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OPI: S&T/IEES
LINE SPEEDS FOR HEAVY YOUNG CHICKENS (BROILERS, ROASTERS)

I. PURPOSE

This directive sets forth recommended maximum line speeds for official establishments that process heavy young chickens under the Streamlined Inspection System and the New Line Speed Inspection System.

II. [RESERVED]

III. [RESERVED]

IV. REFERENCES

MPI Regulations, Sections 381.76 and 381.170

V. ABBREVIATIONS

The following will appear in their abbreviated form in this directive:

IIC Inspector in Charge
MPI Meat and Poultry Inspection
NELS New Line Speed Inspection System
SIS Streamlined Inspection System
SIS-1 Streamlined Inspection System with one inspector
SIS-2 Streamlined Inspection System with two inspectors

VI. BACKGROUND

A. Section 381.76 of the MPI regulations prescribes maximum line speeds for young chickens processed under SIS and NELLS. SIS may be performed by one inspector or two inspectors. The maximum line speed is 35 birds per minute under SIS-1 and 70 birds per minute under SIS-2. The maximum line speed for NELLS is 91 birds per minute.

B. During the development of SIS and NELLS in the 1980's, FSIS conducted studies to determine procedures and line speeds for those systems. At that time, young chickens weighed less than 6 pounds and had only a small amount of fat on the abdominal flap. Consequently, an inspector uses only one hand to manipulate the abdominal flap to view the inside cavity of these birds. The maximum line speeds prescribed in Section 381.76 of the MPI Regulations are based on data gathered during studies using broilers weighing 6 pounds or less.

C. A significant number of young chickens being processed today

weigh over 6 pounds. To accommodate the processing of these birds, inspectors are required, in most cases, to use both hands during inspection. Heavy young chickens tend to have more fat than the smaller birds, requiring inspectors to use both hands to manipulate the fatter abdominal flaps for viewing the inside cavities of the birds.

VII. LINE SPEED GUIDELINES--ADJUSTMENTS FOR HEAVY YOUNG CHICKENS

A. IIC's must adjust line speeds as necessary to allow for proper inspection of heavy young chickens. It is recommended that the following line speeds not be exceeded to permit adequate inspection of heavy young chickens processed under SIS and NELS:

Recommended Line Speeds for Heavy Young Chickens

SIS-1	31 birds per minute
SIS-2	55 birds per minute
NELS	73 birds per minute

B. In each case, the actual line speed may be less. The line speed must not exceed that which permits adequate examination of each carcass or part. Actual line speeds will vary, depending on a variety of conditions.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. IIC:

1. Ensure that weights of heavy young chickens are determined as necessary by randomly selecting and weighing 10 birds per lot at the establishment's transfer station. Weighing may be done by the establishment or inspection personnel.

2. Adjust line speeds according to the weight of the birds. If the average weight of the 10 young chickens exceeds 6 pounds, the lot is defined as heavy young chickens.

B. Establishment:

1. Provide scales for random weighing at a location acceptable to the IIC.

2. Conduct random weighing of young chickens in a manner acceptable to the IIC.

3. Adjust line speeds as directed by the IIC.

Any questions regarding this directive should be referred to the next level of supervision.

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