

## Reducing the risk of E.coli and other disease causing organisms in slaughterhouses

### LIVESTOCK CULTURE

- Strains of *Eschericia coli* (*E.coli*), *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* are some of the disease causing organisms (pathogens) that can be found in slaughterhouses.
- Some pathogens originate from the intestinal track of infected animals and can be brought into the slaughter facilities on the hides and hoofs of animals.
- It is not possible to eliminate many of these pathogens from animals but there are ways to minimize the risk.
- Reducing the chances of meat becoming contaminated cannot be accomplished at just one step in the process. Reducing contamination must be considered at **all** steps from receipt of the animal, through processing and shipment.
- Insist on clean animals from your supplier.
- Provide clean bedding in your live animal holding areas.
- Ensure staff are completing carcass dressing in a sanitary manner. Key steps include but are not limited to:
  - Bringing dry animals into the slaughter plant area whenever possible.
  - Removing manure 'tags' where knife cuts will be made during skinning.
  - Using care during skinning to avoid cross contamination from the hide surface to the underlying muscle.
  - Ensuring equipment is cleaned and sanitized effectively and frequently.
- Keep the time that carcasses are at room temperature to a minimum.
- Ensure coolers and refrigerators are maintained at 4°C or lower at all times.
- Prevent cross contamination by:
  - Using boot baths between slaughter and processing areas.
  - Providing clean smocks for staff entering the processing area.
  - Ensuring staff thoroughly wash their hands when leaving slaughter area and after hands become contaminated.
  - Providing dedicated knives for the slaughter area.
  - Providing dedicated knives for least sanitary parts of the dressing process (e.g. sticking, skinning, bung removal).
- Microorganisms can build resistance to the same sanitizer when it is used on a repetitive, long-term basis. Consider rotating the type of sanitizer every six to nine months.
- Ensure staff are trained in safe food handling practices including: personal hygiene, cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces, utensils and equipment, temperature control and the prevention of cross contamination.

#### For more information of food borne illness:

- Visit [www.inspection.gc.ca/food/consumer-centre/food-safety-tips/food-poisoning/eng/1331151916451/1331152055552](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/consumer-centre/food-safety-tips/food-poisoning/eng/1331151916451/1331152055552); or
- Contact Chris Smith, Food Safety Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture at 306-7874692 or [Chris.Smith@gov.sk.ca](mailto:Chris.Smith@gov.sk.ca).