

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

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# FSIS NOTICE

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12-18

2/26/18

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR KIDNEY DISPOSITIONS IN POULTRY CARCASSES

### I. PURPOSE

This notice announces that FSIS is updating instructions to inspection program personnel (IPP) for kidney dispositions in poultry carcasses at slaughter establishments. The instructions in this notice replace the poultry kidney disposition criteria set out in [FSIS Directive 6100.3, Ante-Mortem and Post-Mortem Poultry Inspection](#), Section IX. H. The new kidney disposition criteria are to be applied upon receipt of this notice and following correlation by the FSIS supervisor with IPP performing poultry slaughter inspection duties.

### II. BACKGROUND

Historical carcass and visceral organ disposition guidance was based principally on an abundance of caution associated with quality concerns and poultry physiology. A less restrictive approach to organoleptic post-mortem inspection of carcasses and visceral organs is now advantageous to remain current with inspection methods that focus on food safety. Final disposition of poultry carcasses and visceral organs with diseases and conditions is to be based on grossly visible lesions that IPP (and establishment sorters) can observe. While microscopic findings derived from histopathology can provide additional information on flock conditions, a final disposition on carcasses and visceral organs is usually not to be based exclusively on these laboratory reports when they are available. When necessary, the Public Health Veterinarian (PHV) combines the organoleptic inspection information with available laboratory information in making a diagnosis and disposition per [FSIS Directive 10,230.6](#).

### III. AWARENESS MEETING WITH PLANT MANAGEMENT

Upon receipt of this notice, the Inspector-in-Charge (IIC) is to have an awareness meeting with plant management to inform them that there are new kidney disposition criteria that are effective immediately.

### IV. POULTRY KIDNEY DISPOSITIONS

A. Upon receipt of this notice, IPP who are assigned to poultry slaughter establishments are to review the modified instructions below.

B. IPP are to condemn kidneys (9 CFR 381.78(a)) when:

1. Renal (kidney) pathology is present; or
2. Airsacculitis is present specifically in the abdominal air sac membranes making the kidneys an affected tissue, and the posterior (back) part of the carcass is salvaged for airsacculitis per 9 CFR 381.84.

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**DISTRIBUTION:** Electronic

**NOTICE EXPIRES:** 3/1/19

**OPI:** OPPD

**NOTE:** Hepatic (liver) or splenic (spleen) pathology which is determined by IPP to be localized and visibly limited to the affected organ require only the affected visceral organ to be condemned. Localized pathology of the liver or spleen does not require simultaneous condemnation of the kidneys unless the kidneys are also affected by visible pathological changes.

C. IPP are to instruct the “inspector’s helper” to mark the birds for removal of the kidneys. Off-line IPP are to verify removal of the kidneys by the establishment.

D. When necessary, on-line IPP are to hang back carcasses for further examination by a PHV per 9 CFR 381.77. The PHV is to correlate with IPP and plant management if flock disposition or establishment sorting activity concerns exist.

## V. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to the Policy Development Staff through [askFSIS](#). When submitting a question, use the Submit a Question tab, and enter the following information in the fields provided.

Subject Field: Enter **Notice 12-18**

Question Field: Enter your question with as much detail as possible.

Product Field: Select **General Inspection Policy** from the drop-down menu.

Category Field: Select from the drop-down menu.

Policy Arena: Select **Domestic (U.S.) Only** or **International (Import/Export)** from the drop-down menu.

When all fields are complete, press **Continue** and at the next screen press **Finish Submitting Question**.

**NOTE:** Refer to [FSIS Directive 5620.1](#), *Using askFSIS*, for additional information on submitting questions.



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