



## Humane Handling Ombudsman - Q & A's

### **Q. What is the Humane Handling Ombudsman's area of responsibility?**

A. The Humane Handling Ombudsman is responsible for receiving and addressing concerns or complaints related to FSIS verification and enforcement of Federal humane handling and slaughter statutes and regulations.

### **Q. Would the Humane Handling Ombudsman also receive and address concerns or complaints related to Good Commercial Practices in poultry slaughter?**

A. Yes. Although the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act only covers livestock, FSIS also verifies that poultry are handled and slaughtered humanely in accordance with Good Commercial Practices.

### **Q. Would the Humane Handling Ombudsman receive and address concerns or complaints regarding firms operating under custom exemption?**

A. Yes. Because FSIS carries out enforcement activities at custom exempt facilities, the occurrence of inhumane handling at a custom exempt facility could be brought to the attention of the Humane Handling Ombudsman.

### **Q. At what point can a concern or complaint be brought to the attention of the Humane Handling Ombudsman?**

A. The Humane Handling Ombudsman may be contacted at anytime. There are no prerequisites that define the circumstances as to when the Ombudsman can or should be contacted. Ideally, steps towards resolution have been attempted before the Ombudsman is contacted. However, this is a general consideration and not an absolute. If no prior attempts at resolution have been made, the Ombudsman will work with the complainant in developing options for attempting to resolve the issue themselves. There may be situations where prior attempts at resolution are either impractical or impossible, so this determination is made on a case-by-case basis.

### **Q. How does the Humane Handling Ombudsman differ from the existing channels which may hear concerns and address complaints regarding humane handling?**

A. The position of the Humane Handling Ombudsman was established to serve as an additional resource available to FSIS employees, industry stakeholders and the general public and was created specifically

## Humane Handling Ombudsman

for hearing concerns and addressing complaints related to humane handling. The activities and responsibilities of the Humane Handling Ombudsman are carried out within the context of three guiding principles: Independence, Confidentiality, and Neutrality. In addition, the Humane Handling Ombudsman can issue both formal and informal recommendations which may identify individual and systemic improvements. It is the adherence to these three guiding principles along with the ability to issue recommendations which differentiates the Humane Handling Ombudsman from the existing channels of redress.

### Contact Information

Mr. Mark Crowe is the Humane Handling Ombudsman. If you have a humane handling related comment or concern or wish to file a complaint, Mr. Crowe may be contacted by telephone, e-mail or regular mail.

Telephone: 510-769-5729 (direct)

E-mail: [mark.crowe@osec.usda.gov](mailto:mark.crowe@osec.usda.gov)

Regular mail: United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Food Safety  
Attn: Mark W. Crowe  
800 Buchanan Street  
Albany, California 94710

## Food Safety Questions?

### Call the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline

If you have a question about meat, poultry, or egg products, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline toll free at **1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)**. The hotline is open year-round



Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET (English or Spanish).

Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

Check out the FSIS Web site at **[www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)**.

Send E-mail questions to **[MPHotline.fsis@usda.gov](mailto:MPHotline.fsis@usda.gov)**.

### AskKaren.gov

FSIS' automated response system can provide food safety information 24/7 and a live chat during Hotline hours.



Mobile phone users can access **[m.askkaren.gov](http://m.askkaren.gov)**.

**[PregunteleaKaren.gov](http://PregunteleaKaren.gov)**