



W O G S

Worthwhile
Operational
Guidelines &
Suggestions

BROILER PROCESSING TIMELY INFORMATION – MARCH 2007

Incoming Microbial Load

Are your broilers as externally dirty as this one at market age? What are the consequences of receiving dirty birds for slaughter?

Intestine is a ‘perfect incubator’ for bacterial growth, as bacteria are provided optimal conditions (temperature, pH, nutrients, etc) to thrive. Consequently, a gram of fecal material may contain up to 10^{12} bacteria (that is 1,000,000,000,000). Reducing intestinal contents, **in** (i.e., digestive tract) and **on** (i.e., feathers, skin and feet) market age broilers, prior to and during slaughter should help the processors meet microbiological performance standards (*Salmonella* and *E. coli*) and assure product safety.



We can achieve this by:

- * Maintaining optimal intestinal health and function throughout the broilers life
- * Focusing on litter quality (type, re-use, down-time, moisture, water activity, fecal load)
- * Implementing a well-designed and verifiable pre-slaughter feed withdrawal program
- * Using clean live-haul equipment (coops, crates or cages)
- * Minimizing pre-slaughter plant holding time
- * Having adequate bleed-time (min. 90 sec) to facilitate peri-mortem defecation
- * Incorporating pre-scald vent washers (scald water overflow) and/or brush-scrubbers
- * Installing multi-stage, counter-current scalding systems
- * Assuring full immersion (including the feet) during scalding
- * Preventing spillage of intestinal contents during evisceration



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