



Nourishing Today
Sustaining Tomorrow

Animal Welfare Audit



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MEAT INDUSTRY ANIMAL WELFARE AUDIT

Introduction

As the saying goes, “You can’t manage what you don’t measure.” Understanding and using the Meat Institute’s audit program to measure outcomes can help companies manage animal welfare more effectively. The Meat Institute audit recommends that plants conduct internal self-audits at least weekly, varying the days and times across all shifts to account for differences in employee experience, transporter variability, behavior, and fatigue, and to also complete annual third-party audits by a certified auditor with animal-welfare training. Both internal and third-party audits should use measurements of the critical and key welfare indicators, along with other general animal-welfare elements:

- **Effective stunning**
- **Hot wanding (swine only)**
- **Bleed rail insensibility**
- **Falls**
- **Vocalizations**
- **Electric prod use**
- **Animal condition**
- **Euthanasia**
- **Most critical: willful acts of abuse (egregious acts)**

There are three types of elements, some with multiple criterion, that make up the audit: general elements, key welfare indicators (KWIs) and critical welfare indicators (CWIs).

General elements include animal welfare protocols, training, and facility observations, demonstrating a commitment to animal welfare.

Key welfare indicators are outcome, facility, or resource-based measures that have a significant impact on animal welfare. These indicators are determined to hold substantial risk to animal welfare if not monitored effectively. Factors influencing these indicators may not be entirely under the control of the plant.

Critical welfare indicators are outcome, facility, or resource-based measures that have a highly significant impact on animal welfare. These indicators are determined to hold the greatest risk to animal welfare if not monitored effectively. Factors influencing these indicators are under the control of the plant.

To ensure good outcomes, the Meat Institute recommends varying internal audit days and times across all shifts to assess the role that employee experience, behavior, and fatigue may play in animal handling and stunning. However, auditors and companies should remember that audits represent a “snapshot in time.” Many variables can impact audit outcomes, especially when live animals are involved. These can include:

- **Changes in plant personnel:** it may take time for a new employee to become as skilled an animal handler as a more experienced employee. However, willful acts of abuse can NEVER be tolerated.

- **Breed, age, and gender of domestic livestock and bison:** these factors all can affect temperament.
- **Previous handling or lack of handling and human contact:** domestic livestock and bison that are accustomed to seeing people generally are less skittish at the plant.
- **Weather:** domestic livestock and bison sometimes react to weather or seasonal changes, like a thunderstorm.
- **Auditor influence:** auditors play a critical role in the assessment of humane handling and must have the appropriate expertise and the ability to interact with plant personnel during the audit without interfering with the process and impacting the results of the audit.

For these reasons, audits should be considered part of a process, and trends should be considered along with each specific audit result to determine if results are an anomaly or a pattern. A plant's proposed corrective/preventive measures and follow-up also should be considered. While it is essential to set numeric targets, the mere act of auditing, measuring, and tracking will help companies manage more effectively and will contribute to improved animal welfare.

This audit program is designed to evaluate domestic livestock, specifically cattle, swine, sheep, and bison, though the concepts may be applicable to other species. The term domestic livestock only refers to cattle, swine, and sheep, not bison.

Recommendations that are bison specific are marked with their respective symbol: 

Some country-specific regulations are noted throughout this document and are marked with their respective country symbols ( for United States regulations, and  for Canadian regulations).

TRANSPORTATION AUDIT GUIDANCE

This section details how to audit during the receiving and unloading of domestic livestock at slaughter facilities and outlines the audit elements and their criteria. Objective elements can be used to evaluate humane animal handling during transport by analyzing factors once trucks arrive at plants.

Auditor Instructions and Information

This audit is intended to monitor the welfare of animals arriving at meat packing facilities. It is the responsibility of third-party auditors to:

- Arrange with plant management the best time to perform the audit to ensure the plant will be receiving animals and a representative audit sample can be acquired.
- Plants must have a written animal welfare protocol for transporters hauling animals to their plants. The protocol can be an in-house protocol; a protocol that strictly references the Pork Board's Transport Quality Assurance (TQA™) program (swine), The Beef Quality Assurance Transportation (BQAT) program (cattle), or the Canadian Livestock Transporter (CLT) certification program (swine, cattle, bison, poultry, horse, and sheep); or a combination of recognized species-specific and/or in-house programs.
- Establish with plant management the areas the audit will cover. Areas will include the trailer holding or staging area, the trailer(s) (only for assessing set-up and unloading), and the unloading area (i.e., up to the exit gate of the unloading alley/receiving pen or to the gate of the first alley off the trailer). Due to differences in plant design, this will need to be established by plant management and communicated to the auditor. At the discretion of the plant, the auditor may not be allowed to enter the trailer. The balance of the handling and stunning areas beyond the unloading area are covered in the slaughter audit.
- The auditor must find a safe place to stand that will not impede unloading or cause the animals to balk. The auditor should seek guidance from a plant representative on the best place to stand to effectively observe unloading and not impede it. The auditor must not enter the trailer while the animals are being unloaded.



Auditors should practice extra caution when auditing bison and understand that bison have a large flight zone that the auditor should respect.

- All auditors should be familiar with the National Pork Board's Transport Quality Assurance (TQA™) program (swine), the Beef Quality Assurance Transportation (BQAT) program (cattle), the Canadian Livestock Transporter (CLT) Certification Program (swine, cattle, bison, poultry, horse and sheep), or a similar program to educate themselves on the current transportation practices and guidelines for the species they are auditing.

- Some element points may not apply to the plant the auditor is auditing. It is the responsibility of the auditor to meet with management and review the elements and their applicability before conducting the audit.
- Some elements will be dependent on animal type, trailer style, plant design, or regional climate differences. Choose the points that apply to the animal type or trailer being audited.
- Scoring for the elements of falls, electric prod use, and compromised animals are performed on a *per animal* basis. For example, document the number of animals that fall. If an auditor observes multiple falls from one animal, it is only counted once.
- Trailer selection: The number of trailers to be audited will be determined before beginning the audit based on the scheduled number of trailers scheduled to arrive during the audit. The auditor will base the audit results on the trailers that were actually audited, not on trailers they may have observed that were not part of the selected audit sampling. Audit and score no more than five trailers that arrive during the audit. When possible, auditors can select trailers based upon the auditor's selection scheme (which should be randomized), what unloading docks are being used during the audit (auditors should monitor trailers at different docks), and what trailers can be audited in an efficient manner.
- Observation of an egregious act of abuse at any point during the audit always results in a failed audit, even if observed on a trailer that is not being audited.
- Any tallied observation of an element (for example, a fall) or failure should be immediately communicated to plant personnel.



Auditor Tip:

Before the start of the audit, work with plant personnel to acquire an estimated load arrival schedule to ensure you can observe all requirements of the audit.

Completing the Transportation Audit Form

- **Trailer number and other identification information.** In this space, enter the sequence number of the trailers audited and the truck identification numbers, if applicable.



Gooseneck farm livestock trailer



Potbelly/drop center trailer

- **Total number of animals on board.** This is the total number of animals on the trailer being audited. This number can be obtained from the plant employee, transporter, or scale ticket.
- **Types of trailers.** Note the type of trailer such as potbelly, straight, or gooseneck.
- **Has the driver completed training and certification in a species specific transportation welfare program?**
 - Cattle: BQAT™, CLT, or other recognized cattle program
 - Swine: TQA™, CLT, or other recognized swine program
 - Sheep/Bison: Industry-derived program, CLT, or other recognized species appropriate program



Auditor Tip:

Once the total number of animals on board is obtained from plant staff, transporter or scale ticket, there is no need to count the animals as they come off the trailer.

Audit Scoring

- **Plant protocols, facility, and handling observations apply to the plant only.** They are scored only once during the audit.
- **Trailer set-up, loading density, alignment, and timeliness of arrival apply to individual trailers only.** Each trailer will be individually assessed. At the end of the audit, the total points for all the trailers will be added together to obtain the final scoring for each of the criteria within the element. The average of the trailers scored will serve as the overall score. If any single trailer does not meet all the required criteria, this should be noted on the audit form. If the trailer does not meet the required criteria, the Meat Institute recommends further investigation and that the plant has a mechanism for communicating back to the site of trailer loading. Corrective actions should include communication with the site of trailer loading outlining expectations regarding humane transport and potential adjustments to written protocols at the establishment.
- **There are three types of audit elements:** General elements, key welfare indicators (KWIs), and critical welfare indicators (CWIs).
- **There are two ways to fail an audit:**
 - Fail any of the critical welfare indicators (CWIs)
 - OR
 - Have a total score less than the established passing percentage specific to each audit.
- **The audit has a multi-type scoring system.** Elements may be scored as:
 - Yes/No based
 - Per animal observed based
 - Percentage observed based
 - Welfare indicators have up to four levels of achievement:
 - Excellent: the plant receives the maximum number of points for a given criterion.
 - Acceptable: the plant passes that criterion.
 - Unsatisfactory: the plant receives the minimum number of points for a given criterion.
 - Unacceptable: the plant fails that criterion.
- **Sampling.** Up to five trailers should be sampled. The total number of animals on board sampled trailers will be the sample size for falls, electric prod use, and condition of animal.

Scoring Small Plants

The auditor should try to schedule the audit around when trailers arrive and audit the trailers that arrive during the audit.

Point levels for set-up and unloading of trailer and wait time to unload are adjusted based on the number of trailers audited. The adjusted scores are denoted under each element where applicable.

The small plant adjustment is used when less than 100 animals are observed at unloading. Under this adjustment, results are expressed as the number of incidents rather than percentages. The adjustment applies only to the scoring of falls, and condition of the animal.



For bison scoring, the small plant adjustment is built into the bison scoring system since all bison plants are considered small plants, so additional adjustments will not be needed.

Element 1: Commitment to Animal Welfare – Plant Protocols and Training

These criteria audit the plant's commitment to animal welfare through protocols for transportation. It is only scored once during an audit. The following are explanations of each of the applicable points to be scored during the audit.

1. **Plant has an arrival management process that minimizes load wait time at the plant.**
 - a. Plant must have a process in place to minimize wait time at the plant.
 - i) A scheduling system that allows a specific number of loads to arrive within a given time-period works for most plants.
 - b. Plant should have the lairage space and personnel to meet the requirements of the loads they are accepting.
2. **Plant has documented employee training for animal receiving.**
 - a. The plant must have a training program and staff handling animals at unloading must be trained.
 - i) The plant must have documentation that employees responsible for receiving and handling animals at unloading are trained according to the company's animal welfare program.
 - ii) This training should include how to handle compromised or non-ambulatory animals arriving on trailers.
3. **Plant has an animal welfare protocol that is written for transporters including the use of handling tools.**
 - a. Plant must have a written animal welfare protocol for transporters hauling animals to their plants.
 - i) The protocol can be an in-house protocol, or
 - ii) a protocol that strictly references one or more of the following:
 - (1) Transportation Quality Assurance (TQA™),
 - (2) Beef Quality Assurance Transportation (BQAT),
 - (3) Canadian Livestock Transport certification program,
 - (4) A combination of recognized species-specific and/or in-house programs.
4. **Plant has a way to communicate their electric prod use protocol to truck drivers.**
 - a. This could be achieved through posting a sign, sending out a letter to truck drivers, etc.



Auditor Tip:

It is not necessary to review the substance of a plant's training program; it is only necessary to ensure that a program is in place and documented.

5. **Plant has a protocol that is written or widely understood and tools are available for handling compromised animals.**

- a. The plant must have a written protocol for handling compromised (i.e., non-ambulatory, fatigued) animals on trailers.
 - i) A non-ambulatory animal is an animal that cannot or will not rise from a recumbent position or that cannot walk. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - (1) Acutely split animals
 - (2) Animals that require hobbles to assist in the healing of injuries or to prevent further injury
 - ii) A fatigued animal is an animal that has temporarily lost the ability or the desire to walk but have a reasonable expectation to recover full locomotion with rest.
- b. This protocol may mention the tools necessary for handling compromised animals unless they are euthanized and are not moved according to the protocol.
- c. The protocol should also include instructions for when an animal is to be euthanized and the acceptable euthanasia methods, which should be based on industry guidance (e.g., Meat Institute Stunning Guide, American Veterinary Medical Association Euthanasia Guidelines, American Association of Bovine Practitioners Guidelines for Humane Euthanasia of Cattle, etc.).
- d. All plants must provide provisions for protection of animals, which can include, but not be limited to resting pens, protective boards/gates, etc.
-  e. U.S. plants must also provide equipment for employees or transporters to use in handling compromised animals humanely. This equipment can include, but not be limited to, sleds, stretchers, hand carts, and mechanized equipment.
 - i) In plants that euthanize non-ambulatory animals where they are found, this equipment may not be necessary, as long as the animal is not moved before it is euthanized.
-  f. Canadian plants are not allowed to move non-ambulatory animals that arrive at the plant or become non-ambulatory during unloading. The animal must be euthanized where it is found.

6. **Employees responsible for euthanasia have documented training.**

- a. Employees must be trained in the company's euthanasia protocol and the application of the mode of euthanasia.
- b. Documentation of training must be provided and employees should be able to demonstrate/articulate knowledge of training.

7. **Plant has a method for communicating back to the site of trailer loading.**
- a. Some examples of information communicated back include, but are not limited to:
- i) Excessive dead on arrivals (DOAs)
 - ii) Excessive non-ambulatory animals
 - iii) The condition of animals at arrival
 - iv) Overcrowding
 - v) Poor trailer conditions, such as:
 - (1) Lack of non-slip flooring
 - (2) Gates and doors that do not open freely and cannot be secured shut
 - (3) Internal ramps that do not function properly and cannot extend all the way to the floor
 - (4) Presence of sharp or protruding objects that can injure the animals
8. **Emergency plans are in place for animals in transit.**
- a. Plant must have a written protocol that outlines an action plan for loaded trailers in transit to the establishment. This action plan may include the following:
- i) Contacting transporters/dispatchers in route to keep their trailer moving until there is sufficient room at the plant to unload.
 - ii) Requesting that transporters provide a comfortable area for animals while transporters await further instructions on unloading.
 - iii) Requesting that crews postpone loading of animals at the source.
 - iv) Requesting that transporters unload animals at an alternate facility.

Scoring

Yes/No

5 points are available for each criterion for this element for a total of 40 points available.

Element 2: Facility and Handling Observations

These criteria audits the plant's commitment to animal welfare through preparedness for receiving animals. It is only scored once during an audit. The following are explanations of each of the applicable points to be scored during the audit.

1. **Employee(s) are available for receiving animals and follow the receiving protocol.**
 - a. Plant staff must be available to receive animals during plant receiving hours.
 - b. If transporters are scheduled to arrive during off-hours, a plant employee should be available by phone to assist transporters if necessary. The contact number should be made available to the transporters.
2. **The employee(s) who receive and unload the trailer follows the company animal welfare program.**
 - a. Make note if this is a plant employee or truck driver.
3. **Unloading area is in good repair.**
 - a. The unloading area must be maintained and in good repair to prevent injury to animals.
 - b. There must be no sharp edges, holes, or gaps where animals can get stuck or be directly injured.
4. **There is adequate lighting.**
 - a. The unloading area must have adequate lighting to observe animals during the unloading process.
5. **Flooring allows animals to maintain good footing in order to prevent falling.**
 - a. The unloading area must have flooring that allows animals good footing to prevent falling.
 - b. Floors should be maintained such that excessive buildup of manure, urine, ice, etc. does not cause animals to fall.
6. **Plant provides extreme temperature management tools (Example: water, fans, protection, continuous movement of trailers, etc.).**
 - a. Refer to the establishment's selected industry standard for verification of compliance.
 - i) Remember that extreme temperature management requirements for domestic livestock, particularly in cold weather, may not be the same as bison which are more cold-tolerant.
7. **Acceptable handling tools are available and utilized as needed.**
 - a. The plant must provide handling tools for plant employees and transporters to aid in the movement of animals off trailers.
 - b. Acceptable handling tools must be used correctly based on the company animal welfare program.
 - c. As part of internal training for plant employees and listed expectations of transporters, plants should have a procedure that describes acceptable handling tools and the proper use of handling tools.

8. **Acceptable euthanasia tools are available and stored properly.**
 - a. Acceptable euthanasia tools (*See Element 1: Question 5c.*) include:
 - i) Cattle & bison: firearms and penetrating captive bolt guns
 - ii) Swine and sheep: firearms, penetrating captive bolt, and handheld cardiac arrest electric stunners.
 - b. Appropriate euthanasia tools and an employee(s) trained to use them must be available at all times when animals are being received.
 - i) A prudent establishment will always have two appropriate euthanasia tools immediately available.
 - c. The equipment and ammunition must be stored in a dry place when not in use to prevent them from becoming ineffective.
9. **Maintenance records are kept for euthanasia equipment**
 - a. Documentation of cleaning and maintenance must be provided for each piece of equipment.
 - b. Cleaning frequency and preventative maintenance should occur per the manufacturer's recommendations and instructions.
 - c. Proper cleaning and maintenance of equipment is necessary for effective stunning.

Scoring

Yes/No

10 points are available for each criterion for this element for a total of 90 points available.

Element 3: Set-up and Loading of Trailer (KWI)

This section ensures animals are transported and unloaded safely.

1. **Compartments are gated.**

- a. Trailers with compartments must be gated as needed to protect animals from falling from deck to deck during transport.
- b. Gates not in use must be secured during transport.
- c. If the auditor is unable to see if all the gates are closed, obtain the information from the driver or from the plant employee(s) that are unloading the trailer.
- d. If all the gates are not closed, note the reason on the audit form (i.e., broken gate).



Auditor Tip:

Divider gates within the trailer compartments are not scored. Questions about the type of gating in the trailer should be discussed with the driver.

2. **Trailer is loaded at the proper density.**

- a. The auditor should visually observe the trailer for signs of overcrowding.

If any overcrowding indicators are present, the auditor may assess the loading density based on applicable industry standards to determine if the load was not in compliance.

- i) Signs of overcrowding for swine may include:

- (1) Piling
- (2) Excessive squealing
- (3) Open mouth breathing
- (4) Excessive number of fatigued animals
- (5) Injured animals
- (6) Excessive dead on arrival (DOA)
- (7) Excessive euthanized on arrival (EOA).

- ii) Signs of overcrowding for cattle and sheep may include:

- (1) Vocalization
- (2) Animals not settled
- (3) Animals standing on each other
- (4) Open mouth breathing
- (5) Excessive number of fatigued animals
- (6) Injured animals
- (7) Dead on arrival (DOA)
- (8) Euthanized on arrival (EOA).

- b. Gates should close easily without squeezing animals.

3. **Incompatible animals are segregated when required.**
 - a. Segregation prevents more aggressive animals from injuring other animals in the trailer.
 - i) Examples of appropriate segregation include keeping aggressive, intact males separate from females and separating significantly larger animals from smaller ones.
 - b. Identified incompatible bison should be segregated at loading.
 - i)  Bison may show signs of aggression towards one another, though it may not be necessary to separate them to avoid injury.
 - ii) If raised together, intact bison males may not need to be separated on the trailer.
4. **Trailer is properly aligned with the unloading area to prevent animals from escaping or becoming injured.**
 - a. Trailers must be aligned square and flush with the unloading dock/ramp.
 - b. Plants need to ensure that there are minimal gaps between the dock/ramp and the bottom of the trailer exit.
 - i) If the plant utilizes a transition piece to fill the gap and align the trailer, it is acceptable.
 - c. Plants need to ensure that there are minimal gaps between the back end of the trailer and the side walls of the unloading area.
 - d. If holes and gaps are unavoidable due to unloading area design in relation to the trailer design, they must not be large enough to allow an animal's legs or feet to get caught or injured or for animals to become wedged or escape.

Scoring

- Compartments are gated when needed | 5 pts
- Trailer is loaded at the proper density | 5 pts
- Incompatible animals are segregated when required | 10 pts
- Trailer is properly aligned | 10 pts

This element is scored by averaging the points earned for each of the trailer criterion (Compartments are gated, loaded at proper density, animals are segregated when required, and proper alignment).

Example: 5 trailers were audited for a possible average of 30 points (Add the points earned for all 5 trailers and divide by 5).

#1 = 20 points; #2 = 25 points; #3 = 30 points; #4 = 25 points; #5 = 30 points

Total Score = $130 \div 5 = 26$ pts

- Excellent: 30 average points scored
- Acceptable:
 - » 1 or 2 trailers sampled | 20 or more average points scored
 - » 3 or more trailers sampled | 25 or more average points scored
- Unacceptable:
 - » 1 or 2 trailers sampled | less than 20 average points or more scored
 - » 3 or more trailers sampled | less than 25 average points or more scored

Element 4: Wait Time to Unload (KWI)

This element audits the timeliness of load arrivals and the length of time loads spend waiting to unload.

1) Wait time to unload.

Scoring

- To score wait time to unload for domestic livestock, the wait time begins as soon as the trailer arrives at the plant premises and stops when the first animal walks off the trailer.
- Record the arrival time of the load, this can be obtained from a plant employee.
- The plant will receive the full 40 points if unloading started within 60 minutes of the load's arrival at the plant.
- Points will then be deducted for each 30-minute interval past the 60 minutes it takes to start unloading.
- Total time to unload (from when the first animal steps off the trailer until the last animal walks off) will be noted separately in the notes but not scored.
- All domestic livestock should be unloaded within 60 minutes.



Bison may take an extended period of time to come off the trailer. Wait time begins as soon as the trailer arrives at the plant premises and stops when the trailer door is opened to allow the animals to walk off the trailer.

Plant begins unloading within:

- 60 minutes of arrival
- 61 – 90 minutes of arrival
- 91 – 120 minutes of arrival
- ≥ 120 minutes of arrival (with reason)
- ≥ 120 minutes of arrival (without reason)

Points Received:

- 40 points
- 30 points
- 20 points
- 10 points
- 0 points

If any wait time to unload exceeds 90 minutes, this should be noted on the audit form.

Example: 5 trailers were audited for a possible average of 40 points (Add the points earned for all 5 trailers and divide by 5).

#1 = 40 points; #2 = 40 points; #3 = 30 points; #4 = 40 points; #5 = 30 points

Total Score = $180 \div 5 = 36$ pts

- Excellent: 40 average points scored
- Acceptable:
 - » 1 or 2 trailers sampled | 30 or more average points scored
 - » 3 or more trailers sampled | 35 or more average points scored
- Unacceptable:
 - » 1 or 2 trailers sampled | less than 30 average points or more scored
 - » 3 or more trailers sampled | less than 35 average points or more scored

Element 5: Falls (KWI)

This element audits the number of animals that fall at unloading after the animal has completely exited the trailer.

1. Falls are to be scored in the unloading area (*i.e.*, up to the exit gate of the unloading alley/receiving pen or to the gate of the first alley off the trailer) only after all four limbs are off the trailer and on the unloading ramp or dock.
 - a. A fall occurs when an animal loses an upright position suddenly in which a part of the body other than the limbs touches the ground.
 - b. Falls are counted on a per animal basis. If the same animal falls multiple times, it is only counted as one animal falling.
 - c. When auditing domestic livestock all falls are counted, regardless of the cause.
2.  Bison that fall due to temperament should not be counted. Only falls as a result of active handling should be counted.

Scoring

The number of animals that fell are tallied together for all loads. The total is then divided by the total number of animals audited for all trailers.

Cattle, Swine, and Sheep

- Excellent: 0.0% of animals falling | 40 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 – 1.0% of animals falling | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 1.1 – 3.0% of animals falling | 20 points
- Unacceptable: > 3.0% of animals falling | 0 points

Bison

- Excellent: 0 animals falling | 40 points
- Acceptable: 1 – 2 animal(s) falling | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 3 animals falling | 20 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 4 animals falling | 0 points

Small Plant Adjustment

- Excellent: 0 animals falling | 40 points
- Acceptable: 1 animal falling | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 2 animals falling | 20 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 3 animals falling | 0 points

The temperament of the animals may be noted to provide additional information and context on unloading.

Element 6: Electric Prod Use (CWI)

This element audits electric prod use on animals at unloading after the animal has completely exited the trailer.

1. Electric prod use is to be scored in the unloading area (i.e., up to the exit gate of the unloading alley/receiving pen or to the gate of the first alley off the trailer) only after all four of the animal's limbs are on the unloading ramp or dock.
2. Electric prod use on the trailer is not scored because the auditor cannot see what is happening inside the trailer to evaluate if the electric prod touches the animal.
3. Electric prods should never be applied to a sensitive area (animal's mouth, eyes, ears, nose, anus, vulva, testicles, or belly).
 - a. Applying an electric prod to a sensitive area of any animal is considered a **willful act of abuse**.



Auditor Tip:
Touching an animal with a prod is scored whether the prod is energized or not.

Scoring

Count the number of animals touched with an electric prod.

The total number of animals touched is then divided by the total number of animals audited for all trailers.

Cattle, Swine, and Bison

- Excellent: 0.0% electric prod use | 50 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 - 10.0% electric prod use | 40 points
- Unacceptable: > 10.0% electric prod use | 0 points

Sheep

- Excellent: 0.0% electric prod use | 50 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 - 5.0% electric prod use | 40 points
- Unacceptable: > 5.0% electric prod use | 0 points

 Electric prod use on sheep is prohibited.

Element 7: Condition of Animal (KWI)

This element audits the condition of animals at arrival, identifying any mobility or welfare concerns that deem the animal compromised.

1. A compromised animal is an animal with reduced capacity to withstand transportation. Some compromised animals can be transported with special provisions to prevent undue suffering. Animals that are compromised are more likely to become fatigued, injured, non-ambulatory, or die during transport. Reference specific country regulations on the definition of compromised for the appropriate species, where applicable.
 - b. **Non-ambulatory.** A non-ambulatory animal is an animal that cannot or will not rise from a recumbent position or that cannot walk. This includes, but is not limited to, acutely split animals and animals that require hobbles to assist in the healing of injuries or to prevent further injury.
 - c. **Severe injuries/conditions:** Severe injuries in swine include broken legs, bleeding gashes, deep visible cuts, and prolapses (larger than a softball or dark in color and necrotic). Severe injuries in cattle, bison, and sheep include broken legs, bleeding gashes, deep visible cuts, necrotic prolapses, and severe cancer eye. For sheep, exclude superficial shearing cuts in the skin layer.
 - d. **Severely lame:** Severely lame animals are animals that appear to be experiencing significant pain, especially in the hoof or leg, resulting in the animal limping or walking with extreme difficulty. A severely lame animal appears unlikely to make it through the slaughter process without experiencing extreme discomfort and distress.
 - e. **Delivered/delivering:** This includes all animals that have delivered or are in the process of delivering on the trailer.
 - f. **Other:**
 - i) *Fatigued:* Fatigued animals that have temporarily lost the ability or the desire to walk but have a reasonable expectation to recover full locomotion with rest. Animals may become fatigued due to heat stress, among other potential reasons.
 - ii) *Heat Stress:* Animals experiencing heat stress will exhibit open mouthed panting and may be reluctant to move.
 - iii) *Frostbite (SWINE ONLY):* Visible signs of frostbite include purple/dark pink patches on the skin, which is especially apparent on light colored swine. Clearly visible signs should be scored. Frostbite will only occur during extreme cold temperatures at some point during transport.

If animals are heat stressed or frost bitten a note should be made of whether the truck was following plant protocol or industry best practices for bedding and boarding.



Unfit for transport: prolapse



Unfit for transport: cancer eye



Unfit for transport: frostbite

Scoring

All compromised animals on the trailer at arrival are tallied together for all loads. The total is then divided by the total number of animals audited.

Swine Example: 5 trailers are audited, with a total of 925 total swine observed.

of compromised animals

Trailer #1 = 3 swine;

Trailer #2 = 1 swine;

Trailer #3 = 6 swine;

Trailer #4 = 2 swine;

Trailer #5 = 4 swine

Total Swine = 16 $16 \div 925 = 0.017$ or $(0.017 \times 100) = 1.7\%$

Swine:

- Excellent: $\leq 1.0\%$ of animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 1.1 - 3.0% of animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: $> 3.0\%$ of animals | 0 points

Cattle/sheep:

- Excellent: $\leq 1.0\%$ of animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 1.1 - 2.0% of animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: $> 2.0\%$ of animals | 0 points

Bison:

Bison are more likely to become injured in transport than domestic livestock.

Therefore scoring is as follows

- Excellent: 0 animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 1 - 2 animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 3 animals | 0 points.

Small Plant Adjustment

- Excellent: 0 animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 1 animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 2 animals | 0 points

2. **Poor udder condition and severely poor body condition:** Cattle with poor udder condition and all animals with severely poor body condition are tallied separately from the compromised conditions above.
- a. **Poor udder condition (cattle only):** Poor udder condition includes any animal that displays a severely engorged/swollen/distended udder that is interfering with the animal's ability to walk, pushing out against the rear legs causing difficulty of movement, and/or causing obvious pain/distress to the cow.
- b. **Severely poor body condition:** For the purpose of this audit, animals are considered in severely poor body condition if they have a **body condition score of 1** according to their respective body condition scoring guide.
- i) **Swine** – Swine with severely poor body condition will be extremely narrow in the loin, have a hollow flank area, and their ribs and backbones will be easily visible.
- 1) Swine body condition scoring guide: <https://www.cpc-ccp.com/uploads/userfiles/files/ACA-Appendix-10.pdf>
- ii) **Cattle and Sheep** – Cattle and sheep with severely poor body condition will be extremely thin, with their ribs and backbones easily visible. Such animals would be described as extremely thin if there is no fat on the rib or in the brisket and the backbone is easily visible, with some muscle depletion evident through the hind quarter. The extremely thin attributes of these animals may sometimes compromise their mobility, cause severe weakness, and lead to debilitation.
- 1) Cattle body condition scoring guide: <https://www.meatinstitute.org/sites/default/files/documents/Body%20Condition%20Scoring%20Guide.pdf>
- 2) Sheep body condition scoring guide: <https://files.ontario.ca/omafra-sheep-body-condition-scoring-22-061-en-2023-03-29.pdf>

Scoring

All animals on the trailer at arrival with severely poor body condition and those with poor udder condition are tallied together for all loads. The total is then divided by the total number of animals audited for all trailers.

Swine:

with severely poor body condition

- Excellent: ≤ 3.0% of animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 3.1 – 6.0% of animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: > 6.0% of animals | 0 points

Cattle

with severely poor body condition and/or poor udder condition

- Excellent: ≤ 2.5% of animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 2.6 – 5.0% of animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: > 5.0% of animals | 0 points

Sheep:

with severely poor body condition

- Excellent: $\leq 2.5\%$ of animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 2.6 – 5.0% of animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: $> 5.0\%$ of animals | 0 points

Bison:

with severely poor body condition

- Excellent: < 2 animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 2 – 3 animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 4 animals | 0 points

Small Plant Adjustment

Cattle, Swine, and Sheep with severely poor body condition

- Excellent: < 2 animals | 20 points
- Acceptable: 2 – 3 animals | 15 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 4 animals | 0 points



Unfit for transport: Cow in severely poor body condition.



Unfit for transport: Pig in severely poor body condition.

Element 8: Euthanasia (CWI)

This element audits the plant's promptness of conducting euthanasia of animals that require euthanasia.

1. Animals observed during the audit that require euthanasia, such as severely injured/severely lame animals, must be promptly euthanized according to plant protocol.
 - a. Promptly means as soon as it can be safely done, considering all of the relevant facts, per plant program, with the goal of minimizing pain and suffering.

Scoring

- Not Applicable: If no animals are observed that require euthanasia, the element will be scored as not applicable (N/A)
 - » Remove 50 points from the total points possible for the audit.
- Excellent: If any animal(s) are observed that require euthanasia, and they were promptly euthanized according to plant protocol | 50 points
- Unacceptable: If any animal(s) are observed that require euthanasia, and they were **not** promptly euthanized according to plant protocol | 0 points

Element 9: Willful Acts of Abuse/Egregious Acts (CWI)

This element audits for the observation of any willful acts of abuse/egregious acts.

1. Any willful act of abuse/egregious act is grounds for automatic audit failure, regardless of whether the act is observed within the area being audited.
 - a. Willful/egregious acts of abuse include, but are not limited to:
 - i) **Dragging or hoisting** a conscious animal, non-ambulatory or otherwise
 - ii) **Making cuts or skinning** conscious animals
 - iii) **Intentionally prodding sensitive parts** of the animal such as the animal's mouth, eyes, ears, nose, anus, vulva, testicles, or belly
 - iv) **Deliberate slamming** of gates on animals
 - 1)  Note: Bison may run into a pen and immediately turn around, causing a human safety hazard where the handler needs to quickly close a gate. Quickly closing a gate to prevent a human safety hazard, so long as it is not deliberately slammed on the animals is acceptable.
 - v) **Intentional driving of ambulatory animals** on top of one another either manually or with direct contact with motorized equipment
 - vi) **Driving animals off high ledges**, platforms, or off a truck without a ramp
 - 1) driving market weight or adult animals off a low stock trailer is acceptable
 - vii) **Beating or excessive prodding of animals**
 - viii) **Animals frozen** to the floor or sides of the trailer
 - ix) **Leaving disabled animals** exposed to adverse climate conditions while awaiting disposition
 - x) **Lifting sheep by the wool or throwing a sheep**
 - xi) **Otherwise causing unnecessary pain and suffering** to animals, including situations on trucks

SLAUGHTER AUDIT GUIDANCE

This section outlines audit elements and their criteria and details how to audit animal handling after unloading and through the stunning of domestic livestock at slaughter facilities.

Auditor Instructions and Information

It is the responsibility of third-party auditors to:

- Arrange with plant management the best time to perform the audit to ensure the plant will be slaughtering animals and a representative audit sample can be acquired.
- Establish with plant management when they would like to review protocols and training and conduct facility and animal handling observations.
- Establish with plant management the location of handling and stunning areas. Establish a safe place to stand where the auditor can observe what they are auditing, but also not impede the process or cause a safety issue for themselves or others. This is particularly important around the lead up to the restrainer and in the stunning area.
- Stunning criteria vary by the stunning method, and religious slaughter and small plant adjustments alter some scoring.
- Scoring for the elements of falls, electric prod use, vocalization, stunning, and insensibility are performed on a per animal basis. For example, document the number of animals that fall. If an auditor observes multiple falls from one animal, it is only counted once on the audit sheet.
- Observation of an egregious act of abuse at any point during the audit always results in a failed audit.

Completing the Slaughter Audit Forms

Weather. Note the weather conditions on the day of the audit as this could impact animal behavior, create slippery conditions, and impact water access.

Line Speed. Note the line speed to indicate whether it is over or under 100 head per hour. If the line speed is under 100 head per hour, apply the small plant adjustment. Reference the *"Small Plant Adjustment in Slaughter Audit Scoring"* on pg. 31.

Stunner Type. Note the type of stunner whether it be electrical stunning, penetrating or nonpenetrating captive bolt, CO₂, or firearm.

Audit Scoring

This audit generally utilizes a sample size of 100 animals at facilities that slaughter at least 100 animals per hour.¹

- **Sampling:** In each area, the 100 head sample should be selected on a random basis by time, a given number of head per lot, or over a given amount of time to ensure that a broad sample is included.
- **Per Animal:** Scoring for the element of falls, electric prod use, vocalization, stunning, and insensibility are performed on a per animal basis. For example, if an auditor observes multiple falls from one animal, it is only counted as one on the audit sheet.
- **There are three types of audit element:** General element, key welfare indicators (KWIs), and critical welfare indicators (CWIs).
- **There are two ways to fail an audit:**
 - Fail any of the critical welfare indicators (CWIs)
OR
 - Have a total score less than the established passing percentage specific to each audit.
- **The audit has a multi-type scoring system.** Elements may be scored as:
 - Yes/No based
 - Per animal observed based
 - Percentage observed based
 - Welfare indicators have up to five levels of achievement:
 - Excellent: the plant receives the maximum number of points for a given criterion.
 - Good: the plant passes that criterion and earns more points than acceptable, but not as many as excellent.
 - Acceptable: the plant passes that criterion.
 - Unsatisfactory: the plant receives the minimum number of points for a given criterion.
 - Unacceptable: the plant fails that criterion



Auditor Tip:

If you have already observed 100 animals to score prod use and you see a prod used in another area, you do not count it because your prod scoring has been completed.

¹This sample size was set based on previous surveys, non-normalcy of the data associated with the attributes listed in the criteria, and practicality of use. Numerous peer-reviewed surveys conducted on animal welfare attributes in slaughter facilities use the 100-head sample (Grandin, 1997; Grandin 1998a; Grandin, 2000; and Grandin, 2012). Additionally, calculations to determine sample size needed to detect an attribute rely on numerous assumptions, including independence between observations and a normal distribution of the data. Due to the nature of an audit, observations will not be independent, as animals that flow through a slaughter facility will likely be part of the same group or groups of animals. Additionally, a normal distribution of the data for numerous criteria is not observed. For example, the data collected for assessing Criterion 4 in the Slaughter Audit, "Falls," is not normal, because such criteria are observed to be very frequent or non-existent. This indicates a more binomial distribution of the data would likely be applicable. If different assumptions must be made to determine the sample size for each attribute, this would result in an audit that requires, for example, 281 samples for one attribute, and only 70 for another. Auditing a different number of animals for each criterion is not practical, nor is it easily-understood. Therefore, based upon previous work, differences in the assumptions that must be made when calculating sample size for each attribute, and practicality of use, the 100-head sample size is appropriate.

Scoring of Small Plants

The small plant adjustment is used for plants slaughtering fewer than 100 head per hour. Under this adjustment, the auditor evaluates one hour of production, with results expressed as the number of incidents rather than percentages. The adjustment applies only to the scoring of falls, vocalizations, and stunning. The adjusted scores are denoted under each element where applicable.



For bison scoring, the small plant adjustment is built into the bison scoring system since all bison plants are considered small plants.

Scoring of Religious Slaughter

Plants that conduct religious slaughter should use the same scoring procedures except for:

- Stunning – stunning is not scored in religious slaughter plants that do not apply a pre-cut stun.
 - If a pre-cut stun is applied, stunning is scored the same as conventional.
- Vocalizations – the scoring levels for cattle and bison vocalizations are adjusted for religious slaughter or conventional plants utilizing a head holder.

The following are considered egregious acts specific to religious slaughter that would result in a failed audit:

- The use of clamping boxes or trip floor boxes.
- An animal is not promptly stunned if collapse (loss of posture) and eye rollback does not occur within a set amount of time. The time should be determined by the plant based on industry best practices or a legislative limit.

Audit Approaches and Planning

Auditors should follow the rule of thirds when scoring animal handling at slaughter. For example, identify a place in each of the following areas to observe animals for electric prod use and falls and divide the number of animals to audit in each area as evenly as possible:

- Drive alley (i.e., 33 animals)
- Crowd tub (i.e., 34 animals)
- Single-file chute (i.e., 33 animals)

Electric prod use, falls, insensibility, and vocalizations are done on a per animal basis and not per event basis. If a steer is touched with an electric prod in the crowd tub and again in the single-file chute, it only counts as one electric prod use. A good practice to avoid scoring a single animal more than once would be to make your observations backwards through the process (i.e., *single-file chute, crowd tub, drive alley*).

Observations in these three areas should add up to the total number of animals necessary to complete the audit.

If you have already observed 100 animals and you see an auditable event in another area, you do not count it since your scoring has been completed.

In many plants, it is possible to score multiple elements at a time. For example, an auditor may be able to stand in one location and score multiple elements at once. This may be necessary in small plants where the auditor may not have the opportunity to observe a sufficient number of animals for each element if audited separately.

Auditors should consult with plant personnel when determining where they may safely stand that allows them an unobstructed view in order to observe multiple criterion, that will not impede handling or other plant operations.

Element 1: Commitment to Animal Welfare – Plant Protocols and Training

A key factor in establishing and maintaining optimal animal handling and stunning in plants is a clearly communicated management commitment to an animal handling program. All levels of management must play an active role in the animal welfare program to demonstrate a culture of animal care. This element audits the plant's management commitment to animal welfare through documented protocols, internal audits, and personnel training. It is only scored once during an audit. The following are explanations of each of the applicable elements to be scored during the audit:

1. **Plant has a documented training program or uses an outside training program for its employees on the principles of good animal handling.**
 - a. This program should include training on condition of animals, holding, and moving the animals up to the stunning area.
 - b. The program should cover onboarding/new hire and annual employee training.
2. **Plant has a protocol that is written or widely understood for handling compromised animals.**
 - a. A written protocol for compromised animals should address immobile and fatigued animals that are non-ambulatory.
 - i) This may mention the tools necessary for handling non-ambulatory animals unless they are euthanized and are not moved according to the protocol.
 - b. The plant protocol should also include instructions for when an animal is to be euthanized and the euthanasia methods, which should be based on industry guidance (e.g., Meat Institute Stunning Guide, American Veterinary Medical Association Euthanasia Guidelines, American Association of Bovine Practitioners Guidelines for Humane Euthanasia of Cattle, etc.).
 - c. All plants must provide provisions for protection of animals, which can include, but not be limited to resting pens, protective boards/gates, etc.
3. **Employees are trained in handling compromised animals.**
 - a. This training should be based on the facility protocol for handling compromised animals.
 - b. The training should provide instruction on whether non-ambulatory animals may be moved and should include:
 - i) how to safely and properly use tools to move the animal, or
 - ii) how to euthanize the animal and confirm insensibility.
4. **Plant performs internal audits at least weekly and implements corrective actions as needed.**
 - a. Ongoing monitoring of animal welfare outcomes must be completed through internal audits.
 - b. Different parts of the audit may be divided up and occur at different times throughout the week so long as outcomes are measured weekly.
 - c. Corrective actions should be implemented as appropriate for critical issues such as an egregious act.

5. **An emergency management protocol for animals is in place.**
 - a. A plan must be in place with consideration to species specific needs and climate conditions of the plant location for short-term and long-term breakdowns, weather events, scheduling issues, etc.
 - i) In the event of a disruption to normal operations, like downtime at the plant, the flow of animals may be disrupted and necessitate keeping animals in drive alleys or unloading docks, rather than returning animals to holding pens or back to the farm of origin.
6. **The emergency management protocol includes instructions on when/how water will be provided to animals in drive alleys/unloading docks and how feed will be provided if animals are held longer than 24 hours.**
 - a. Plans must be in place to provide access to water if animals are held in areas not typically equipped for holding animals and provide appropriate feedstuffs to animals held over 24 hours in the event of an emergency situation.
 - i) Animals require water access during holding regardless of unforeseen emergency conditions.
7. **Employees inspect the facility weekly and document for repair any damage or sharp protrusions that may injure animals.**
 - a. These can include broken gates, sharp edges, and broken concrete.
8. **Plant has a protocol for stunning equipment maintenance.**
 - a. Documentation of cleaning and maintenance must be provided for each piece of equipment.
 - b. Cleaning frequency and preventative maintenance should occur per the manufacturer's recommendations and instructions.
 - c. The equipment and any ammunition must be stored properly when not in use.
9. **Special training is provided to stunner operators to ensure proper equipment use and stunning efficacy.**
 - a. Employees must be trained in the company's stunning methods.
 - b. Documentation of training must be provided and employees should be able to demonstrate/articulate knowledge of training.
 - c. Training should include the proper anatomical location to stun the animals, training for different species that the stunner operator may be asked to stun, and training on safe use of stunning equipment.
10. **A written protocol on how to handle a sensible animal on the bleed rail is in place and employees are trained on the procedure.**
 - a. A written protocol must be in place for how to identify and stun a sensible animal on the bleed rail along with employee training on how to operate stunning equipment

Scoring

Yes/No

5 points are available for each criterion for this element for a total of 50 points available.

Element 2: Facility and Handling Observations

This element audits the plant's commitment to animal welfare through facility and handling observations. It is only scored once during an audit. The following are explanations of each of the applicable criterion to be scored during the audit.

1. **Plant has flooring that allows animals to maintain good footing in order to prevent falls.**
 - a. This includes areas such as drive alleys, crowd pens or bud boxes, single file alleys, and knock box.
2. **Animals flow through the crowd pen or bud box with stress and discomfort minimized.**
 - a. An overcrowded crowd pen or bud box can result in overuse of driving aids. The appropriate number of animals in the crowd pen or bud box changes from one facility to the next and as animals flow through, there may be more or less animals in the crowd pen or bud box at any given time.
 - b. Auditors should assess the outcome, not a specific number or percentage
 - i) The crowd pen or bud box should not be filled to the point that animals are not flowing and are showing signs of distress, such as vocalization.
 - c. Animal temperament can influence behavior in the crowd pen or bud box, but regardless of temperament, handlers can work to minimize stress and discomfort.
3. **Non-electric devices are the primary tool(s) used to move animals.**
 - a. Use of electric prods should be on a limited basis and must not be the primary handling tool. Other handling tools such as flags, rattle paddles, sorting boards, etc., should be the primary tools used.
4. **Holding pens are not overcrowded.**
 - a. First, visually assess all holding pens. If a pen appears to be overcrowded, the auditor has two options to evaluate further to make a determination.
 - i) Option 1: The auditor should ask if animals are going to be held overnight and if so, assess if they have adequate room to lie down. If the animals have room to lie down, the pen is not overcrowded.
 - ii) Option 2: The auditor should ask if the establishment uses pen density guidance based on industry guidance (e.g. Meat Institute Guidelines, Swine Care Handbook, etc.). If the plant is adhering to that guidance, the pen is not overcrowded.
 - b. Overcrowding Determination: If the pen appears to be overcrowded and the auditor further investigates and finds that the animals do not have room to lie down and will be kept overnight or that the establishment is not adhering to their pen density guidance (if applicable), the pen is overcrowded.
5. **Documentation that CO₂ levels or amperage/voltage are regularly monitored.**
 - a. For swine or sheep, if electrical stunning is used, documentation that amperage/voltage of the stunner is being monitored regularly.
 - b. For swine, if CO₂ stunning is used, documentation is available that CO₂ levels are monitored.

Scoring

Yes/No

10 points are available for each criterion for this element for a total of 50 points available for swine and sheep. Only 40 points for cattle and bison.

Element 3: Access to Water (CWI)

This element audits animals access to water.

1. All animals must have access to clean water in holding pens.
 - a. Each pen must have a suitable and accessible water source.

Scoring

Yes/No | 50 points

Element 4: Falls (KWI)

This element audits the number of animals that fall during active handling through the facilities.

1. All areas where animals walk must have non-slip flooring. Animals should be observed during active handling from the crowd pen to the stunning chute or the gate where animals enter the CO₂ gondolas.
 - a. A fall occurs when an animal loses an upright position suddenly in which a part of the body other than the limbs touches the ground.
 - b. Falls are counted on a per animal basis. If the same animal falls multiple times, it is only scored as one animal falling.
 - c. All animals that fall in a stun box or restrainer before stunning or religious slaughter are counted.
 - d. When auditing domestic livestock, all falls are counted, regardless of the cause.



Auditor Tip:
For all species, falls caused by powered gates are counted.



Bison that fall due to temperament should not be counted. Only falls as a result of active handling should be counted.

Note: Because survey results indicate that the greatest falling problems occur in high traffic areas such as the drive alley near the crowd pen and the stunning chute, scoring should be done in such high traffic areas (Grandin, 1998).

Scoring

Score in the areas where the animals are being actively handled. Falls caused by powered gates are counted. Score a minimum of 100 animals in large plants for all species.

Cattle, Swine, Sheep

- Excellent: 0.0% of animals falling | 40 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 – 1.0% of animals falling | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 1.1 – 3.0% of animals falling | 20 points
- Unacceptable: > 3.0% of animals falling | 0 points

Bison

- Excellent: 0 animals falling | 40 points
- Acceptable: 1 – 2 animal(s) falling | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 3 animals falling | 20 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 4 animals falling | 0 points

Small Plant Adjustment

- Excellent: 0 animals falling | 40 points
- Acceptable: 1 animal falling | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 2 animals falling | 20 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 3 animals falling | 0 points

Element 5: Electric Prod Use (CWI)

This element audits electric prod use at the plant, separate from unloading.

1. Touching an animal with an electric prod is scored whether the prod is energized or not. Auditors should count the number of animals touched with an electric prod. Electric prod use should be monitored anywhere that prods are being used – the single file alleyway and entrance to the restrainer are common locations.
2. Electric prods must never be applied to a sensitive area (animal's mouth, eyes, ears, nose, anus, vulva, testicles, or belly). Applying a prod to a sensitive area of any animal is considered a willful act of abuse.

Things to remember:

- A vibrating prod or air prod is not the same as an electric prod and should not be scored.
- The number of animals prodded is counted, not the number of times a prod is applied.
- Reducing the use of electric prods will improve animal welfare. Using electric prods significantly raises heart rate, open mouth breathing and many other physiological measures.

Scoring

Cattle, Bison

- Excellent: ≤ 5.0% electric prod use | 50 points
- Acceptable: 5.1 – 15.0% electric prod use | 45 points
- Unsatisfactory: 15.1 – 25.0% electric prod use | 40 points
- Unacceptable: > 25.0% electric prod use | 0 points

Electric or CO₂ Stunning Systems Where Swine:

Enter in Single File

- Excellent: ≤ 5.0% electric prod use | 50 points
- Acceptable: 5.1 – 15.0% electric prod use | 45 points
- Unsatisfactory: 15.1 – 25.0% electric prod use | 40 points
- Unacceptable: > 25.0% electric prod use | 0 points

Enter in Groups

- Excellent: 0.0% electric prod use | 50 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 – 2.5% electric prod use | 45 points
- Unsatisfactory: 2.6 – 5.0% electric prod use | 40 points
- Unacceptable: > 5.0% electric prod use | 0 points

Sheep

- Excellent: 0.0% electric prod use | 50 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 – 2.5% electric prod use | 45 points
- Unsatisfactory: 2.6 – 5.0% electric prod use | 40 points
- Unacceptable: > 5.0% electric prod use | 0 points



Electric prods are not allowed to be used on sheep in Canada.

Element 6: Vocalization (KWI)

This element audits vocalization of animals within the restrainer.

Vocalization

1. Vocalization can be an indicator of stress in animals and is used in this audit to measure stress during restraint for stunning and/or slaughter.
 - a. Vocalization is scored on a per animal basis.
 - i) If an animal vocalizes more than once, it is only counted as one on the audit sheet.
 - ii) Auditors should count the number of animals that vocalize in the restrainer or knock box.
 - b. Vocalizations should only be scored up until an effective stun is applied.
 - c. You must be able to see the animal to count the vocalization.
 - d. Vocalizations in the yards are not scored because animals will often vocalize to each other.

Guidance to the auditor:

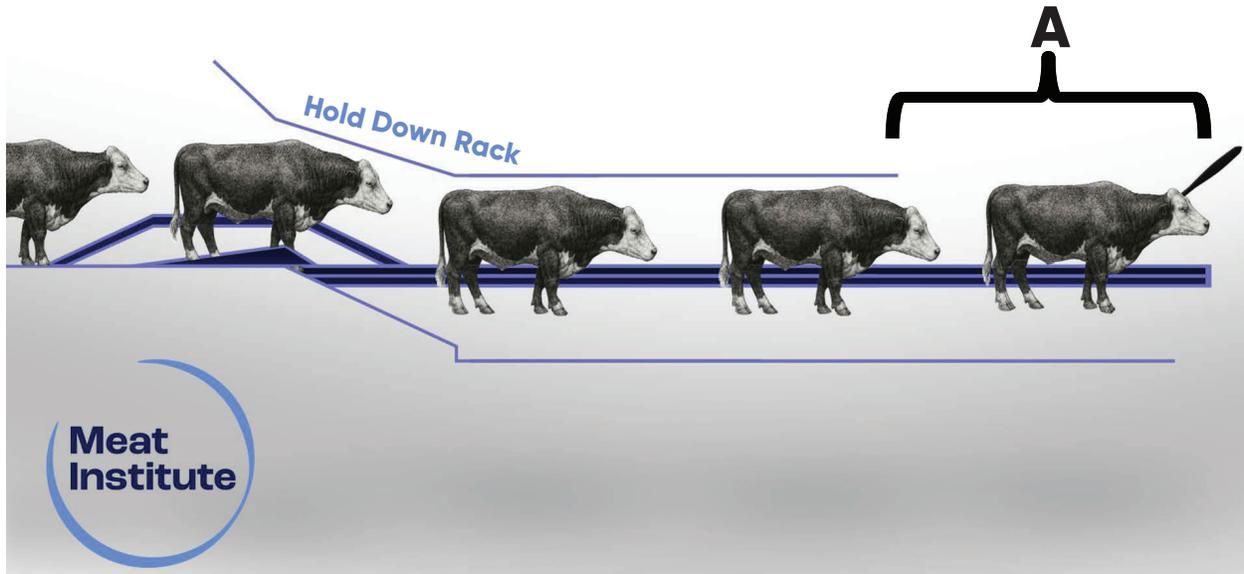
- If an auditor hears vocalization(s) of concern, they may investigate the cause. Additionally, the auditor may record notes on vocalizations of concern that they were not able to witness.
- If an animal vocalizes in the lead up, the auditor may investigate to determine the root cause (*i.e., was the animal simply communicating or was the animal in pain or distress*).
- If an animal vocalizes when a handling tool other than an electric prod was utilized, the auditor may make a note in their report. Additionally, the auditor should investigate whether the cause for the vocalization, as a result of the handling tool use, was an egregious act (e.g., prodding an animal with an air wand).
- Finally, if an animal vocalizes as the result of electric prod use, that is captured through the “electric prod use” element.
 - Vocalizations may be a result of electric prod use to encourage animals to enter the restrainer. These vocalizations are not counted because the use of the electric prod will be captured

The following diagrams are designed to help demonstrate when an auditor would likely be able to see the animal in order to score vocalization.

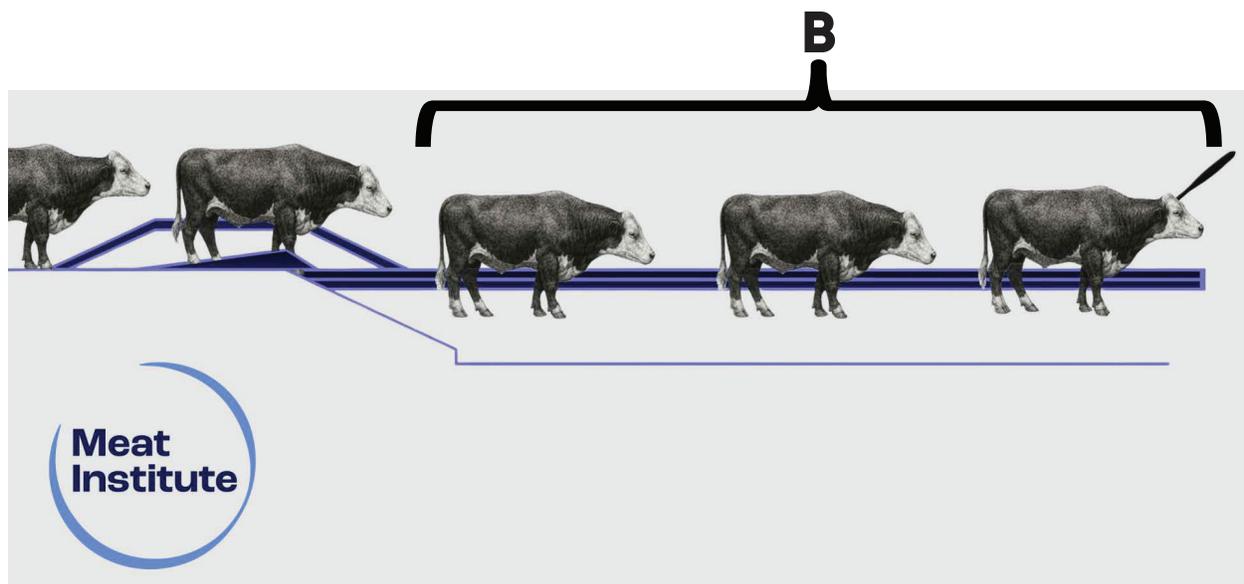
Cattle and Bison

Cattle and bison vocalization should be audited as follows:

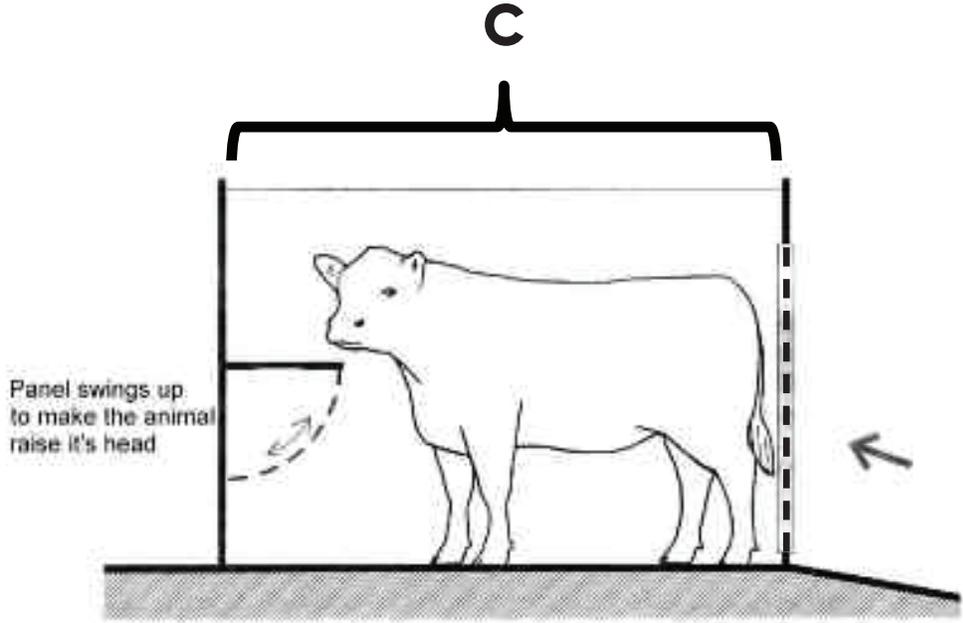
Restrainer systems: Auditors are to only score vocalizations when the view of the animal's head is unobstructed and can clearly be identified as the animal that is vocalizing. In the graphic below, **Section A** identifies where an auditor will score vocalizations because the view of the animal's head is unobstructed.



If view of the animal's head is unobstructed throughout the entirety of the restrainer system, the entire restrainer system will be audited for vocalizations, but only once the entire posterior portion of the animal is completely within the restrainer system. In the graphic below, **Section B** identifies where an auditor will score vocalizations because the view of the animal's head is unobstructed



Knock Box systems: **Section C** indicates where to score vocalizations once the entirety of the animal is past the tail gate (dashed line) and inside the knock box



Religious Slaughter/Head Holders

When evaluating religious slaughter/head holder, vocalizations are only scored once the animal is entirely in the restrainer or stun box. Cattle vocalization should be $\leq 5\%$. A slightly higher vocalization percentage is considered acceptable because the animal must be held longer in the restraint device compared to conventional slaughter.

Swine

- It is impossible to count individual vocalizations in a group of swine, therefore, vocalization scoring of swine can only be conducted in the restrainer or stun box.
- Do not score vocalization in group CO₂ stunning systems.
- Do not score vocalizations that can be attributed to “hot-wanding” or vocalizations that appear unprovoked by humans or by equipment.
- It is important to count squeals only and not grunts in swine.
 - A squeal is an extended sound produced with an open mouth, indicating excitement, fear, or pain.
 - Vocalizations that occur when swine root under each other or jump on top of each other is counted if provoked by handling.
- Score swine squeals after the most posterior part of the hind end is past the restrainer entrance. The definition of the restrainer entrance for different types of equipment is listed below:
 - **V conveyor restrainer:** The entrance point is located on the outer circumference of the slats where they turn around the sprocket (pivot).
 - **Center track conveyor restrainer:** The entrance point is located at the point where the conveyor emerges from the housing and is exposed. In the unlikely event that swine squeal because both legs and feet get on one side of the center track, the squeal would be counted.
 - **Stun box:** The entrance point is located on the inside surface of the tailgate.
 - **Group floor stunning:** The entrance point is the gate where the swine enter the stunning pen. Score after the swine enter and the gate is closed.

Sheep

- Vocalizations are not scored in sheep.

Scoring

Score a minimum of 100 animals in large plants or 1 hour of production in small plants.

A single animal that vocalizes more than once is counted as one vocalization.

Cattle

- Excellent: 0.0% of animals vocalize | 40 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 – 3.0% of animals vocalize | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 3.1 – 5.0% of animals vocalize | 20 points
- Unacceptable: > 5.0% of animals vocalize | 0 points

Religious Slaughter/Head Holder

- Excellent: 0.0% of animals vocalize | 40 points
- Good: 0.1 – 3.0% of animals vocalize | 30 points
- Acceptable: 3.1 – 5.0% of animals vocalize | 20 points
- Unacceptable: > 5.0% animals vocalize | 0 points

Swine

Do not score vocalizations that can be attributed to “hot-wanding” or vocalizations that appear unprovoked by humans or by equipment.

- Excellent: 0.0% of animals vocalize | 40 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 – 5.0% of animals vocalize | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 5.1 – 10.0% of animals vocalize | 20 points
- Unacceptable: > 10.0% of animals vocalize | 0 points

Bison

- Excellent: No vocalizations | 40 points
- Acceptable: 1 – 2 animal(s) vocalize | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 3 – 5 animals vocalize | 20 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 6 animals vocalize | 0 points

Small Plant Adjustment

- Excellent: No vocalizations | 40 points
- Acceptable: 1 animal vocalizes | 30 points
- Unsatisfactory: 2 animals vocalize | 20 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 3 animals vocalize | 0 points

Element 7: Effective Stunning (CWI)

This element audits the effectiveness of stunning method used by the plant.

1. Plants are evaluated on the effectiveness of a single application of captive bolt, firearm, electric stun, or exposure to CO₂.

Effective Captive Bolt or Firearm Stunning

Regardless of species or device, an acceptable stunning score is $\geq 96\%$. When evaluating effective captive bolt or firearm stunning, the auditor monitors whether or not an animal is rendered insensible with a single shot.

 USDA regulations require cattle, calves, sheep, swine, and other animals to be rendered insensible on the initial stunning attempt.

Some plants routinely shoot some animals twice to ensure insensibility and employee safety. This is called a security or safety stun. In this situation, the auditor must examine the animal for signs of sensibility before the second shot is applied to ensure that the stunner is capable of rendering $\geq 96\%$ of the animals insensible with a single shot.

Scoring

Score a minimum of 100 animals in large plants or 1 hour of production in small plants. Scoring is the same for all species.

Percent of animals instantly rendered insensible with one shot

- Excellent: 100% of animals | 50 points
- Acceptable: 99.9 – 96.0% of animals | 40 points
- Unacceptable: < 96.0% of animals | 0 points

Small Plant Adjustment:

One ineffective stun is considered acceptable if a second stun is applied in a timely manner and renders the animal insensible

- Excellent: 0 animals ineffectively stunned | 50 points
- Acceptable: 1 animal ineffectively stunned | 40 points
- Unacceptable: > 1 animal ineffectively stunned | 0 points

Electrical Stunning Systems for Swine and Sheep

When evaluating effective electrical stunning, the auditor monitors both the correct placement of stunning wands/tongs and the effectiveness of the stun in ensuring insensibility.

Scoring

Score a minimum of 100 animals in large plants or 1 hour of production in small plants.

Scoring is the same for all species.

For guidance of accurate stunner placement, reference the Meat Institute's "Stunning Guide"

Percent correct electrical stunner placement

- Excellent: 100% | 10 points
- Acceptable: 99.9 – 99.0% | 5 points
- Unacceptable: < 99.0% | 0 points

Percent of animals effectively stunned

- Excellent: 100% | 20 points
- Acceptable: 99.9 – 98.0% | 15 points
- Unacceptable: < 98.0% | 0 points

Percent of animals "hot wanded" – swine only

- Excellent: 0.0% | 20 points
- Acceptable: 0.1 – 1.0% | 15 points
- Unacceptable: > 1.0% | 0 points

Small Plant Adjustment:

Correct electrical stunner placement

- Excellent: 0 misplacements | 10 points
- Acceptable: 1 misplacement | 5 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 2 misplacements | 0 points

Effectively stunned

- Excellent: 0 animals ineffectively stunned | 20 points
- Acceptable: 1 animal ineffectively stunned | 15 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 2 animals ineffectively stunned | 0 points

CO₂ Stunning System Operation for Swine

Gondola Loading

The gondola or other conveyance for moving animals into the gas system must be evaluated for animal handling to ensure they are not overloaded.

Scoring

Score 50 gondolas across all machines in operation in plants that slaughter more than 1000 swine per hour to determine the number of gondolas (elevator boxes/baskets) that are overloaded. Score 1 hour of production in plants that slaughter less than 1000 swine per

hour. A gondola or elevator is to be scored as over-loaded if there is not sufficient space for the animals to stand or lie down without being on top of each other. Score on a per gondola basis.

Number of overloaded gondolas

- Excellent: 0 overloaded gondolas | 20 points
- Acceptable: 1 overloaded gondolas | 15 points
- Unacceptable: > 1 overloaded gondolas | 0 points

Note: For gas systems where the animals ride head to tail on a continuous conveyor that does not have separate animal compartments, omit gondola scoring.

Effective CO₂ Stunning

When evaluating the effectiveness of CO₂ stunning, the auditor monitors whether or not an animal is rendered insensible when it emerges from the CO₂ chamber as evidenced by the absence of signs of sensibility. If signs of a return to sensibility are observed, the animal must be immediately re-stunned using an immediately available backup stunner.

Scoring

Score a minimum of 100 animals in large plants or 1 hour of production in small plants.

Percent of animals showing signs of sensibility post CO₂ stunning

- Excellent: 0.0% | 30 points
- Acceptable: 99.9 – 98.0% | 25 points
- Unacceptable: < 98.0% | 0 points

Small Plant Adjustment:

Number of overloaded gondolas

- Excellent: 0 overloaded gondolas | 20 points
- Acceptable: 1 overloaded gondolas | 15 points
- Unacceptable: > 1 overloaded gondolas | 0 points

Showing signs of sensibility post CO₂ stunning

- Excellent: 0 animals showing signs of sensibility | 30 points
- Acceptable: 1 animal showing signs of sensibility | 25 points
- Unacceptable: ≥ 2 animals showing signs of sensibility | 0 points

Note: For a more accurate assessment in small plants, data collected over a period of time can be averaged.



Auditor Tip:

There will be instances where an auditor may not be able to see directly into the gondola. In this case, an auditor can observe the number of animals that are loaded into the gondola and compare to loading requirements of the plant, rather than directly observing the animals inside the gondola.

Element 8: Bleed Rail Insensibility (CWI)

This element audits sensibility of animals at the bleed rail.

1. Auditors should monitor a minimum of 100 animals in large plants or 1 hour of production in small plants looking for signs of sensibility.
 - a. Auditors should not stop the plant's process in an attempt to assess signs of insensibility.
 - b. Regardless of the number of animals audited, **100% must be rendered insensible.**

Hoisting or any dressing procedure such as skinning, scalding, limb removal, etc. must never be performed on a sensible animal.

No sensible animal should be observed on the bleed rail or bleed table. However, on rare occasions, it is possible that an animal with potential return to sensibility will be observed. Research by Terlouw, *et. al.*, (2016) confirms that consciousness and unconsciousness occur on a continuum that essentially has three phases:

1. definitely unconscious,
2. the transition phase, and
3. definitely conscious

The presence of one or more of three signs:

- » Eyelash reflex,
- » Corneal reflex, or
- » rhythmic breathing

indicates that an animal is unconscious but is in the transition phase and may soon become conscious (*see table 1 on pg. 48.*)

It is critical that animals showing signs of return to sensibility be re-stunned promptly.

An animal showing transition signs is NOT counted as sensible as long as the backup stunner is readily accessible and a successful second stun is administered promptly prior to the animal returning to sensibility.



Auditor Tip:

When a second application of the stunner is done on a sensible animal in any location before the animal is stuck, cut, or hoisted, it is counted as an ineffective stun, not as a sensible animal on the bleed rail or bleed table.

TABLE 1: ASSESSING UNCONSCIOUSNESS IN DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK DURING SLAUGHTER		
Definitely Unconscious: <i>ALL of the following signs are ABSENT</i>	Unconscious But Beginning Transition Back to Consciousness: <i>ONE OR MORE of the following signs are PRESENT</i>	Definitely Conscious: <i>ANY of the following signs are PRESENT</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Menace reflex ● Eyelash reflex ● Corneal reflex ● Rhythmic breathing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Menace reflex ● Eyelash reflex ● Corneal reflex ● Rhythmic breathing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No loss of posture ● Righting reflex ● Vocalization ● Natural blinking ● Eye pursuit of a moving object
Unconscious: No Action Needed	Unconscious: Re-stun Immediately	Conscious: Re-stun Immediately
<i>See below for differences between the menace, eyelash, and corneal reflex tests</i>		

Understanding and Evaluating Signs for Determining Sensibility

Eye Reflexes

No reflex is a sole indicator of consciousness, as reflexes are autonomic actions, which do not require full sensibility to stimulate (Fischer and Truong, 2015).

- **Menace reflex test:** The menace reflex is a reaction that causes the animal to blink in response to a sudden movement toward the eye. The menace reflex test can be helpful in assessing sensibility because the neurologic path goes through the cerebrum (the area of the brain that generates complex thoughts and controls body movements), rather than the brainstem only (area of the brain that controls automatic functions). Blinking in response to a menace reflex test is a sign of potential consciousness.

The menace reflex can be tested by waving a hand in front of the eye.

- **Eyelash reflex test:** The palpebral reflex, commonly referred to as the eyelash reflex, is a reaction that causes the eye to blink in response to stimulation of the skin around the eye or eyelid. The eyelash reflex can be used to help assess consciousness, but should not be the sole indicator of consciousness, because the neurologic path goes through the brainstem only. Blinking in response to an eyelash reflex test is a sign of a potential return to consciousness.

The eyelash reflex can be tested by lightly touching the eyelash or skin surrounding the eye.

Note: Auditors are to have employee(s) from the establishment conduct the eyelash reflex test. The auditor is not to conduct this test on their own.

- **Corneal reflex test:** The corneal reflex is a reaction that causes the eye to blink in response to stimulation of the cornea, the area of the eye that covers the iris and the pupil. This is one of the most sensitive areas of the eye, making it a reasonable tool for assessing sensibility in animals, but should not be the sole indicator of consciousness, because the neurologic path goes through the brainstem only. Blinking in response to a corneal reflex test is a sign of a potential return to consciousness.

The corneal reflex can be tested by lightly touching the surface of the eye, ideally avoiding the pupil. Any touch should be gentle, because if the animal is conscious, it will be painful

Note: Auditors are to have employee(s) from the establishment conduct the corneal reflex test. The auditor is not to conduct this test on their own.

Other Signs

- **Rhythmic breathing:** is when an animal breathes in and out at least twice. This sign is indicated by the rib cage moving in and out in a normal breathing pattern at least twice. Agonal breathing (gasping like a fish out of water) may be present in electric and CO₂ stunned animals and should not be considered a sign of consciousness or return to consciousness.
- **Loss of posture:** is when an animal can no longer maintain a standing position. The animal will collapse and no longer holds its weight on its limbs. Depending on the restraining system, the animal may remain in an upright position while restrained, but the head and body will go limp and loss of posture will be evident once restraint is released.
- **Righting reflex:** is when a conscious animal attempts to stand up. This sign is indicated by a hanging animal attempting to "right" itself, lifting its head and arching its neck and back as if to put its feet down towards the ground.
- **Vocalization:** is when an animal makes a normal sound for that animal, such as a moo, bellow, bleat, or squeal. Properly stunned animals may groan, moan, or gasp as a unconscious result of stunning and slaughter, which is not considered a vocalization.
- **Natural blinking:** is natural blinking where the eyes open and then re-close.
- **Eye pursuit of a moving object:** is where the eyes move to track a moving object. This sign can be identified by moving a finger in front of the eyes to see if the eyes follow the movement of the finger.

Scoring

100 percent of animals must be rendered insensible prior to hoisting or any dressing procedure such as skinning, scalding, limb removal, etc.

Insensibility

- Excellent: 100% of animals insensible | 50 points
- Unacceptable: < 100% of animals insensible | 0 points

Element 9: Euthanasia (CWI)

This element audits the plant's promptness of conduction euthanasia of animals that require euthanasia.

1. Animals observed during the audit that require euthanasia, such as severely injured/severely lame animals, must be promptly euthanized according to plant protocol.
 - a. Promptly means as soon as it can be safely done considering all of the relevant facts, per plant program, with the goal of minimizing pain and suffering.

Scoring

- Not Applicable: If no animals are observed that require euthanasia, the element will be scored as not applicable (N/A)
 - » Remove 50 points from the total points possible for the audit.
- Excellent: If any animal(s) are observed that require euthanasia, and they were promptly euthanized according to plant protocol | 50 points
- Unacceptable: If any animal(s) are observed that require euthanasia, and they were **not** promptly euthanized according to plant protocol | 0 points

Element 10: Willful Acts of Abuse/Egregious Acts (CWI)

This element audits for the observation of any willful acts of abuse/egregious acts.

1. Any willful act of abuse is grounds for automatic audit failure, regardless of whether the act is observed within the areas being audited.
 - a. Willful/egregious acts of abuse include, but are not limited to:
 - i) **Dragging or hoisting** a conscious animal, non-ambulatory or otherwise
 - ii) **Making cuts or skinning** conscious animals
 - iii) **Intentionally prodding sensitive parts** of the animal such as the animal's mouth, eyes, ears, nose, anus, vulva, testicles, or belly
 - iv) **Deliberate slamming** of gates on animals
 - 1)  Note: Bison may run into a pen and immediately turn around, causing a human safety hazard where the handler needs to quickly close a gate. Quickly closing a gate to prevent a human safety hazard, so long as it is not deliberately slammed on the animals is acceptable.
 - v) **Intentional driving of ambulatory animals** on top of one another either manually or with direct contact with motorized equipment
 - vi) **Driving animals off high ledges**, platforms, or off a truck without a ramp (driving market weight or adult animals off a low stock trailer is acceptable)
 - vii) **Beating or excessive prodding of ambulatory or non-ambulatory animals**
 - viii) **Animals frozen** to the floor or sides of the trailer
 - ix) **Leaving disabled animals** exposed to adverse climate conditions while awaiting euthanasia
 - x) **Lifting sheep by the wool or throwing a sheep**
 - xi) **Otherwise causing unnecessary pain and suffering** to animals, including situations on trucks

Glossary of Terms

Amperage: the flow of electricity, or current (measured in amps).

Bloodsplash: petechial (pinpoint size) hemorrhages that result when small capillaries in muscle rupture because of increased blood pressure and muscular contraction.

Bison: undomesticated animals that have a large flight zone and retain their wild instincts.

Clonic: a phase within a seizure in which the animal displays uncontrolled kicking and twitching.

Compromised animal: an animal with reduced capacity to withstand handling or transportation, but where handling or transportation with special provisions will not lead to undue suffering; compromised animals may be locally transported with special provisions to receive care, be euthanized, or humanely slaughtered.

Corneal reflex: the blinking effect elicited by lightly touching the cornea (surface) of the eyeball.

Crowd gate: a gate used in an animal handling system that can facilitate the movement of animals from a large pen into a single-file alley or used for moving a group of animals along a drive alley.

Crowd pen: a pen which aids in the movement of animals into a single-file alleyway; contrary to the name, the crowd pen should never be crowded to the point that animals do not flow through the pen.

Domestic livestock: only cattle, swine, and sheep – not bison.

Driving: handler actively moving an animal.

Euthanasia: ending the life of an individual animal in a way that minimizes pain and distress.

Exsanguination: the act of draining the blood from an animal.

Fall: occurs when an animal loses an upright position suddenly in which a part of the body other than the limbs touches the ground.

Fatigued animal: fatigued animals have temporarily lost the ability or the desire to walk but have a reasonable expectation to recover full locomotion with rest.

Flight zone: an animal's personal space; determined by the wildness or tameness of the animal, or how accustomed animals are to people and handling.

Frequency (regarding electric currents): how many times the waveform is repeated in a second (measured in Hertz (Hz)).

Gondola : a large basket in which swine can be loaded before being exposed to carbon dioxide stunning.

Holding pen: Where animals are held with access to water, as defined by the establishment.

Hot wanding: an instance in which the stunning wand is energized before it is in full contact with an animal, which usually elicits an adverse response, such as a squeal.

Involuntary movement: these may be associated with but not limited to the mouth, cheek, tail, forelimbs or back limbs, and may be characterized by kicking, reflexive movements, or spasms.

Knock box: area of containment where the animal is stunned, also known as a stun box.

Lairage: a place where animals may be held during transit to a slaughter facility or in a slaughter facility.

Livestock: cattle, swine, sheep, and bison raised in an agricultural setting to provide products for consumption such as meat.

Menace reflex: the blinking effect elicited by waving a hand in front of the eye; this reflex is a sign of sensibility.

Non-ambulatory animal: an animal that cannot or will not rise from a recumbent position or that cannot walk. This includes, but is not limited to, acutely split animals and animals that require hobbles to assist in the healing of injuries or to prevent further injury.

Non-penetrating captive bolt: a captive bolt device which provides a concussive effect without the bolt penetrating the skull.

Penetrating captive bolt: deliver bolts of varying diameters and lengths through the skull and into the brain. Unconsciousness is produced immediately by physical brain destruction and a combination of changes in intracranial pressure and acceleration concussion.

Pithing: causing further damage to the brain after an animal has been rendered in sensible by captive bolt or firearm by inserting a thin metal or plastic rod into the hole made by the concussive device.

Point of balance: the point at which an animal will move forward or backward in relation to a handler's movement, located at the shoulder of the animal.

Poor udder condition: the condition of an animal that displays a severely engorged udder that is interfering with the animal's ability to walk, including udders that descend below the hock, significantly push out against the rear legs causing difficulty of movement, or highly distended udders which cause obvious pain/distress to the cow.

Promptly: occurs as soon as it can be safely done, considering all of the relevant facts, per plant program, with the goal of minimizing pain and suffering.

Restrainer: a chute, box, or conveyor system that holds an animal still for handlers to more effectively place a captive bolt, firearm, or electric stun device to render an animal unconscious.

Rhythmic breathing: breathing displayed by animals, in which the ribs move in and out *at least twice*; this is a sign of sensibility.

Righting reflex: an attempt of an animal to lift up its head and/or arch its back (or right itself), in response to being hung upside down; animals which are sensible after being hung on the rail will exhibit such a reflex; the presence of this reflex is a sign of sensibility and is not acceptable.

Security stun: an additional stunning action taken after the first stun has rendered an animal unconscious.

Severely poor body condition: animals with a body condition score of one. Swine will be extremely narrow in the loin, have a hollow flank area, and their ribs and backbones will be easily visible. Cattle and sheep will be extremely thin, with their ribs and backbones easily visible. Such animals would be described as extremely thin if there is no fat on the rib or in the brisket and the backbone is easily visible, with some muscle depletion evident through the hind quarter. The extremely thin attributes of these animals may sometimes compromise their mobility, cause severe weakness, and lead to debilitation.

Single file alleyway: an alleyway in which animals are moved single-file, usually leading up to the restrainer or stun box, also known as a single file chute or race.

Slip: occurs when a portion of the leg other than the foot touches the ground or floor, or a foot loses contact with the ground or floor in a non-walking manner.

Split animal: an animal (usually bovine) who cannot keep its back legs together to support its weight

Tonic: a phase within a seizure in which the animal displays stiffness and rigidity due to extreme muscle contraction.

Unfit animal: an animal with reduced capacity to withstand transportation and where there is a high risk that transportation will lead to undue suffering; if transported, unfit animals would endure unjustified and unreasonable suffering (unfit animals may only be transported for veterinary treatment or diagnosis).