Responsible Down Standard 3.0

User Manual

RDS-201-V3.0-2020.02.27

The RDS 3.0 replaces RDS 2.0 and is effective as of July 1, 2019. All audits conducted after June 30, 2020 shall be conducted using RDS 3.0.

English is the official language of the Responsible Down Standard. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

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The RDS will undergo a revision process at least every five years. The next revision is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2023. You may submit feedback to the standard at any time; send to ResponsibleDown@TextileExchange.org. Points of clarification may be incorporated into RDS guidance documents prior to 2023. More substantive feedback or suggested changes will be collected and reviewed as part of the next revision of the standard.

Document Revision History

Responsible Down Standard 3.0 User Manual accompanies the Responsible Down Standard 3.0.
This supersedes the Responsible Down Standard Implementation Manual 2.0, released March 2015.

Contents

Introduction

About the RDS User Manual

The RDS User Manual is intended to support farms, slaughterhouses, and suppliers in the implementation of the Responsible Down Standard.

About the Responsible Down Standard

The Responsible Down Standard (RDS) is an international, voluntary standard that addresses animal welfare in the duck and geese supply chain and chain of custody of down and feather material from certified farms to the final product.

Individual sites are certified by independent third-party certification bodies using annual audits. Material is tracked from the farm to the final product using transaction certificates, following the requirements of Textile Exchange's Content Claim Standard (CCS). For more information or to apply for certification, please visit: ResponsibleDown.org.

The goals of the Responsible Down Standard are to:

- Ensure that down and feathers do not come from supply chains where animals have been subjected to any unnecessary harm.
- Reward and influence the down and feather industry to incentivize practices that respect the humane treatment of ducks and geese.
- Education and development of the supply chain in order to drive continuous improvement of best practices.
- Provide companies with a tool to know what is in their products, and to make accurate claims.
- Ensure strong chain of custody for certified materials as they move through the supply chain.

About Textile Exchange

TextileExchange
Creating Material Change

The Responsible Down Standard is owned and managed by **Textile Exchange**. Textile Exchange is a global non-profit that works closely with our members to drive industry transformation in preferred fibers, integrity and standards and responsible supply networks. We identify and share best practices regarding farming, materials, processing, traceability and product end-of-life in order to reduce the textile industry's impact on the world's water, soil and air, and the human population.

How to Use This Document

This document includes additional guidance to the standard requirements, templates for written management plans and records. It provides supplementary guidance on the animal welfare, and chain of custody requirements. These are intended to make it easier for the farmer to integrate the requirements of the RDS into practice.

Guidance Sections

Animal welfare

In the guidance section, the animal welfare requirements have been listed with additional comments on what compliance with these requirements will look like. In some cases, there are guidance points that only apply to small farms. In many cases, these provide guidance on how a requirement is adapted to cover small farms.

Chain of custody

The guidance section on chain of custody provides information on how to meet the chain of custody requirements.

Additional Guidance

Additional good practice guidance and links to further information is also provided for some requirements. This information is often not audited but may be helpful in learning how to meet the requirement.

Templates

Plan Templates

Many of the requirements in the Responsible Down Standard require that a written plan be available for the auditor to review. The plans are not required to look exactly like the templates in this document, but they are helpful guidelines to make sure your written plans have all the required elements. If you do not already have a plan, these should help you get started.

Record Templates

Records are required to be kept by the farmer. This allows the auditor to get a better idea of how the farm operates day to day. Again, it is not necessary for your records to look exactly like the templates in this document, but you should be recording at the same level of detail. If you do not already keep records, feel free to print out these templates for your own use.

Section A – Get to Know the RDS 3.0

A1. What is the Responsible Down Standard?

The RDS includes three important elements:

1. Animal Welfare verification at farms and slaughterhouses.
    - Duck and goose farms are audited to verify that animals are treated well and that all requirements are followed.
    - Live-plucking is not allowed.
    - Force-feeding is not allowed.
2. Chain of custody of down and feather materials from the source to the final product.
    - Documents track the materials through each stage in the supply chain to make sure that products with down and feathers from RDS-certified farms can be identified.
3. Product labelling.
    - A logo is provided to allow companies to identify products for consumers that want to purchase products with down and feather material that has come from RDS-certified farms.

You can download a copy of the Responsible Down Standard 3.0 online: https://responsibledown.org/.

A2. How does Certification Work?

The first step in the supply chain that shall be certified is the raising farm (or hatcheries if they keep the birds longer than 24 hours). These may be individual farms, a group of farms, or all the farms in a given area. Each company (including the farms, slaughterhouses, down processors, down suppliers, garment manufacturers, and sometimes the brand) is required to be certified on an annual basis.

Certification is performed by an independent third-party organization called a *certification body*. You can find a list of Certification Bodies approved to the RDS on our website: https://responsibledown.org/.

Steps of Certification:

1. Contact an approved Certification Body (CB).
2. Fill out the application form from the CB.
3. The CB will respond with an offer that includes their fee structure. It's a good idea to apply with more than one CB to compare prices and timeline.
4. Select an offer and sign a contract with the CB.
5. Read this document carefully, especially the sections specific to farms, slaughterhouses, or supply chain, as relevant. Prepare as well as you can; this will save time and money during the audit.
6. The CB will send an auditor to your operations to interview staff, and review documents and procedures against the requirements of the standard. This is the on-site audit. In your first year, this will be scheduled. In following years, it may be announced or unannounced.
7. A report of the audit will be sent to the CB office; a separate person will review them and make a final certification decision. If you fail any of the requirements, you will be given a period of time to correct them (if you fail *critical* requirements, you will be suspended).
8. Once all corrections have been completed, the CB will issue an RDS Scope Certificate. This certificate will have to be renewed yearly, with an audit each time.
9. The CB may visit without advance notice, to make sure that you are still following the requirements.
10. Slaughterhouses and all supply chain companies should request Transaction Certificates when you ship certified goods, in order to show your customers that the material is certified. Goods shipped without a Transaction Certificate are not considered certified.

Section B – Animal Welfare Criteria

AW1. Nutrition

Desired outcome: Access to sufficient feed and water suited to the animals' age and needs to maintain normal health and to prevent prolonged hunger, thirst, malnutrition or dehydration.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW1.1	There shall be no force-feeding of waterfowl.	C
	AW1.1.1 The farm shall not source animals that were force-fed and shall not outsource animals for force-feeding.	C
AW1.2	Waterfowl shall be provided with sufficient food to meet their nutritional needs and maintain them in good condition.	Ma
	AW1.2.1 Feed shall be continuously available during daylight hours.	Ma
	AW1.2.2 In all cases, birds should not go more than 8 hours without access to food.	R
	AW1.2.3 Food shall be provided without undue competition.	Ma
	AW1.2.4 Growth hormones shall not be applied.	Ma

Guidance

- Make food available all day. Don't withhold for longer than 8 hours.
- You should understand the varying amounts of feed needed for birds as they grow and based on the number per flock.
- Determine your space allowance to ensure that there is not too much competition for food.
- No growth hormones.
- Whenever possible, the use of feed from genetically modified sources should be avoided.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW1.3	Waterfowl shall be provided with a supply of clean and safe drinking water.	Ma
	AW1.3.1 Regular testing of the water should be conducted by management to ensure it is fit for consumption by the animals.	R
	AW1.3.2 In all cases, birds should not go more than 8 hours without access to water.	R

If the auditor observes potential unsafe or contaminated drinking water, they may request records of annual water testing or a spot test. ATP Bioluminescense or Oxidation-Reduction Potential (ORP) are recommended testing methods.

Water should be monitored as part of daily wellness checks.

Indicators of potentially unsafe drinking water include:

- lack of water clarity
- excessive algae growth
- presence of foam
- poor color yellow or brown
- oil on the surface
- litter
- chemical odor
- petroleum odor
- odor of decay, fecal matter, or rotten egg smells.

Use the following questions to assess the risk of contamination of drinking water:

- Is the water the same drinking water source for the animals as it is for humans?
- Is there farming that uses pesticides or herbicides close by?
- Any past problems with the water?
- Any potential run off near a water source?

AW2. Living Environment

Desired outcome: Animals are kept in an environment that provides the conditions and facilities needed for health, safety, comfort and normal behavior.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW2.1	Waterfowl shall have access to housing or a shelter protecting them from extreme weather conditions.	Mi
	AW2.1.1 The roof and walls shall be in good condition and be waterproof, where needed.	Mi
	AW2.1.2 Housing shall be located away from areas of (potential) run off.	Mi
	AW2.1.3 Shelter should include a sufficient number of exits in view of the waterfowl.	R
	Extreme weather conditions may include winds, sleet, heavy snows and sun in climatic regions where the welfare of the birds might be negatively impacted. The goal should be to ensure that birds are not injured or exposed to potential harm. If not already present, walls should only be added for times of extreme weather. Run off is considered any water running to housing. If there are known cases of water running to housing, there should be a mechanism in place to prevent run-off from entering the housing.	
AW2.2	Shelters and housing (including nesting areas) shall be clean and well ventilated.	Ma
	AW2.2.1 Housing should not have a strong ammonia smell.	R
	AW2.2.2 Nesting areas shall be weatherproof and dry.	Mi

Number	Requirement	Level
	1. If birds are kept in a shelter without circulated air or fresh litter, the ammonia level will continue to rise. High levels of ammonia are dangerous for birds' respiratory systems and eyes, and it also presents a danger to workers. High ammonia levels may limit the body weight of some birds.[1] 2. Studies show that duck farms may be especially susceptible to high ammonia levels.[2] **3.** Recommended ammonia limits: • Ammonia smell should not be noticeable, less than 10 ppm at all times. Auditors may use portable ammonia testers. • The United States Environmental Protection Agency sets the ammonia limit at 25 ppm on poultry farms. This is set for human health and safety and is likely dangerous for birds that are exposed 24 hours/day. • During winter, it may be necessary to limit outside air to maintain heating the building. Excessive ammonia levels should still be addressed by keeping the litter fresh and investing in air circulation systems. **4.** Nesting areas for waterfowl should be dry relative to nesting habit of the breed.	
AW2.3	Temperature shall be controlled in the housing of hatchlings.	Ma
	AW2.3.1 Hatchlings shall be provided with appropriate supplemental brooding heat.	Ma
	AW2.3.2 After 20 days, temperature shall be controlled to prevent the waterfowl from being subject to extreme heat or cold.	Ma
	*Small farms* should ensure that animals are not exposed to dangerous fluctuations in temperature.	

1 https://www.poultryworld.net/Breeders/Health/2010/10/Harmful-effects-of-ammonia-on-birds-WP008071W/
2 https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/hsus-report-animal-welfare-duck-industry.pdf

Number	Requirement	Level
AW2.4	Housing and shelters shall have an area available that provides dry, safe, and comfortable footing. Dry, mold-free bedding shall be continuously available to waterfowl.	Ma
	AW2.4.1 The floors should be well-drained.	R
	AW2.4.2 Wire mesh should not be used as flooring.	R
	• Existing mesh or slatted flooring areas may be covered to create the equivalent of a solid surface. • Hock and foot pad burns are caused by contact with litter which is both wet and contains a high level of ammonia from feces. Such burns can cause pain, act as a gateway for bacterial infection and have been shown to be associated with lameness. • Fresh litter seems to be the best way to reduce these burns. The farm should have the litter changed regularly.	
AW2.5	Waterfowl shall have sufficient space indoors to enable them without competition to move freely, stand, turn around, stretch their wings, and run.	Ma
	AW2.5.1 When provided, shelter should have at least one nest box for every four birds.	R
	• The Standard does not prescribe a limit for the minimum amount of space birds should have. You should use your best judgement to ensure that birds are able to move freely, turn around, stretch their wings, and run without restriction, both in terms of floor space and height of the building. • RSPCA UK sets the indoor space restriction at no more than 17 kg/m_2.	
AW2.6	Waterfowl shall not be kept in cages.	Mi
	AW2.6.1 Waterfowl may be temporarily held in cages for vaccinations or other justified reasons.	Mi

Number	Requirement	Level
	If this occurs, justification shall be provided in writing from a qualified veterinary practitioner and is indicated for the treatment of a medical condition.	
AW2.7	Except for brooding under a heat lamp up to four weeks of age, a minimum of eight hours of darkness - or near darkness - at night and eight hours of light during the day shall be provided.	Mi
	AW2.7.1 Shelters and housing should allow natural light to enter.	R
	AW2.7.2 Nesting areas should be kept dark so that they are attractive nesting sites.	R
	AW2.7.3 If artificial light is used, it should be distributed evenly.	R
AW2.8	Waterfowl shall have access to water for behavioral needs.	Mi
	AW2.8.1 Waterfowl shall have access to water deep enough for them to dip their heads.	Mi
	AW2.8.2 Waterfowl should have access to water deep enough to be able to swim without the feet touching the bottom of the water.	R
	AW2.8.3 Water for behavioral needs shall be kept safe.	Mi

The standard requires that birds are provided with access to water deep enough to dip their heads.

The most common types of water drinkers are:

- Nipple drinkers are most common, but also provide the least access to water for behavior needs.
- Bell drinkers allow birds to submerge their bills and is preferable to nipple drinkers.

Troughs are recommended. These allow birds to dip their heads.

Humane Society United States explains: “The birds’ restricted grooming abilities[3] can also lead to dirty bills, nostrils, and eyes, which could potentially increase the risk of infection. Ducks also use

Number	Requirement	Level
	water to thermoregulate and can suffer from heat stress in systems without adequate water for wetting their bodies."[3]	
AW2.9	Waterfowl shall have free outside access from six weeks of age.	Mi
	AW2.9.1 Outdoor area should have sufficient space that is consistently dry.	R
	AW2.9.2 The waterfowl shall not be forced to stand in water or mud.	Mi
	AW2.9.3 Shelter should have sufficient exits, allowing birds to exit at will.	R
	AW2.9.4 In addition to outdoor access, birds should be provided with environmental enrichment.	R
	Access to fresh air is an important way to limit exposure to ammonia while also encouraging natural behavior like foraging. • If possible, geese should be given outdoor access after four weeks. • Temporary confinement dependent on weather conditions is permissible if the health or welfare of the birds would be otherwise compromised. • During disease outbreaks, governmental regulation may place controls limiting outdoor access. Farms are responsible for monitoring and keeping in compliance with local legislation. The farm's biosecurity plan should include preventing the contraction of disease while still providing outdoor access. When provided at a young age, enrichment can help prevent injurious pecking. Enrichment outdoors could include foraging substrate like straw, hay, or wood shavings.	

[3] https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/hsus-report-animal-welfare-duck-industry.pdf

Number	Requirement	Level
AW2.10	Outdoor space shall have sufficient space to enable them without competition to move freely, stand, turn around, stretch their wings, and run.	Ma
	• The Standard does not prescribe a limit for the minimum amount of space birds should have. You should use your best judgement to ensure that birds are able to move freely, turn around, stretch their wings, and run without restriction, both in terms of floor space and height of the building. • RSPCA UK sets the indoor space restriction at no more than 17 kg/m_2.	
AW2.11	Waterfowl shall be protected from predators.	Ma
	AW2.11.1 Predator control shall be humane.	Mi
	• Lethal predator control methods must not be used, especially indiscriminate methods that cause severe pain and suffering such as snare and leg-hold traps. • Examples of humane predator control: – Strong, well-built fence. – Penning or sheltering at night – Covered outdoor access.	

AW3. Animal Management

Desired outcome: Animals are managed in a way that promotes good health and prevents disease. Sick or injured animals are treated. Husbandry operations are carried in a way that minimizes pain and distress.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW3.1	Farm workers shall conduct wellness checks at least twice per day.	Ma
	An adequate wellness checks includes the following: • Walk slowly and carefully through the flock to find injured or lame birds. • Be sure to walk close enough to view all birds close enough to identify any issues. • Identification of any sick or injured birds. • Check that all feeding and watering equipment is clean and in good working order. • Check animal feces for signs of disease or worms	
AW3.2	A veterinarian shall pay regular visits at the farm to check on the health condition of waterfowl. For *small farms*, veterinary access shall be available as needed.	Ma
	AW3.2.1 Veterinarian visit should include a review of the Veterinary Health and Welfare Plan (VHP) and identification of areas of improvement.	R Not applicable for small farms
AW3.3	Appropriate hand-washing facilities and toilets should be available for all personnel working on or visiting the farm.	R Not applicable for small farms

Number	Requirement	Level
AW3.4	Foot brush/disinfectant or barrier footwear systems should be provided at the entrance to the farm.	R Not applicable for small farms
AW3.5	Surgical procedures shall be limited to those that are medically necessary and shall be carried out by a veterinarian	Ma
AW3.6	Any sick or injured bird shall be treated immediately to minimize pain and distress. Treatment shall not be withheld in order to preserve a bird or flock's eligibility for market.	Ma

Birds that present signs of illness or injury should be removed from the larger flock for further observation, see AW3.7.

The following have been identified by the United Nations FAO as signs of abnormal behavior:

- Accelerated breathing (gasping) with rattling or gurgling noises;
- Increased thirst;
- Diarrhea; White-ish feces; check feces for worms
- Anorexia;
- Dull eyes; Sunken eyes;
- Drooped wings.
- Sneezing;
- Prostration;
- Reluctance to move;
- Nasal discharge;
- Ocular discharge;
- Swollen and red uropygial glands;
- Swollen and red eye lids;
- Depression;
- Emaciated;
- Stunted growth;

Number	Requirement	Level
	• Listless; • Ruffled feathers (accompanied with other signs of abnormal behavior); • Reduced egg production; • Reduced hatch; • Lethargy; • Unsteady on their feet; • Difficulty getting up; • Erratic movements; • Standing in one position with head lowered and eyes closed; • Huddle close to heat source; • Coughing; • Greenish diarrhea; • Uncoordinated movement; • Tremor of the neck and head; • Difficulty breathing; • Weak; • Head tremors Lameness is characterized by the following: • Unable to walk normally • Walking with a limp • Falling consistently when trying to walk	
AW3.7	A safe place, free of competition, shall be provided for sick and/or injured animals to recover.	Ma
	The “bird hospital” should be separate from the flock to allow for closer observation and should provide the following: • Low density • Easy access to food • Easy access to clean, safe water • Regular observation (2-3 times per day) • Within view of the other birds	

Number	Requirement	Level
	• Clean bedding • Good footing	
AW3.8	There shall be no physical alterations of waterfowl such as: • De-clawing • Hole-punching • Wing-clipping • Trimming of feathers • Castration	Ma
	Trimming of large feathers is allowed if feathers are broken or damaged.	
AW3.9	There shall be no bill trimming, de-beaking, or infra-red bill treatment (or trimming).	Ma
	Infra-red bill trimming or treatment is not allowed by the RDS. There should be systems in place to ensure that hatcheries out of scope of the RDS (birds held for less than 24 hours) do not perform infra-red bill trimming or treatment or any other physical alterations on RDS birds.	
AW3.10	There shall be no *live-plucking* of down and feather of waterfowl.	C
	AW3.10.1 There shall be no molt harvesting, forced molting, or assisted molting.	C
	AW3.10.2 All down shall come from waterfowl that were raised for food.	Ma
	AW3.10.3 The farm shall not source animals that were ever live-plucked and shall not outsource animals for live-plucking.	C
AW3.11	Female waterfowl that are in lay shall be provided with nesting areas that provide a partially enclosed area for egg-laying and each nest area shall contain friable nesting material.	Mi

Number	Requirement	Level
AW3.12	Measures shall be taken to minimize fighting and/or feather pecking.	Ma
	AW3.12.1 If the capacity of a barn is more than 3000 birds, a separation wall should be high enough that waterfowl are not able to see each other.	R
	• The provision of enrichment has been shown to reduce injurious plucking in many birds. This includes providing foraging materials, increasing the amount of space provided, and providing access to water deep enough to dip their heads. • These measures may also prevent other negative behaviors such as smothering from panic or competition for food and water. • Farms can also address the risk of panic by walking the flocks often and exposing them to novel noises and new experiences starting when the birds are very young.	
AW3.13	Waterfowl having pain or injury from which they are unlikely to recover shall be immediately and humanely euthanized in a way that renders the waterfowl immediately insensitive to pain.	Ma
	AW3.13.1 The following birds shall be euthanized: 1) birds that are in uncontrollable pain, and are unlikely to recover without prolonged suffering, 2) birds that have not made any signs of recovery after a period of three days, 3) birds no longer able to drink water unassisted after 48 hours.	Ma
	AW3.13.2 Only the following methods are allowed for euthanasia: • Captive Bolt Gun • Hand-held stunning followed by exsanguination • Cervical neck dislocation (only if other options are not available)	Ma
	AW3.13.3 Only trained workers shall carry out euthanasia on the farm.	Ma
	AW3.13.4 A single worker or veterinarian shall not cull more than 70 birds by cervical neck dislocation in a day unless this is required	Ma

Number	Requirement	Level
	for bird welfare or where other qualified and experienced people are not available.	
	See Euthanasia Guidance Note	

AW3. Animal Management Guidance Notes and Templates

Guidance Notes

- Euthanasia Guidance Note

Templates

- Veterinary Health and Welfare Plan Templates
- Record keeping Templates

Euthanasia Guidance Note

Euthanasia literally means “a good death” and refers to the practice of culling or killing animals that are suffering due to illness or injury from which they are unlikely to recover. The practice prevents the animal from suffering longer than is necessary.

The key aspects to ensuring that euthanasia is carried out in accordance with animal welfare includes the following:

- Identify birds that need to be euthanized.
- Ensure that only trained workers perform euthanasia.
- How to perform euthanasia, methods allowed by the RDS.
- Check that the euthanasia was effective.

Identify birds that need to be euthanized

1. Birds should be immediately and humanely euthanized in the following circumstances:
    - Birds in uncontrollable pain, and unlikely to recover without prolonged suffering.
    - Birds that have not made any signs of recovery after three days.
    - Birds unable to drink water unassisted after 48 hours.

2. Recommended decision-making guide:
    - When a bird is first observed to be sick or injured, keep track of the following and take action immediately if needed:
    - **On the first day** of lameness, illness, or injury, the birds shall be removed to an animal hospital for further observation. Symptoms (including ability to eat or drink) should be recorded. Consult a veterinarian if possible. Animals in uncontrollable pain should be euthanized immediately.
    - **On the second day** of lameness, illness, or injury, birds should be observed to determine whether they are improving or getting worse. Animals in uncontrollable pain, or those that have not been able to eat or drink in 24 hours should be euthanized immediately.
    - **On the third day**, the same protocol should be followed. Animals in uncontrollable pain, those that have not been able to eat or drink in 24 hours, or those that have shown no signs of improvement in 24 hours should be immediately euthanized.

Ensure that only trained workers perform euthanasia

1. There should always be someone working that is trained to perform euthanasia.
2. Only workers that have been trained in the appropriate signs of euthanasia shall be authorized to determine that euthanasia is appropriate.
3. Only workers that have been trained in appropriate methods of euthanasia may perform it.
4. For this reason, it's a good idea to provide euthanasia training to multiple workers.

How to perform euthanasia

The following methods of euthanasia are allowed by the Responsible Down Standard.

1. Captive Bolt Gun, followed by neck cutting
2. Hand-held stunning
3. Cervical dislocation (also called neck dislocation, only allowed if above methods are unavailable)
4. Farms may also rely on their veterinarian to perform euthanasia. This is outside the scope of the standard but should be allowed.

Be careful to follow the guidance in the handling section when restraining animals for euthanasia. Poor handling can result in pain to the animal: Handling of Animals (AW4.1).

How to perform euthanasia using a captive bolt gun (or concussion stunning)

What is a captive bolt gun?

A severe blow to the head will result in unconsciousness, or even death. When the immediate blow leads to unconsciousness, this can be an effective way to prevent the animal from a painful death. However, it is difficult to get an effective blow without specially designed equipment.

A captive bolt gun delivers a controlled blow to the head that much more reliably results in unconsciousness. There are two types of captive bolt guns: cartridge powered captive-bolt stunners and compressed air powered captive-bolt stunners. They are both available with flat or convex heads. Convex heads are the best choice for both ducks and geese.

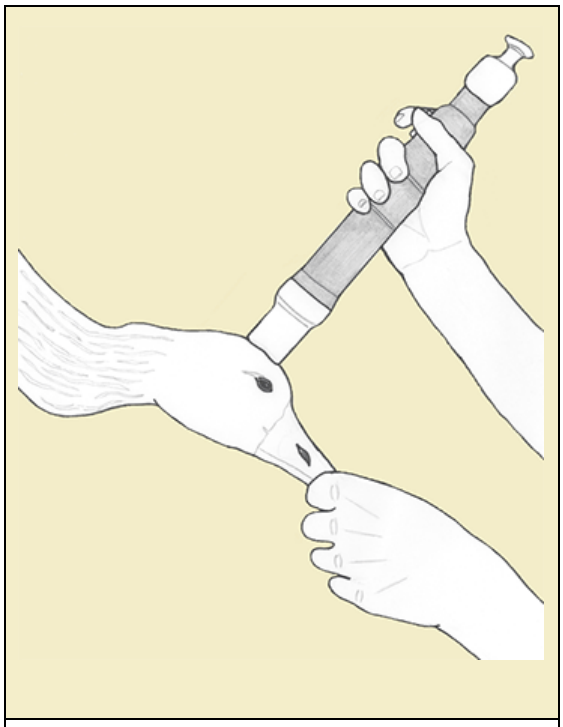
Captive bolt guns are the most reliable method of euthanasia and should be the goal for all farms.

	
Air-powered captive bolt gun.	*Cartridge powered captive bolt gun.*

Steps for Using the Captive Bolt Gun:

1. Use the correct cartridge size or air pressure for the species and age of the bird. This is specific to the make and model of the equipment and should be kept on file in the euthanasia plan.
2. Restrain the bird to ensure accurate position of the captive bolt gun:
    a. Place muzzle on the highest point of the head, on the midline, with the captive bolt gun aimed straight down.
    b. Hold the bird's head by lightly holding the comb or resting the end of the beak between the tips of your fingers.

3. Stun the bird.
    a. Don't be alarmed by involuntary movement, this is normal and is a sign of an effective stun.
    b. **YouTube Video** on Concussion stunning equipment loading, firing: https://youtu.be/yR3P0Hup_6A
4. Check that the stun was effective:
    a. Signs of An Effective Concussion Stun: no rhythmic breathing (check for abdominal movements in the vent area); uncontrolled wing flapping; leg flexion and extension; no neck tension; no vocalization.
    b. If you touch the cornea (the eyeball) and the bird shows a blink reflex, this is a sign of consciousness and the stun should be performed again.
    c. YouTube Video on Signs of an effective concussion stun: https://youtu.be/6uopdSqtfUs
    d. If you are in doubt, always stun the bird again.

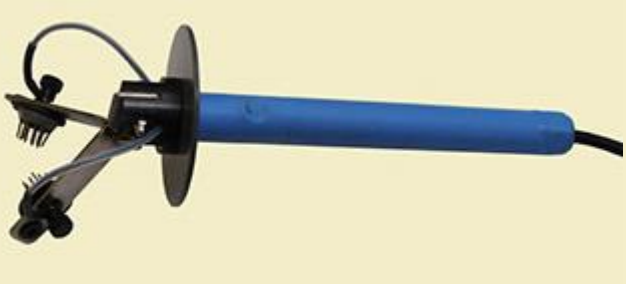


Correct positioning for concussion stunning of ducks and geese.

How to perform euthanasia using hand-held stunning

What is hand-held stunning?

Electrical can be a reliable method of stunning birds prior to euthanasia. Small, hand-held equipment is available to perform this on the farm. These electrical stunners placed paired electrodes across the head of the animal. This piece of equipment plugs into an outlet and the electrodes may be adjusted to accommodate different sized birds.



A hand-held electrical stunner.

Steps for using hand-held stunning:

1. Keep the equipment clean. Dirty electrodes can impede the flow of electricity, resulting in an ineffective stun. Use the correct setting for ducks or geese. Consult the manuals of the equipment for the correct setting.
    a. Pre-wetting the bird's head can improve the stunning.
    b. For your own safety, remove all jewelry before using electrical stunning equipment, wear rubber gloves and boots, avoid all contact with the live electrodes and observe the manufacturer's operating instructions.
2. Adjust the electrodes to fit the bird's head.
3. Position the electrodes on the bird's head:
    a. Wearing a rubber glove, use one hand to hold the back or bottom of the bird's head and then apply the electrodes firmly to either side of the head between the eye and ear.
    b. Never apply electrodes on the bird's neck. This causes pain and does not result in unconsciousness.
4. When you are sure the electrodes are in the right

Correct positioning for electrical stunning

position, press the switch without hesitation. Application times vary, but the switch should be on for at least 7 seconds or until wings stop flapping.

   a. Don't be alarmed by involuntary movement, this is normal and is a sign of an effective stun.

   a. YouTube video demonstration: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mdDI0pjYuw&feature=youtu.be

5. Check that the stun was effective:

   a. Signs of An Effective Concussion Stun: neck arched with eyes fully open; no rhythmic breathing immediately after the stun: rigidly extended legs; constant rapid body tremors; and wings held close to the body (following initial uncontrolled bursts of flapping).

   b. If you touch the cornea (the eyeball) and the bird shows a blink reflex, this is a sign of consciousness and the stun should be performed again.

   c. If you are in doubt, always stun the bird again.

   d. Immediately after electrical stunning, within 15 seconds, the bird must be killed by either neck-cutting or neck dislocation.

How to perform euthanasia by neck dislocation (or cervical dislocation)

1. This method shall only be used if captive bolt gun and hand-held equipment are not available.
2. Neck dislocation should not be performed on birds that weigh more than 5 kg.[4]
3. Farms should take steps to invest in a captive bolt gun of hand-held stunning equipment.

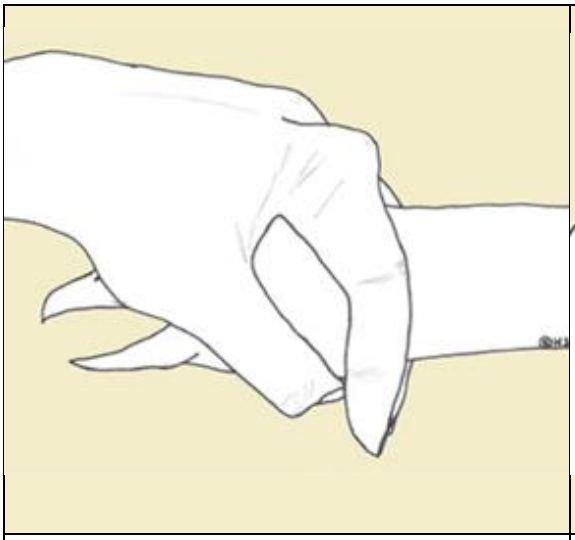
What is neck dislocation?

This method of euthanasia kills the bird immediately by rupturing the spinal cord which stops breathing. This may be done by hand but shall be limited to less than 70 birds in a day by the same worker. This is because after performing manual neck dislocation on many birds, the worker may tire resulting in less effective dislocation.

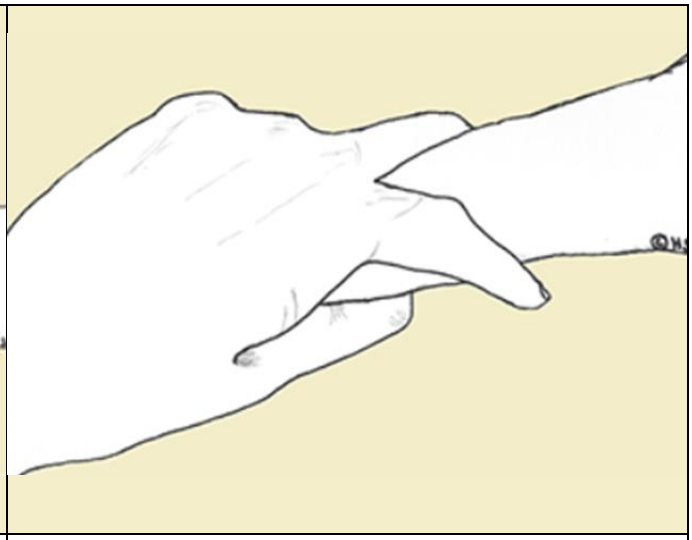
4 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32009R1099&from=DE

Steps for manual neck dislocation

1. Position the bird accurately.
    a. Hold the bird's legs (and the wing tips if possible) in one hand, close to your hip with the underside of the bird's body against your thigh.
    b. Using the first two fingers of your other hand, grip the head immediately behind the skull with your thumb under the beak.
2. Dislocate the neck.
    a. Stretch the neck downwards, at the same time pressing your knuckles into the neck vertebrae and pulling the birds head back.
    b. Neck dislocation should be achieved in one, swift, pull. Be firm confident and positive. [5]
    a. Don't be alarmed by involuntary movement, this is normal and is a sign of an effective stun.



Holding a bird's head for manual neck dislocation. Grip the head immediately behind the skull with your first two fingers and place your thumb under the beak.



Another view of how to hold a bird's head for manual neck dislocation. Grip the head immediately behind the skull with your first two fingers and place your thumb under the beak.

5 Humane Slaughter Association, "Practical Slaughter of Poultry: Neck Dislocation", www.hsa.org.uk

3. Check that the dislocation was effective:
    a. If you touch the cornea (the eyeball) and the bird shows a blink reflex, this is a sign of consciousness and the stun should be performed again.
    b. YouTube Demonstration of an effective neck dislocation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=25&v=-twCZ_x7jB0.

Check that the animal is dead

After euthanasia has been performed, always be sure to check that the animal is dead:

1. Lack of a heartbeat
2. Lack of respiration
3. Lack of a corneal reflex (reaction when the eyeball is touched)
4. Presence of rigor mortis

Veterinary Health and Welfare Plan Templates

General Information

This information should be submitted to the auditor ahead of the audit.

Name and Address		
Farm Name		
Types of Birds Kept		
Name of Person Responsible for Farm		
Consulting Veterinarian:		
Plan completed by:	Name:	Signature: Date:

Production	
Total number of birds on farm at any one time	
Number of birds produced per year	

1. Wellness Checks

Describe your waterfowl inspection schedule: who inspects the birds, and how often:
Describe what must be included in each daily wellness check:
Describe your regular cleaning schedule:

2. Feeding and watering plan

2.1 Feeding: Provide details of the plan for feed provided to the animals. Use an additional row each time the amount of food is increased.

Age of Birds (# of days)	Food	Amount/Frequency	Distribution (feeding points)

2.2 Watering: Provide details on how water is provided for all birds, including sick and injured birds kept separately.

Watering schedule	Identify potential sources of contamination, with action plan to address if needed.	Testing method	Testing Schedule

3. Biosecurity Measures

Document the actions undertaken to manage or reduce the risk of disease from the following sources, and any others you have identified. See AW5.2, AW5.3.4, and B3.3 of the RDS.

Potential sources of disease	Control Actions Taken
Incoming waterfowl	
Workers and Visitors	*Be sure to indicate here what auditors need to do to be allowed to enter the farm.*
Buildings	
Equipment	
Other (please describe)	

4. Emergency Measures

Document the emergency procedures and contingency plans for disaster using the table below.

Emergency	Plan for Immediate Safety	Plan for Access to Water	Plan for Access to Feed
Drought			
Flood			
Fire			
Extreme weather			
Other (please describe) *Take your local weather trends into consideration*			

5. Euthanasia Plan

Describe how decisions to euthanize are made on the farm.	
Who is responsible for making this decision? Is there a back-up person?	
Describe the euthanasia method:	

Record Keeping Templates

1. Mortality and Illness Records *(keep one log per flock)*

Age:	Date of Death:	Description of Symptoms, including duration:	Outcome (recovered, died, euthanized):	Veterinarian Treatment, if any:

2. Veterinarian Visits

Date of Visit	Reason for Visit:	Treatments Administered:	Review of Management Plan?

AW4. Handling and Transport

Desired outcome: Good human-animal relationships are in place and animals are handled and transported around the farm and off the farm in a way that protects welfare.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW4.1	Animals shall be handled humanely; mistreatment of animals is unacceptable.	C
	AW4.1.1 Mistreatment includes rough physical contact such as kicking, striking, throwing or dropping animals, dragging or pulling waterfowl by the feathers, wings, head, neck, tail, or legs.	C
	AW4.1.2 Extra care shall be taken when handling waterfowl with special needs, such as hatchlings, chicks, sick, lame, or injured waterfowl.	C
	See Handling of Animals Guidance Note	
AW4.2	No farm cats, dogs and other pets should be present in the waterfowl housing and shelter.	R
AW4.3	While loading and unloading, proper handling techniques shall be followed to prevent distress in the birds.	Ma

Number	Requirement	Level
	Prior to loading: • Position the truck as close to the birds as possible for loading and as close to the destination as possible for unloading. • Using an open truck may be preferable to cages. Loading birds for transport: • Approach birds quietly and calmly. Dim lighting may reduce panic. • Use small pens to confine birds for catching. Mobile catching frames may be helpful. • Catching birds using noisy or aggressive techniques will cause birds to panic, and risk injury or suffocation to the bird and injury to the worker. • Never hit or squeeze a bird against a hard object like a fence or side of the truck. Placing birds in cages or containers for transport: • Follow the above guidance for catching the animals (AW4.1) • Put the birds in head-first. • Birds should never be dropped into a container or cage. • A helper should be available to open and close the cage while keeping the other animals in place. • When used, module drawers should be filled from the top to the bottom to prevent injuring the animals that have already been loaded. Removing birds from cages or containers: • Birds should be removed one at a time. • Use two hands on either side of the bird's body to secure the wings. • A helper should be available to close the cage while keeping the other birds from escaping.	
AW4.4	Waterfowl shall be transported in a vehicle that provides sufficient ventilation and protection from wind, rain, snow and thermal stress.	Ma
	AW4.4.1 Waterfowl shall not be transported during severe weather conditions unless enough protection is provided.	Ma
AW4.5	Waterfowl shall not be overcrowded during transport.	Ma

Number	Requirement	Level
	AW4.5.1 Based on average weight of waterfowl, the amount of waterfowl per container shall be determined before transport.	Mi
	AW4.5.2 The trucks should be weighed upon arrival at slaughter to verify density.	R
	Indications that birds are too crowded during transport: • Birds are unable to sit down comfortably. The recommended stocking density from Humane Slaughter Association is as follows (space is indicated as floor space): • Day old chicks - 21 – 25 cm_2 per chick • Poultry other than day old chicks (weight in kg) – < 1.6 kg - 180 – 200 cm2 per kg – 1.6 < 3 kg - 160 cm2 per kg – 3 to 5 kg - 115 cm2 per kg – >5 - 105 cm2 per kg	
AW4.6	Planning of transport shall ensure that waterfowl reach their destination as soon as possible.	Ma
	AW4.6.1 If transport is further than eight hours away (including loading and unloading time), steps shall be taken to ensure the birds do not go more than eight hours without food or water.	Ma
	AW4.6.2 A trained worker shall accompany the birds on trips longer than four hours to ensure proper care. This may be the driver.	Ma
	• Birds may not go without food or water for longer than eight hours. This includes transportation time and any waiting after loading or upon arrival. • If the journey is longer than eight hours, there should be a plan to make sure a break is given, and birds are provided food and water. • Birds should be protected from extreme weather while on the truck. • A trained worker should accompany all transportation but is required for trips longer than four hours.	
AW4.7	The words "LIVE BIRDS" should be present in the local language on the outside of the truck.	R

Number	Requirement	Level
AW4.8	Transportation vehicle shall be cleaned and dried prior to loading the waterfowl.	Ma
	• Trucks used for transport should be cleaned and disinfected between each flock of birds.	
AW4.9	Only birds fit for transport shall be permitted on the truck.	Ma
	Birds that are sick or injured should not be transported. This will likely prolong their suffering and they will be unable to be slaughtered with the flock anyway. Slaughterhouses should ensure there are not incentives for transporting sick or injured birds (e.g. payment based on the weight of the truck upon arrival, etc.).	

AW4. Handling and Transport Guidance Notes and Templates

Guidance Notes

- Handling of Animals Guidance Note

Handling of Animals Guidance Note

Handling of Animals (AW4.1)

- It's important to keep daily interactions calm to reduce stress among the birds and limit their fear of people. Here are some tips for daily interaction with ducks and geese:
  - Walk among the flock at least once daily from the first day the hatchlings arrive.
  - Walk slowly and quietly, allowing the birds to get out of the way without panic.
  - Walk throughout the flock, close enough to view all the birds.
- If birds need to be picked up for any reason, be sure to follow species-specific guidelines to prevent injury or pain:

For both ducks and geese:

- Never lift, suspend, or carry bird by the neck unless the breast is also fully supported. Be careful to hold the neck just below the head, to ensure the head or neck are not twisted and the windpipe is not squeezed.
- Never hold a duck or geese by the head, wing, tail or leg.

Ducks:

Support the weight of the duck, holding the legs firmly. Once held securely against your body, the bird's head is accessible for stunning.

Ducks should never be caught by the legs only. They may be caught and gently lifted by the base of the neck for a minimal time before transferring the bird to your hand and arm. Take care not to apply excessive pressure.

- Ducks should be handled by placing one hand on each side of the body, over the wings, and lifting the bird.

- Do not carry more than two ducks in each hand. If you are holding their neck, ensure that a finger is placed between the necks of the two birds.
- Once you have hold of the bird, slide one hand under the body and firmly clench the legs between your outstretched fingers (positioning one or two fingers between the legs) and support the bird's breast on the palm of the same hand. The wings can then be controlled by your opposite hand or by holding the bird against your body, under your arm.

Geese:

Once gently caught by the neck, most geese will sit down.

Once held in this position, the bird's head is accessible for stunning.

- Geese should be handled by placing one arm around the body and lifting the bird under the armpit, whilst the other hand carefully holds onto the neck (Figure 5).
- Adult geese may also be caught and lifted by both shoulder joints, with a finger in between, to separate, each shoulder. Ideally the breast should be fully supported simultaneously.
- Do not carry more than one goose in each hand.
- Do not cross or interlock the wings of geese to prevent flapping.
- Control the head to avoid being bitten.
- You may approach geese from behind and lightly hold the neck, taking care not to squeeze. This will cause most geese to sit down.

AW5. Management, Plans, and Procedures

Desired outcome: Farmers have a clear strategy and set of protocols to safeguard the welfare of their animals, and to demonstrate compliance to the relevant RDS.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW5.1	Farms shall comply with all applicable legal animal welfare requirements.	Ma
AW5.2	The biosecurity policy shall be made available to the certification body prior to the visit, to ensure the audit may take place. Where personal protection equipment is required, it shall be provided or the farm shall inform the certification body ahead of the audit.	Ma
AW5.3	The farm shall have a written Veterinary Health and Welfare Plan (VHP).	Mi
	AW5.3.1 This plan should be developed with, or reviewed by, a veterinarian at least annually.	R
	AW5.3.2 The VHP shall include a provision to ensure the nutritional requirements of the waterfowl are met.	Mi
	AW5.3.3 The VHP shall include a provision to ensure waterfowl have access to clean and safe drinking water at all times.	Mi
	AW5.3.4 The VHP shall include a biosecurity plan, including steps to prevent contamination from incoming waterfowl, people, buildings, or equipment.	Mi
	AW5.3.5 The VHP shall include a plan for emergency situations (e.g. fire, power or water cut off, flood, snow storm, feeding system breakdown, transport vehicle breakdown) shall be available to care for the waterfowl.	Mi
	AW5.3.6 The VHP shall include a written plan for euthanasia, including how the decision shall be made, who may perform	Mi

Number	Requirement	Level
	euthanasia (including during non-work hours), and the methods of euthanasia.	
	See Euthanasia Guidance Note	
AW5.4	Records on administration of veterinary medicinal products or other interventions, mortality rate, injured, euthanized waterfowl (reasons and methodology) shall be maintained.	Mi
	See Record Keeping Templates	
AW5.5	The farm personnel shall have training on basic animal welfare principles, including the specific measures described in the *VHP* and the *RDS User Manual*.	Mi Not applicable for *small farms*
	AW5.5.1 Training records shall be maintained.	Mi Not applicable for small farms
	AW5.5.2 Responsible personnel shall be trained on good practices for handling of waterfowl.	Mi Not applicable for small farms
	AW5.5.3 Personnel involved in the transport of birds shall receive basic animal welfare training. Training shall include: 1) Basic animal welfare principles 2) Proper handling, moving of birds 3) How to observe signs of illness or injury	Mi Not applicable for small farms

AW6. Slaughter

Desired outcome: The slaughter process prevents or minimizes pain and distress. All animals are stunned (rendered unconscious and insensible to pain) prior to slaughter.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW6.1	Slaughter sites shall comply with all legal animal welfare requirements.	Ma
AW6.2	Personnel responsible for unloading, stunning and killing shall receive basic animal welfare training. Training shall include: 1) Basic animal welfare principles 2) Proper handling, moving of birds 3) How to observe signs of illness 4) Stunning methods, checking stunning effectiveness 5) Slaughter methods	Mi
	AW6.2.1 Training records shall be maintained.	Mi
	AW6.2.2 Standard operating procedures (e.g. posters) should be in view of workers and available in their language.	R
	AW6.2.3 Workers should be provided with a way to report non-conformity to the certification body.	R
AW6.3	The site shall keep records for all incoming loads of birds from RDS certified farms: 1) Rate of birds dead on arrival 2) Rate of sick or injured birds on arrival 3) Travel time 4) Time from arrival to slaughter	Mi
AW6.4	All birds shall be inspected upon arrival for sickness, injury, or illness. Records shall be kept and made available to inspectors.	Ma
AW6.5	After arriving at the slaughter site, waterfowl shall be handled properly to prevent distress.	Ma

Number	Requirement	Level
	AW6.5.1 Staff shall never deliberately injure a bird.	C
	In the case that there are appropriate facilities, it may be acceptable to unload animals and have them wait before being slaughtered. The facilities should provide: • Access to food and water. • Protection from extreme weather, including rain, storms, heat, or cold.	
AW6.6	Waterfowl shall be unloaded and slaughtered within two hours, unless the slaughterhouse has a waiting area with appropriate facilities.	Ma
AW6.7	Waterfowl should be unloaded (or hung) in a room with reduced lighting to prevent stress and fear as much as possible.	R
	AW6.7.1 Steps should be taken to prevent waterfowl from seeing other waterfowl get killed. This requirement is fulfilled if sufficient measures are taken to minimize stress of waterfowl from arriving to the slaughter site up to the moment of killing.	R
	• Reduced lighting can lower the stress level for the birds. • This should be balanced with worker safety to ensure the room is not too dark to see what they are doing.	
AW6.8	Birds shall not be subject to extreme cold or heat.	Ma
AW6.9	Waterfowl shall be stunned then killed before they can regain consciousness.	Ma
	AW6.9.1 The following methods of slaughter are permitted: • Electrical Stunning, followed by neck cutting • Captive bolt gun	Ma
	AW6.9.2 If electrical stunning applied; when using a 50 Hz AC frequency stun setting, a minimum of 130 mA per bird shall be applied.	Ma
	AW6.9.3 Stunning frequency shall be checked three times per day and results recorded.	Ma

Number	Requirement	Level
	AW6.9.4 Adjustments shall be made when the frequency and current settings do not produce an effective, consistent stun.	Ma
	The following methods of stunning before slaughter are allowed by the Responsible Down Standard. • Electrical stunning • Captive Bolt Gun	
	See Stunning Guidance Note	
AW6.10	Slaughter sites should conduct confirmation inspections of supplier farms to confirm their compliance to RDS.	R

AW6. Slaughter Guidance Notes and Templates

Guidance Notes

- Stunning Guidance Note

Stunning Guidance Note

How to stun using electrical stunning

What is electrical stunning?

Electrical stunning is one of the more reliable methods of stunning birds prior to slaughter. In industrial slaughterhouses, this is often done using a water bath. The water is electrified and birds are passed through the water before being slaughtered.

Most often a shackle is attached to a conveyer and birds are loaded onto the shackle by their feet. The conveyer moves birds into the slaughter facility and passes through the waterbath. Birds continue onto the slaughter step by the conveyer.

We recommend reviewing the guide for electrical waterbath stunning for poultry prepared by the Humane Slaughter Association: https://www.hsa.org.uk/downloads/hsagn7electricalwaterbathpoultry1.pdf.

Steps for using electrical waterbath stunning:

1. Ensure that equipment is well maintained and in good working order.
    a. The voltage, current, and resistance should be checked regularly to ensure the stun is done effectively.
    b. Make sure the height of the line is properly set to fully submerge the bird's head.
2. Shackle the birds properly onto the line to ensure they are not in pain.
    a. Sick or injured birds should not be shackled. They should be euthanized according to the requirements in AW3.13.
    b. Birds that are too small for the settings should not be shackled.
    c. Workers should remain calm and quiet during this process to minimize stress.
    d. Ensure there are no obstructions the birds may hit on their way to slaughter.
    e. Conveyers should be designed without need for transfer.
    f. Gently lift the bird and attach the legs into individual slots of the shackle. Gently lower the bird onto the breast contact strip.
    g. Birds should not be shackled for longer than two minutes before stunning.
    h. Birds that are shackled too close to one another may move and flap their wings more. It is recommended to allow enough space between birds that they can extend their wings without touching.
3. Pass birds through the electrical waterbath.

a. Ensure that the bird's head passes through the waterbath for the recommended duration. Refer to the equipment manual and the settings for the species.

4. Check that the stun was effective:

e. If you touch the cornea (the eyeball) and the bird shows a blink reflex, this is a sign of consciousness and the stun should be performed again.

f. If you are in doubt, always stun the bird again.

g. Immediately after electrical stunning, within 15 seconds, the bird should be killed by either neck-cutting or neck dislocation.

How to stun using a captive bolt gun (or concussion stunning)

What is a captive bolt gun?

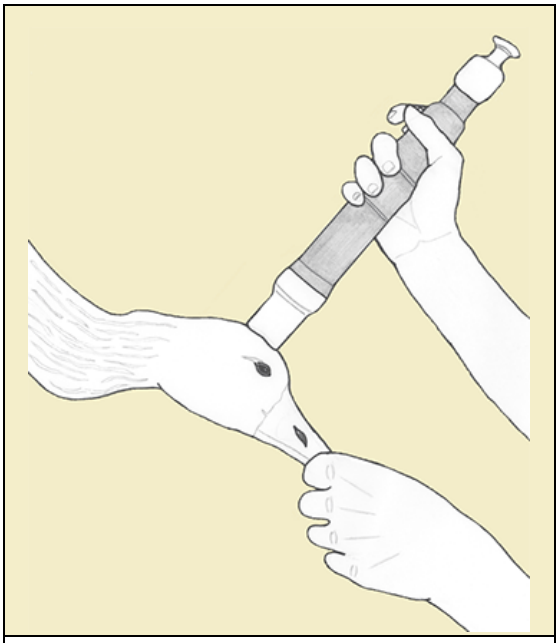
A severe blow to the head will result in unconsciousness, or even death. When the immediate blow leads to unconsciousness, this can be an effective way to prevent the animal from a painful death. However, it is difficult to get an effective blow without specially designed equipment.

A captive bolt gun delivers a controlled blow to the head that much more reliably results in unconsciousness. There are two types of captive bolt guns: cartridge powered captive-bolt stunners and compressed air powered captive-bolt stunners. They are both available with flat or convex heads. Convex heads are the best choice for both ducks and geese.

	
Air-powered captive bolt gun.	*Cartridge powered captive bolt gun.*

Steps for Using the Captive Bolt Gun:

1. Use the correct cartridge size or air pressure for the species and age of the bird. This is specific to the make and model of the equipment and should be kept on file in the euthanasia plan.
2. Restrain the bird to ensure accurate position of the captive bolt gun:
    a. Place muzzle on the highest point of the head, on the midline, with the captive bolt gun aimed straight down.
    b. Hold the bird's head by lightly holding the comb or resting the end of the beak between the tips of your fingers.
3. Stun the bird.
    a. Don't be alarmed by involuntary movement, this is normal and is a sign of an effective stun.
    b. **YouTube Video** on Concussion stunning equipment loading, firing: https://youtu.be/yR3P0Hup_6A
4. Check that the stun was effective:
    a. Signs of An Effective Concussion Stun: no rhythmic breathing (check for abdominal movements in the vent area); uncontrolled wing flapping; leg flexion and extension; no neck tension; no vocalization.
    b. If you touch the cornea (the eyeball) and the bird shows a blink reflex, this is a sign of consciousness and the stun should be performed again.
    c. YouTube Video on Signs of an effective concussion stun: https://youtu.be/6uopdSqtfUs
    d. If you are in doubt, always stun the bird again.



Correct positioning for concussion stunning of ducks and geese.

Section C – Chain of Custody

C1. Slaughterhouses

In this section, you will find supplemental guidance for the RDS 3.0 Chain of Custody requirements that apply to slaughterhouses. Not all RDS 3.0 requirements are listed in the RDS 3.0 User Manual, but all requirements are still applicable according to their level.

Slaughterhouses are required to meet all the requirements of the Content Claim Standard. This ensures that down and feather material from RDS-certified farms is properly handled and kept separate from down and feather material from non-certified farms.

Managing incoming birds (B2. of CCS 2.0)

1. Workers should be trained to verify the origin of incoming animals. There should be a way to indicate whether or not they are RDS-certified. This should regularly be cross-checked with scope certificate information to verify the certification status of the farm.
    - This may not be necessary when the slaughterhouse is the ICS manager of a Farm Group. Steps should still be taken to confirm the farm the animals came from.
2. There should be a plan in place to indicate the number of birds and the other records required for RDS-certified farms.

Managing down and feather material after slaughter (B3. of CCS 2.0)

1. Production lines, storage facilities, and packaging should include some form of identification of RDS-certified material. This does not have to include the name of the standard but should be able to be reference by the management in some way. For example, all certified materials are identified with a reference code that starts with the number 9.
2. The slaughterhouse must demonstrate how down and feather material from RDS-certified farms is segregated from non-certified farms.
    - For slaughterhouses that process both certified and non-certified animals on the same equipment: There must be a pause between certified and non-certified animals to ensure that machines can be cleaned. It may also work to run all the certified animals through the facility and then follow this with non-certified animals without cleaning. The machines should be thoroughly cleaned before switching back to certified animals.
    - For slaughterhouses with separate lines for certified and non-certified animals: There should be adequate separation between facilities for certified and non-certified materials. This is especially important after down and feather material has been cleaned, as it may transfer through the air from a non-certified storage area to a certified area.

Managing down and feather material for shipping (B4. of CCS 2.0)

1. All shipments that contain RDS-certified material should be properly identified. It should be closed to ensure that materials cannot easily be swapped.

2. There should be corresponding identification listed in purchase documents and the transaction certificate that allows the buyer of the material to identify the material.
3. Certified and non-certified material may be shipped in the same container, as long as there is sufficient identification attached to the RDS-certified products in a way that does not allow the identification to be easily moved to other products.

C2. Supply chain

In this section, you will find supplemental guidance for the RDS 3.0 Chain of Custody requirements that apply to other supply chain sites. Not all RDS 3.0 requirements are listed in the RDS 3.0 User Manual, but all requirements are still applicable according to their level.

Any company that handles RDS down and feather material is required to meet all the requirements of the Content Claim Standard. This ensures that down and feather material from RDS-certified farms is properly handled and kept separate from down and feather material from non-certified farms.

Managing down and feather material (B3. of CCS 2.0)

1. Production lines, storage facilities, and any packaging should include some form of identification of RDS-certified material. This does not have to include the name of the standard but should be able to be reference by the management in some way. For example, all certified materials are identified with a reference code that starts with the number 9.
2. The facility should be able to demonstrate how RDS-certified down and feather material is segregated from non-certified materials.
    - For facilities that process both certified and non-certified material on the same equipment: There must be a pause between certified and non-certified material to ensure that machines can be cleaned. The facility may run certified material through the facility and then follow this with non-certified materials without cleaning. The machines should be thoroughly cleaned before switching back to certified materials to prevent commingling.
    - For facilities with separate production lines for certified and non-certified material: There should be adequate separation between facilities for certified and non-certified materials. This is especially important with loose down and feather material, as it may transfer through the air from a non-certified storage area to a certified area.

Managing down and feather material for shipping (B4. of CCS 2.0)

1. All shipments that contain RDS-certified material should be properly identified. It should be closed to ensure that materials cannot easily be swapped.
2. There should be corresponding identification listed in purchase documents and the transaction certificate that allows the buyer of the material to identify the material.

3. Certified and non-certified material may be shipped in the same container, as long as there is sufficient identification attached to the RDS-certified products in a way that does not allow the identification to be easily moved to other products.

Product Labelling (F2.2 of RDS 3.0)

1. If you are requested by your client to attach hangtags or sewn-in labels to the product with reference to the RDS, you must have the following documentation:
    - One example corresponding label release form issued by an authorized certification body to the company requesting the labeling. It is not required to file all label release forms for every different product line.

Appendix A – Definitions

Refer to *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents* for definitions of terms used in these procedures. Key definitions are included below. Defined terms are shown in italics in the first usage in this document, and in some other uses for clarity.

Area: A clearly defined geographical area from which *RDS material* is purchased. An area does not need to be contiguous.

Area Certification: Certification of the supply *area*. The organization purchasing from the area is the certified *organization*.

Bird: See *waterfowl.*

Collector: A person or organization that collects down and feather from farms and trades this to down traders and/or processors. A collector may work independently or under contract by another entity. In the context of RDS, collector refers to the small collector collecting from households and registered by the certified *organization* as an approved RDS collector.

Down: The fine plumage on a *waterfowl* that sits under the outer feathers. For simplicity, the term down refers to all plumage including feathers and down. All RDS requirements are applied to down and feathers.

Farm: Any *site* where crops or livestock are raised for the production of food and/or textiles. Non-adjacent fields may be considered part of the same farm, provided they are under the same management (i.e. same farmer). For RDS: Limited to domestic *waterfowl* farms (for production of food and/or parent *waterfowl*); includes *hatcheries*.

Small farm: Any *farm* where less than 200 birds are raised at one time.

Force feeding: Any form of feeding that forces the *waterfowl* to eat more than it wants/needs. In particular, this refers to manual intervention using mechanical equipment (i.e. tubes) to increase the fat content, often for the production of foie gras.

Group: A scope certificate which includes multiple, separately owned *sites* whose conformity with the standard falls under the responsibility of another separately owned legal entity with an internal control system (ICS). The entity which manages the ICS is considered the organization. Group eligibility requirements are defined in RDS.

Group Member: A *site* which is part of a *group* certification. The word 'member' may be used to refer to a group member.

Hatchery: Any *site* where *waterfowl* eggs are mechanically or naturally hatched to produce *waterfowl*.

Industrial: A supply chain where the following are true: more than 200 birds are raised on a farm at once, the slaughter site has a capacity higher than 1,000 birds per day, and the meat is sold commercially (i.e. not for personal or local consumption).

Internal Control System (ICS): The system used by an organization for the oversight and management of certification for multiple sites, such as a group.

ICS Manager: The ICS manager (or management group) is responsible for the implementation of the *ICS*.

ICS Inspector: A person responsible for conducting inspections of sites covered by an *ICS.*

Live-plucking: Any form of removing *down* and feather from living *waterfowl*, including any form of molt harvesting.

Organization: A legal entity which is *certified* to or in the process of becoming certified to the RDS.

Parent Farm: Any *farm* where *waterfowl* are kept for producing eggs. Any time RDS *down* is collected from a parent farm, the entire farm is subject to RDS certification.

Parent Farm Certification: An optional extension of the application of the RDS. Under Parent Farm Certification, all *parent farms* that supply to the raising farms on a scope certificate are required to be audited and certified. Material certified under parent farm certification may be separately identified through to the final product.

Parent Farm Certified Material: Material certified under *parent farm certification*. The designation shall appear on the *transaction certificate*.

RDS Material: The specific material that is being verified by the RDS as a content claim in a product which is sold.

Site: Any geographically distinct unit within a certificate scope. Locations which are geographically distinct or have different civic addresses are considered to be separate sites (see exception for *farms*).

Slaughter: Any *site* where livestock are killed for their meat. The slaughter process may happen at *farms*, small *facilities* or large-scale slaughterhouses.

> **Small slaughter site**: Any *slaughter* site with a capacity of less than 1,000 *waterfowl* per day.

Waterfowl: Domestically raised ducks and geese. Use of the word *bird* in the context of RDS refers to individual waterfowl.

Appendix B – Acknowledgements

The Responsible Down Standard draws on leading knowledge of animal welfare organizations, and we would like to specifically thank Four Paws International, Humane Society International, and RSPCA UK for their contributions in research and advisement.

The Humane Slaughter Association provides resources that form a crucial component of this guide, and we are grateful for their work and commitment to providing best practice in animal welfare. In particular, sections on euthanasia, slaughter, and handling.