

40-14-GCP009

**Sanderson Farms, Inc.**

**Bryan, TX, Est. P19688**

**March 3, 2014**

**Correlated With:**

Sanderson Farms, Inc.:

(b) (6)

USDA:

(b) (7)(C)

A brief entrance meeting was held at 9:30 AM with FSIS inspection personnel and Sanderson Farms, management representatives.

I informed management that I would be conducting a 'Good Commercial Practices' (GCP) assessment and provide GCP correlation guidance. I briefly described the objectives of a GCP assessment discussed the five stations I normally monitor starting at the holding facility.

**Summary of Data Assessment Prior to Visit:**

Establishment P19688 is a large, 2-shift, mandatory poultry slaughter and processing young chicken (large 8 # birds) plant that utilize the SIS system. The PHIS data base was reviewed for the past twelve months (February 28, 2013 to February 27, 2014) to identify non-compliance referencing the 9 CFR 381.65(b) requirements for the handling of live poultry according to Good Commercial Practices (GCP). The establishment has been compliant for this task during the past twelve months; there have been two GCP MOI discussions with plant management during the past year.

The PHIS data base was also reviewed for total birds slaughtered and ante-mortem condemnation numbers. The number of birds slaughtered at this facility was consistent from month to month and shift to shift for the twelve month time period reviewed (57,498,345 birds). This review did indicate the numbers of birds dying during transport to this facility is relatively low. DOA losses are less than 0.01 percent. There are some seasonal variations in DOAs that appear to be associated with inclement weather. Hot, humid spring weather, appears to result in greater losses than cold winter days.

The grant of inspection was updated on 12-7-2011.

**Systematic Approach Comments:**

The Sanderson Farms organization has a comprehensive 'Systematic Approach'. This program addresses employee training needs; aggressive monitoring and oversight of employee performance, production practices and assessment of carcass quality standards as these criteria reflect poultry welfare and handling practices. The last annual training was on February 7, 2014.

Audits are performed by Quality Assurance staff and plant supervision. The audits are for 3.5 minutes which is approximately 500 birds. Performance standards established for this program comply or exceed standards published by the National Chicken Council.

## Good Commercial Practices in Poultry Narrative

**MarJac Poultry, Est. P32**

**Dates Visited: 04/02/2014**

**Report Date: 04/02/2014**

**Routine Annual Assessment**

Performed by (b) (7)(C)

### Correlated with:

I conducted a Good Commercial Practice (GCP) verification assessment at P32, MarJac Poultry, on 04/02/2014. The verification included correlation with the inspection staff to address specific questions regarding GCPs. Correlation focused on the Agency's renewed interest in performing GCP verification and documenting GCP concerns. In the near future, GCP MOIs and NRs will be made available to the public via the FSIS website. In preparation, the Agency has made enhancements to PHIS which will allow establishments to post responses to MOIs and NRs. The Agency is also focusing on GCP concerns that involve the mistreatment of animals and systematic control of the poultry slaughter process. The inspection staff did not have any major concerns or issues to discuss.

### Summary of Data Assessment prior to visit:

Establishment P32, MarJac Poultry, is a large poultry plant that performs mandatory slaughter of young chickens Sunday thru Friday. There are (b)(4) inspection lines with each running at (b)(4) birds per minute. Average bird size is 4.3 pounds. There are two shifts at this plant: each shift has staffing positions for one SPHV, two CSIs, and twelve (12) FSI's. The establishment slaughters an average of (b)(4) birds per week.

PHIS data shows that the establishment's average weekly condemnation rate for DOA's is 0.29%.

There have been no GCP noncompliances during the previous six (6) month period, but there has been one (1) GCP MOI issued during that time. The MOI (dated 10/21/2013) documented an issue with "faulty" cages that allowed birds to escape and, in some cases, killed/crushed.

### Systemic Approach Comments:

MarJac Poultry has a comprehensive systematic Animal Welfare Program (AWP) that extends from the farm to the processing plant. MarJac Poultry reviewed their AWP on 06/03/2013. **Their AWP follows the National Chicken Council's Animal Welfare Guidelines that were adopted on January 28, 2010 to provide industry standards for humane treatment of birds.** The written program covers: 1) Facility Animal Welfare Program, 2) Management of Animal Welfare Program, 3) Training for Broiler Growers, 4) Training for Breeder/Pullet Growers, 5) Training in the Hatchery, 6) Training at Live Haul (Catchers), and 7) Training at the Processing Plant (Quality Assurance).

**Good Commercial Practices in Poultry Narrative****Pilgrim's Pride Corp. of Delaware, Est. P855****Dates Visited: 04/03/2014****Report Date: 04/03/2014****Routine Annual Assessment****Performed by (b) (7)(C)****Correlated with:**

I performed a Good Commercial Practices (GCP) verification assessment at P855, Pilgrim's Pride Corp. (Athens, GA location) on 04/03/2014. The verification included correlation with the inspection staff to address specific questions regarding GCPs. Correlation focused on the Agency's renewed interest in performing GCP verification and documenting GCP concerns. In the near future, GCP MOIs and NRs will be made available to the public via the FSIS website. In preparation, the Agency has made enhancements to PHIS which will allow establishments to post responses to MOIs and NRs. The Agency is also focusing on GCP concerns that involve the mistreatment of animals and systematic control of the poultry slaughter process. The inspection staff did not have any major concerns or issues to discuss.

**Summary of Data Assessment prior to visit:**

Establishment P855, Pilgrim's Pride Corporation, is a large poultry establishment that performs mandatory slaughter of young chickens Sunday through Friday. There are four (4) NELS inspection lines running at (b)(4) birds per minute. There are two shifts at this plant; each shift has staffing options for one SPHV, one SCSi, 2 CSI's and twelve (12) Food Safety Inspectors; currently the dayshift SCSi is vacant and there are no plans to fill the position.

The establishment slaughters an average of (b)(4) birds per week, and the birds average 4.45lbs at the time of slaughter. The establishment's weekly DOA condemnation rate is 0.18%.

Records show there have been no GCP noncompliances in the previous 6 months, however, there have been four (4) GCP MOIs written since 10/01/2013. All GCP MOIs were written for live birds buried under piles of DOA birds. Despite the recent MOIs, I did not observe any incidents during my assessment.

**Systemic Approach Comments:**

Pilgrim's Pride Corporation has a comprehensive systematic program for the handling and slaughter of poultry that extends from the farm to the processing plant. They produce product for (b)(4) and (b)(4) and are audited twice per year by these companies. Additionally, Pilgrim's Pride hires individuals to perform annual Animal Welfare Audits.

Pilgrim's Pride adheres to a comprehensive animal welfare program to prevent and eliminate any undue suffering of animals during all phases of its operations. **Pilgrim's Pride has committed to an animal welfare program in compliance with the National Chicken Council Animal Welfare Guidelines to ensure the proper handling, treatment and well-being of poultry during the**

**Good Commercial Practices in Poultry Narrative**  
**Wayne Farms LLC, Est. P170**  
**Dates Visited: 04/09/2014**  
**Report Date: 04/11/2014**  
**Routine Annual Good Commercial Practices Assessment**  
**Performed by (b) (7)(C)**

**Correlated with:**

I conducted a Good Commercial Practice (GCP) verification assessment at P170, Wayne Farms LLC, on 04/09/2014. The verification included correlation with the inspection staff to address specific questions regarding GCPs. Correlation focused on the Agency's renewed interest in performing GCP verification and documenting GCP concerns. In the near future, GCP MOIs and NRs will be made available to the public via the FSIS website. In preparation, the Agency has made enhancements to PHIS which will allow establishments to post responses to MOIs and NRs. The Agency is also focusing on GCP concerns that involve the mistreatment of animals and systematic control of the poultry slaughter process. The inspection staff did not have any major concerns or issues to discuss.

**Summary of Data Assessment prior to visit:**

Establishment P170, Wayne Farms LLC, is a large poultry plant that performs mandatory slaughter of young chickens Monday through Friday. There is one (1) MAESTRO inspection lines running at (b)(4) birds per minute. Average bird size is 8.8 pounds. There are two shifts at this plant: each shift has one SPHV, one CSI, and four (4) FSI's.

The establishment slaughters an average of (b)(4) birds per week. The establishment's average weekly condemnation rate for DOA's is 0.22 %.

PHIS and in-plant records show there were no GCP noncompliances or MOIs issued during the previous 6 months.

**Systemic Approach Comments:**

Wayne Farms LLC has a comprehensive systematic Animal Welfare Program (AWP) that extends from the farm to the processing plant. **The AWP for Wayne Farms LLC is based on the National Chicken Council (NCC) Guidelines for poultry handling and slaughter.** The written program demonstrated that the establishment has assessed under what circumstances poultry may experience excitement, discomfort and/or accidental injury, and they have taken steps to minimize the possibility of such excitement, discomfort and/or accidental injury.

Another aspect of the systematic approach is evaluating periodically how poultry are being handled and slaughtered to ensure (a) that any excitement, discomfort, or accidental injury is being minimized; (b) that all poultry are slaughtered in a manner that results in thorough bleeding of the poultry carcass, and (c) that breathing has stopped before scalding. This is accomplished at this establishment through daily monitoring checks and through periodic third

Establishment Name, Number: **Holmes Food Inc., P1294**  
Date of Visit: April 15, 2014

**Present at Visit:**

USDA: (b) (7)(C), (b) (7)(C), and (b) (7)(C).  
Establishment: (b) (6) 3)

The DVMS assessment is to correlate the Handling of live birds according to Good Commercial Practices (GCP), not allowing live birds to enter scalding tanks, and assuring that birds were slaughtered in a manner that ensured thorough bleeding.

**Summary of Data Assessment Prior to Visit:**

**Establishment Profile:** Mandatory Poultry Slaughter and Processing, Export Certification, Young Chickens. Grant updated date: 8/16/2011. This is a small, two hanging-line plant that slaughters between (b)(4) birds daily. The plant has one picking line, (b)(4) birds per minute. Inspection lines run (b)(4) birds per minute. Over the last year from April 5, 2013 to April 6, 2014 slaughtered (b)(4) birds. The plant has the (b)(4) system which slaughters the birds with a more sanitary dressing procedure. They do slaughter under Islamic poultry at times.

**Pounds condemned PHIS - data was reviewed for the period 04/6/2013 through 04/5/2014:** out of (b)(4) total heads young chickens slaughtered, there were 326 cadavers reported, indicating a <0.001% cadaver rate.

**Good Commercial Practice Noncompliance Records for the period 03/20/12 through 03/20/13 - one citing 9 CFR 381.65(b).**

**Previous Good Commercial Practice Verification Visit was conducted by (b)(7)(C) on March 20, 2013, recommending "No Action."**

**Systematic Approach Comments:**

The establishment has developed a comprehensive, written animal welfare program that meets criteria established in the September 9, 2005 Federal Register Notice [Docket No. 04-037N]. **An animal welfare guideline was updated in April 2012, and cites the National Chicken Council guidelines.** Standard operating procedures include animal welfare disaster plans, holding facilities and live hang area and processing. Internal audits are performed once per shift, and evaluate trailer and cage conditions, working fans, loose and DOA birds, one-leggers, stunning, back up cutter, broken wings, broken legs, bruised wings and legs, and cadavers. New employees receive intake animal handling and welfare training, and all employees that handle live animals undergo annual refresher training. Bilingual training is available. All training is documented. Video cameras monitor coop dump and hang pen. The establishment performs and monitors daily maintenance on the automatic killing machine. The last third party audit was in October, 2013 by Processed Management Consulting with a 100% score for GCP compliance.

**Summary of Reason(s) for Recommendation:**

The establishment was found to be in compliance with the regulatory requirements of 9 CFR 381.65(b) in that they were observed to be handling and slaughtering birds according to Good Commercial Practices at the time of this visit. These findings support a recommendation of No Action.