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 AUBURN UNIVERSITY  
 DEPARTMENT OF POULTRY SCIENCE



# WORTHWHILE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES & SUGGESTIONS

## Humane Methods for Loading Broilers into Coops

<b><u>Training!</u></b>	Catching crew training is <u>vital</u> for optimizing animal welfare. Providing initial and continuing training with a positive attitude can significantly improve welfare and minimize carcass damage/DOAs.
Lighting	Catching in low light minimizes stress
Noise	When necessary speak quietly and minimize loud noises (e.g. slamming doors, moving crates, fork-lift noise, etc.).
Movement	Walk slowly around the broilers and avoid fast movements.
Piling/Suffocation Overcrowding	Load broilers from the end of the barn while slowly moving into the barn as broilers are being caught. Check corners to ensure broilers are not piling.
Humane Handling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Catching options depend on your part of the world.           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Mechanical</li> <li>b. Catching by the back (one or two at a time)</li> <li>c. Catching by the leg (1 leg is recommended over 2 legs, 2-5 at a time depending on company policy)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Do not carry broilers by the wings or neck.</li> <li>3. Do not swing, throw, or drop broilers.</li> <li>4. Do not pass broilers between people.</li> <li>5. Place broilers gently in crates.</li> <li>6. Ensure broilers are in an upright position.</li> </ol>
Crate Distance	Do not carry broilers more than 5 meters before placing in crates.
Crate Density	Density will depend on crate size, broiler size, and environmental conditions. In hot conditions, crate density should be decreased. In cold conditions, crate density may be able to be increased. Catching crews should be advised on how many broilers should be loaded into each crate for each house to be caught. Do not overcrowd in crates.
Crate Condition	Broiler crates must be properly maintained. Damaged crates can cause broiler injury or allow broilers to escape during holding or transport.



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