



# FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY

## CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SLAUGHTER HOUSES/SLABS

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In exercise of the powers conferred on the FDA by Public Health Act, 2012, Act 851, Part Seven, Section 108, this code of practice applies to the regulation of slaughter houses in a manner that ensures the safety and quality of carcass obtained from such places.

This code of practice applies to all slaughter houses and butchery in Ghana and is intended to provide such facilities with the requirements of the FDA.

This code of practice is hereby promulgated for information, guidance and strict compliance by all concerned.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of these guidelines the following definitions shall apply:

*Slaughter house* refers to any establishment where specified animals are slaughtered and dressed for human consumption and that is approved, registered and /or listed by competent authority

*“Carcass”* means the body of an animal after dressing.

*Meat* refers to all parts of an animal that are intended for, or have been judged as safe and suitable for human consumption.

*“Requirements”* means the criteria relating to trade in food, covering the protection of public health, the protection of consumers and conditions of fair trade.

*“Wholesome”* means food in sound condition, clean, free from adulteration and otherwise fit for human consumption.

*“Establishment”* is a suitable building, area or surroundings in which fresh or frozen meat is processed and packaged.

*“Calibration”* - procedure used for the comparison of a measuring instrument with a standard, under specific conditions, and adjustment of the instrument, if necessary.

*“Cleaning”* - means to remove visible contaminants from any surface.

*“Contaminant”* - any biological agent, chemical agent, foreign matter or other substance not intentionally added to food which may compromise product safety or suitability.

*“Contamination”* – means direct or indirect transmission of contaminants to meat.

*“Equipment”* - includes:

a. the whole or any part of any machine, fitting, device, instrument, stamp,

apparatus, table, or article, that is used or available for use in or for marking, cutting, singeing, packing, storing, carrying, or handling of any carcass or meat and;

b. any machine used or capable of being used in the cleaning of any equipment or facilities.

**“Potable water”** - means water that is acceptable for cleaning and animal consumption.

**“Protective clothing”** - special outer wear garments intended to preclude the contamination of products

**“Sanitize”** means to apply heat or chemicals, heat and chemicals, or other processes, to a surface so that the number of micro-organisms on the surface is reduced to a level that –

(a) does not compromise the safety of food with which it may come into contact; and

(b) does not permit the transmission of infectious disease.

**“Waste”** - includes, without limitation, all solids, liquids, and gases that is intended to be dispose of as being unwanted and that may become a source of contamination or attract pests.

### **3. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **3.1 LOCATION AND DESIGN**

##### **3.1.1. LOCATION**

The location of the slaughter house or slab should pose no threat to the wholesomeness and hygiene of fresh or chilled meat or meat products.

Premises must be located away from:

- 3.1.1.1. Environmentally polluted areas and industrial activities which pose a serious threat of contaminating meat.
- 3.1.1.2. Areas subject to flooding unless sufficient safeguards are provided.
- 3.1.1.3. Areas prone to infestation of pests; and
- 3.1.1.4. Areas where wastes, either solid or liquid, cannot be effectively removed.

##### **3.1.2 DESIGN OF FACILITY**

- 3.1.1.5. The slaughter house or slab should be designed to provide adequate space for equipment and slaughtering activities.
- 3.1.1.6. The slaughter house or slab should be designed in such a way as to minimize the contamination of fresh or chilled meat.
- 3.1.1.7. The slaughter house or slab should be designed to facilitate effective cleaning and, if necessary, sanitization.

#### **3.2 STRUCTURE AND FABRIC**

The slaughter house or slab should be suitable in size, construction, and design to facilitate slaughtering activities, maintenance and cleaning of all parts.

- 3.2.1. The construction should protect against the entrance and harbourage of insects, birds, rodents or other vermin, as well as the entry of contaminants such as smoke, dust, etc.
- 3.2.2. The slaughter house or slab should be designed to provide separation, by partition, location or other effective means, between those operations which may cause cross contamination.

- 3.2.3. Drains shall be covered and the immediate environs clean and free of litter
- 3.2.4. Floors should be of water-proof, non-absorbent, washable and non-slip materials, without crevices, and should be easy to clean and disinfect.
- 3.2.5. Walls should be of water proof, non-absorbent and washable materials and should be light coloured. Up to a height appropriate for the operation they should be smooth and without crevices, and should be easy to clean and disinfect.
- 3.2.6. Ceilings should be designed, constructed and finished as to prevent the accumulation of dirt and minimize condensation, mould development and flaking, and should be easy to clean.
- 3.2.7. Ventilation should be adequate, have good lighting and be easy to clean. All construction material should be such that they do not transmit any undesirable substances to the meat or meat products.
- 3.2.8. Windows and other openings should be constructed so as to enhance ventilation and avoid accumulation of dirt and those which open should be fitted with insect-proof screens. Screens should be easily movable for cleaning and kept in good repair.
- 3.2.9. Doors should have smooth, non-absorbent surfaces and, where appropriate, be self closing and close fitting.

### **3.3 ILLUMINATION AND VENTILATION**

- 3.4.1. Adequate natural or artificial lighting should be provided throughout the slaughter house. Light bulbs and fixtures suspended over meat in any stage of production should be of a safety type and shielded to prevent contamination of meat in case of breakage.
- 3.4.2. Adequate ventilation should be provided to remove dust and contaminated air. The direction of the air flow should never be from a dirty area to a clean area. Ventilation openings should be provided with an insect screen or other protective enclosure of non-corrodible material. Screens should be easily removable for cleaning.

### **3.4 PRESENTATION OF ANIMAL FOR SLAUGHTER**

- 3.4.3. The slaughter house or slab should source its animals from approved farms. A pre-mortem inspection should be conducted by an authorised Veterinary

Officer on the animal before slaughter. This should include animals presented for slaughter by individuals.

- 3.4.4. The lairage should be cleaned and free from all insanitary conditions.
- 3.4.5. An animal reception protocol should be developed to specify parameters as regards to the reception/rejection of animals to be slaughtered.
- 3.4.6. Hide/skin and viscera contents of animals entering the slaughter house are potential sources of contamination of carcass with pathogenic bacteria. Thus the animal to be slaughtered must be clean.
- 3.4.7. Stunning must be done in a humane way as this process affect the quality of the meat, with due consideration to minimizing contamination
- 3.4.8. Slaughtered animals that are scalded, flamed or similarly treated should be scoured of all bristles, hair, scurf, cuticle, feathers and dirt.
- 3.4.9. Bleeding should be as complete as possible. Care must be taken not to puncture the viscera, urinary bladder, gall bladder or uterus to prevent contamination by gut or viscera content.
- 3.4.10. Carcass must be cleaned or washed with portable water. Prevent / reduce airborne cross-contamination between carcasses by not creating aerosols during washing.

### **3.5 CHILLING OF MEAT**

- 3.5.1. The facility should possess adequate cold storage facilities for the storage of raw meat.
- 3.5.2. Chilling must be done as soon as possible after washing and dissecting carcass so as to inhibit microbial growth and to facilitate maturity of meat.
- 3.5.3. Carcass must be on rails and without touching floors/walls and if possible other carcasses to prevent cross contamination.
- 3.5.4. Storage facility shall have the right temperature for storage of fresh meat (i.e. 0°C to +5° C). Cold room temperature shall be monitored and recorded. Thermometer affix to cold room shall be functional and calibrated. Cold room shall be of high hygienic condition. There shall be a functional standby generator of the appropriate capacity.
- 3.5.5. The meat shall be kept in the chiller for the appropriate days before it send to the market

### **3.6 EQUIPMENT & MAINTENANCE**

#### **3.6.1. EQUIPMENT**



- 3.6.1.1 All equipment used in slaughtering and meat handling should be made of material which does not transmit toxic substances, odour or taste, is non-absorbent, is resistant to corrosion and is capable of withstanding repeated cleaning and disinfection. Surfaces should be smooth and free from crevices. The use of wood and other materials which cannot be adequately cleaned and disinfected should be avoided except when their use would clearly not be a source of contamination. The use of different materials in such a way that corrosion can occur, should be avoided.
- 3.6.1.2 All refrigerated spaces should be equipped with temperature measurement and recording devices.
- 3.6.1.3 Equipment used on waste parts of the carcasses should be identified and should not be used for edible products.

### **3.6.2. MAINTENANCE**

- 3.6.2.1 Maintenance work shall be done in a manner that minimises contamination of meat, equipment and the slaughtering environment.
- 3.6.2.2 Prior to any alteration, repair or maintenance work on buildings, facilities or equipment, an officer from the Authority and the Veterinary Services Directorate shall assess its potential for contaminating meat, equipment and the slaughtering environment; and put in place appropriate controls to minimise their exposure to contamination.
- 3.6.2.3 Alterations to the slaughter house design, and maintenance of equipment that may affect hygienic operations or cause contamination of meat and the slaughtering environment shall not be done during slaughtering.
- 3.6.2.4 Cleaning and maintenance tools should not be stored in a meat handling area.

## **3.7 CALIBRATION OF MEASURING DEVICES**

Measuring devices (whether stand-alone or forming part of a piece of equipment) shall:

- 3.7.1. Have the accuracy, precision, and conditions of use appropriate to the task performed
- 3.7.2. Be calibrated against a reference standard showing traceability of calibration to a national or international standard of measurement (where available), or (if no such standard exists) be calibrated on a basis that is documented.
- 3.7.3. Be uniquely identified (e.g. by using serial numbers, indelible tags or other permanent means of identification) to enable traceability of the calibrations and to identify calibration status.

### **3.8 PEST CONTROL**

- 3.8.1. There should be an effective and continuous programme for the control of insects, birds, rodents or other vermin.
- 3.8.2. The slaughter house or slab should be regularly examined for evidence of infestation. Control measures involving treatment with chemical, physical or biological agents should only be undertaken by or under direct supervision of EPA Certified Agent who have a thorough understanding of the potential hazards to health resulting from the use of these agents, including those which may arise from residues retained in the product.

### **3.9 SANITARY FACILITIES**

- 3.9.1. An ample supply of potable water under adequate pressure should be available with adequate facilities for its storage, where necessary, and distribution, and with adequate protection against contamination. An adequate supply of hot potable water should be available at all times during working hours.
- 3.9.2. The slaughter house should have an efficient effluent and waste disposal system. All effluent lines (including sewer systems) should be large enough to carry peak loads and should be constructed in such a manner as to avoid contamination of potable water supplies.
- 3.9.3. Facilities should be provided for the storage of waste and inedible carcass parts prior to removal from the slaughter house. These facilities should be designed to prevent access to waste or pests and to avoid contamination of meat, potable water and equipment.

- 3.9.4. Adequate, suitable, and conveniently located changing facilities and toilets should be provided in the slaughter house. Toilets should be so designed as to ensure hygienic removal of waste matter. These areas should be lit, ventilated and where appropriate should not open directly into meat handling areas. Hand washing facilities with warm or hot and cold water, a suitable hand-cleaning preparation, and with suitable hygienic means of drying hands, should be provided adjacent to toilets and in such a position that the employee must pass them when returning to the processing area. Where hot and cold water are available mixing taps should be provided. Where paper towels are used, a sufficient number of the dispensers with paper towels and receptacles for used towels should be provided adjacent to each washing facility. Taps of a non-hand operable type are preferable. Notices should be posted directing personnel to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- 3.9.5. All rooms used for singeing, deboning, cutting or other handling of meat should be equipped with adequate facilities for cleaning and disinfecting implements, conveniently located for the use of personnel during operations. These facilities are for use exclusively in the cleaning and disinfection of knives, cutlase, cleavers, saws and other implements.

### **3.10 PERSONNEL HYGIENE AND MEAT HANDLING**

#### **3.10.1. MEDICAL EXAMINATION**

Butchers who come into contact with carcass and meat in the course of their work should undergo medical examination. Medical examination of butchers should be carried out at least ones a year.

#### **3.10.2. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING**

- 3.10.2.1. All butchers who enter any part of the slaughtering facility must wear suitable, clean protective clothing and footwear.
- 3.10.2.2. Hair restraints, for both head and facial hair, must be worn in cutting and dressing areas.
- 3.10.2.3. Butchers who work in the slaughter section must change their protective clothing, and clean or change their footwear, before entering the carcass dressing area.

3.10.2.4. Butchers assigned to work in areas where materials for animal consumption or waste are handled must remove their outer clothing, footwear or coverings; and change to clean protective clothing before entering slaughtering areas.

3.10.2.5. Butchers effects and clothing should not be deposited in meat handling areas.

### **3.10.3. PERSONNEL CLEANLINESS**

3.10.3.1. Butchers engaged in the slaughter house where meat or carcass are handled should maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness while on duty, and should at all times while so engaged wear suitable protective clothing including head and footwear, all of which should be washable unless designed to be disposed off and which should be maintained in a clean condition consistent with the nature of the work in which the person is engaged.

3.10.3.2. Butchers engaged in a carcass or meat handling should wash his hands frequently and thoroughly under running warm potable water while on duty. Hands should always be washed before commencing work, immediately after using the toilet, after handling contaminated carcass or meat, and whenever else necessary. After handling diseased or suspect carcass or meat, hands should be washed and sanitised immediately. Notices requiring hand-washing should be displayed.

3.10.3.3. A butcher who has a cut or a wound should discontinue working with carcass and meat until he is suitably bandaged and treated. No person working in any slaughter house should wear exposed bandage unless the bandage is completely protected by a waterproof covering which is conspicuous in colour and is of such a nature that it cannot become accidentally detached. Adequate first-aid facilities should be provided for this purpose.

3.10.3.4. Spitting, eating, chewing and the use of tobacco should be prohibited in meat handling areas.

3.10.3.5. Protective clothes used in meat handling should be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

### **3.11 RECORD KEEPING AND DOCUMENTATION**

The slaughter house shall maintain accurate records on all day-to-day activities of the facility critical to the safety of products. Records shall be kept on the following:

- i. Food Handlers Test
- ii. Pest control activities
- iii. Cleaning activities
- iv. Waste management
- v. List of suppliers
- vi. List of distributors
- vii. Calibration of equipment
- viii. Temperature monitoring
- ix. Complaint Records
- x. Standard Operative Procedures
- xi. Training of Workers
- xii. Certificate of Quality

### **3.12 MISCELLANEOUS**

These provisions relating to slaughter house and slabs are in addition to and not substitute for all other applicable laws or regulations relating to this type of business operation. The FDA shall at any time, when necessary, take other procedures or steps to ensure that fresh or frozen meat offered for sale for human or animal consumption, is wholesome.

## **4. SANCTIONS**

Failure on three counts of caution on non-adherence to this code of practice will result in suspension, revocation of license or any sanction as deemed fit by the Authority as related to the Public Health Act 851.

## **5. PENALTIES**

Where non-adherence to this code of practice results in exposure of consumers to a meat safety hazard, the FDA will impose an administrative fine in accordance with Public Health Act, 2012, Act 851, Section 148, Subsection 4 and 5.