective actions. Your response included: improper shot placement required the cow to be shot four (4) times; you provided record documenting employee retraining for proper shot placement which included employees names and signatures; you will monitor and document stunning effectiveness on 100% of the animals slaughtered during the abeyance period; and clarified that in the event of ineffective stun, establishment personnel will take immediate corrective action and effectively re-stun the animal.

On July 27, 2023, you were verbally notified by FSIS that the corrective actions and preventive measures met the requirements to place Circle F Farms Meat Processing, Est. MI 155, in Abeyance and that a Notice of Suspension Held in Abeyance (NOSHA) and Verification Plan (VP) would be issued. You are hereby being provided written notification of the Notice of Suspension Held in Abeyance.

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE

Mr. Woody Folsom, Owner

Circle F Farms Meat Processing, Est. MI 155

July 28, 2023

Page 3

Please be further advised that the 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 proposed 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.

Sincerely,

PHYLLIS Digitally signed
by PHYLLIS
ADAMS
ADAMS Date: 2023.07.28
14:00:43 -0400

Dr. Phyllis Adams
District Manager

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HELD IN ABEYANCE

Mr. Woody Folsom, Owner

Circle F Farms Meat Processing, Est. MI155

July 28, 2023

Page 4

cc: Melissa Moore, BARO
Phyllis Adams, DM
(b) (6), Humane Handling Enforcement Coordinator
Scott Ehle, Acting OIEA Regional Director
Edward Hepburn, DDM
Barney Welch, DDM
Tracy Bryant, DDM
(b) (6), SEIAO
(b) (6), DCS
(b) (6), DVMS
(b) (6), IA Coordinator
PO/Quarterly Reports

Establishment Name: Circle F Farms Meat Processing July 28, 2023

Establishment Number: 1155M

Week ending_:____ _

On July 25, 2023, 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 Circle F Farms Meat Processing, Est 1155M located at 324 Azalea Road, Baxley, GA 31513. This action was based on your establishment's failure to handle livestock humanely according to 9 CFR Part 313. This Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Verification Plan is designed to verify that the establishment fully implements the corrective actions and preventive measures proffered in response to the Notice of Suspension (NOS) issued on July 25, 2023. Inspection personnel and the Atlanta District Office will utilize the Verification Plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the corrective actions in assuring future regulatory compliance. This FSIS Verification Plan identifies the corrective actions, the relevant regulatory requirements, and the PHIS Task under which FSIS officials will verify the implementation and effectiveness of the proposed action plan. The verification plan has the following tasks.

Humane Handling and Slaughter Verification

"Results of Verification" should be recorded as acceptable or unacceptable. Under the heading "Inspection Actions", please document corrective actions taken in compliance with 9 CFR 313. Please explain all unacceptable findings in the "Inspection Actions" column.

Items to Verify	Results of Verification Acceptable (A} or Unacceptable (U)	Inspection Actions List actions taken if Unacceptable.
------------------------	---	---

Livestock Humane Handling Verification Task		
9 CFR 313 A) Verify by record review all employees stunning cattle have been re-trained in the stunning		

<p>process to reinforce proper shot placement. Verify records once.</p> <p>B) Verify by record review that the establishment monitors and records monitoring of stunning effectiveness on 100% of the animals slaughtered. The document(s) will include the date, time, number of head killed, tag#, caliber of firearm used, weight of the cow, if additional stuns were applied, and the monitors initials. Verify records each day of slaughter.</p> <p>C) Verify by direct observation stunning effectiveness 2 times/shift. Each day of slaughter.</p> <p>D) Verify by direct observation or record review that the back-up firearm is on the slaughter floor at the beginning of the slaughter day. Each day of slaughter.</p>		
--	--	--

COMMENTS AND RECOMENDATIONS

Two Week Period Ending: _____

IIC Comments:

Continue Verification Process: _____

Suspension or Reinstatement of Suspension: _____

No Further Action/ Close with a Letter of Warning: _____

IIC Signature _____