Worthwhile Operational Guidelines & Suggestions

Minimizing Stress during Preslaughter Broiler Shackling

Minimizing physical activity and length of shackling time for broilers prior to slaughter can have significant positive impacts on physiological stress indicators and subsequent meat quality. Lengthy shackling times have been known to lead to higher corticosterone levels and can lead to lighter breast fillets with lower pH and increased cook loss.

- Low light or blue light conditions will minimize bird activity while allowing for visibility by the hanging crew
- Unidirectional shackle line from hanging through entry into the stunner (no shackle line turns)
- Installation of a breast bar or panel from hanging through stunning to keep the birds calm and minimize flapping
- Minimize the length of time from hanging to stunning as much as possible
- Ensure the appropriate size shackles are installed for the size of the birds
- Both bird shanks should be fully seated at the bottom of the shackle
- Conduct hanging crew training and retraining at regular intervals
- Provide adequate space, lighting, air quality, and ventilation for employees as well as the birds