The American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) recently released a broiler paw (processed chicken feet) scoring guide to facilitate animal welfare audits of foot health in broilers. The new guidelines recommend evaluating paws in the processing plant after the removal of the cuticle and paw processing. The intent is to optimize scoring and accuracy during an audit, as well as to minimize welfare concerns with handling live broilers to assess foot health at the farm.

The new guide calls for examining about 200 paws (representing 100 broilers) per flock and assigning a pass or fail score. A result of 90% (or greater) of paws with a pass score is considered to be acceptable during the validation (facility testing) and verification (auditing) processes involved in implementing animal welfare programs.

**Scoring Criteria**
(Relative to the size of the primary footpad)

**PASS:**

* Normal (white or yellow) color
* Slight discoloration or darkened skin
* Hyperkeratosis (thickening)
* Area <1/2 area of the foot pad

**FAIL:**

* Erosions, ulcerations and scabs that cover the foot pad and that may include the toe pads
* Hemorrhages
* Swelling of the foot pad
* Area >1/2 area of the foot pad