



# Worthwhile Operational Guidelines & Suggestions

BROILER PROCESSING TIMELY INFORMATION – FEBRUARY 2008

## Worker Safety

The chicken industry is playing a leadership role in improving worker safety in its workplaces and reducing the incidence of injuries and health problems. Data published by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that injury and illness rate among poultry processing workers in the U.S. has reached its lowest level ever and is below the rate found in food manufacturing in general. For poultry processing, the rate of injury and illness in 2006 was 6.6 per 100 full-time workers, down from 7.4 in 2005. The rate has been cut to less than half the level of 14.2 recorded in the year 2000 (<http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshsum.htm>).

According to the National Chicken Council, workplace safety is a key objective and core value for all poultry processing companies. Among the numerous programs and policies in place and initiatives undertaken by poultry companies are:

- Employees are trained in how to do their jobs in the safest and least stressful manner possible.
- Training is conducted in multiple languages as needed to meet with needs of a diverse workforce.
- Some companies have on-site wellness centers so that employees can get medical attention on company time.
- Many jobs are being automated - done by machines instead of humans - as improved technology becomes available.
- In other cases, technological improvements are used to perform portions of the job, to improve workplace ergonomics.
- Full-time safety managers and registered nurses are assigned to monitor the health and safety of plant employees and treat problems at an early stage, avoiding more serious conditions later.



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