



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Health

Guidelines for Hygienic Practices for Pluck Shop/Pluck Depots

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Guide Poultry means any domesticated bird including chickens, turkeys and ducks.

Carcass means the whole bird after slaughter, bleeding, plucking and eviscerating.

Giblet means the liver, heart and any other parts considered edible, provided that such parts have been properly trimmed and washed.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

All food premises must be registered with the Public Health Department/ Inspectorate on or before March 31, each year.

The registration expires on 31 December each year.



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PLANNING APPROVAL

Before any new pluck shop/pluck depot can be constructed or established in an existing building, an application must be made to the Town and Country Planning Division for their approval. The Town and Country Planning Division will then pass the plans to the Local Health Authority in the area where it is to be established, for processing and final approval. Only when this approval is obtained, can the premises be established. The application and plans must be submitted in triplicate and must indicate the type of bakery/bakery outlet, location, size, sanitary design and proper workflow to ensure good hygienic standards.





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REGISTRATION

1. The owner/operator of a new or an existing pluck shop or pluck depot must apply for registration each year to the Public Health Department which is legally responsible for the area in which the said business will be operating.
2. Before any new pluck shop or pluck depot premises is established, layout of the proposed establishment must first be submitted to the said Public Health Department for approval in duplicate. See examples of layouts at Appendix I and b.
3. The premises must be inspected and registered by the Public Health Department before opening for business to the public.
4. All employees of the pluck shop or pluck depot must be registered with the Public Health Department as food handlers.
5. Payment of an administrative fee is required for the pluck shop or pluck depot registration.
6. Registration of the pluck shop or pluck depot can be cancelled in cases of breach of Sale of Food Stuff Bye-Laws.





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PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Layout - Design to allow one-way flow, with three distinct areas; (1) holding/display pens, (2) processing area and (3) sales or service area. See attached examples of designs in Appendix I.

Floor - Impervious non-skid (preferably tiled), durable, free from cracks and properly graded to an adequate drainage system.

Walls - Should be finished to a smooth, impervious washable surface (tiled from floor to a minimum two (2) metres), be light in colour and the junction between walls and floor should be rounded to facilitate proper cleaning.

Ceiling - Non-absorbent easily cleaned and maintained in good repair. Material used should minimize condensation and mould/ fungus development and residual flaking.

Lighting - All areas should be adequately lit with avoidance of glare and flickering light. Fluorescent lighting is recommended and minimum illumination should be 538 lux. All lighting features should be screened to prevent food contamination and breakage.

Ventilation - There should be adequate cooling and extractor fans. Windows should prevent glare and be fly proofed. Doors should be fly and rat proofed, fire resistant and self-closing.

Plumbing - Proper sanitary plumbing should be placed in an area to facilitate easy maintenance and repairs.

Toilet facilities - Adequate toilet facilities conveniently located, properly installed, maintained in good working order and cleaned several times during the day, should be provided.

Separate sanitary facilities must be provided for staff/employees for both male and females.

Toilet rooms should be completely enclosed and have tightly fitted doors and not ventilate into the food processing or business areas.



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PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Wash hand basins

– Hand washing facilities should be provided in or adjacent to toilet rooms and maintained daily. Disposable towels must be provided, with proper waste collection containers and disposal facilities, or hand dryers.

In the pluck shop preparation area separate hand wash basins, with elbow water tap control and liquid soap are preferable.

Sinks – Separate stainless steel or porcelain or tiled sinks must be provided for washing of utensils and for the preparation of food. Hot and cold water should be provided.

Poultry preparation surfaces

– Counters and table top surfaces used for pluck shop preparation must be smooth and made of impervious material for ease of cleaning, such as stainless steel, tiles and other approved kitchen counter surfaces.

Storage – Separate storage cupboards/shelves must be provided for dry food goods, utensils, and cleaning chemicals and equipment.

Other staff facilities

– Changing rooms and lockers, rest room, staff room with kitchen/dining area. Office with first aid kit.

Yard – Paved yards should be suitably graded and in good repair. Lawn and vegetation suitably cut and maintained. Areas designated for parking and goods/service delivery.

Drains – Drains should be of concrete, suitably graded, regularly cleaned and kept in good repair emptying into a suitable outfall collecting drain.

Vehicles – Vehicles to be used in the poultry trade, should not be used for any other purpose. All vehicles should be inspected and be in good working condition.



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MAINTENANCE

Cleaning Schedules

- There must be cleaning schedules developed for all areas (restrooms, customer service areas, preparation areas, storage, equipment, yard, etc.) of the pluck shop/depot premises. These must be posted, checked and dated as the work is done.

Pest Control – There must be a programme for the control/eradication of insect vectors, rodents and other vermin.

Garbage Disposal – Separate storage must be provided for liquid and solid waste. Bins must have fitted covers. Disposal of waste must be daily and in an approved manner.



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HOLDING/DISPLAY PENS

These pens are for display/selection of birds by the consumer and should therefore only house as much birds as is needed for a short period (can be replenished from another large storage pen). They should be positioned so as to facilitate viewing/selection of birds by the consumer. An area of not less than 1 sq. ft. per bird should be allowed. Walls should be solid for at least 2ft. high and then completed in wire mesh to allow adequate ventilation. The floor must be covered with litter to a depth of approximately 1-2 inches. The weigh scale should be positioned for ready viewing by the customers.





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PROCESSING AREA

A clear line of separation should exist between the holding pens and the processing and sales area. The processing area must be divided into bleed/pluck section, gutting section and cut-up section.

Premises must be fly and rodent free. Bleeding area should be tiled up to the height of 6-8 feet. In the evisceration/gutting area tiles should be placed around the sinks and drain board. Floor surface should be smooth, non-skid, impervious and graded to drains to prevent pooling of water and to facilitate easy cleaning. All drains must flow from clean to dirty areas and not vice versa. Table and sinks (kitchen sinks are acceptable) should be made of stainless steel, aluminum or galvanized sheeting i.e. only non-absorbent material. Pipes should be conveniently placed at each stage of the operation in order to allow maintenance of a consistent standard of sanitation. Additionally, there must be a face basin (equipped with sanitizer) for hand washing. Ventilation should be adequate for a comfortable work environment.



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SALES AREA

There should be adequate provision for the proper storage of bags and other packing material. Counter tops and shelves should be covered with smooth, impervious material. A price- board should be clearly visible indicating the price of bird per pound or kilogram (both live and dressed), as well as cost of processing (See Appendix II). The minimum size of the price-board should be 2ft.x3ft. Where birds are sold dressed, a separate scale should be provided which is again easily visible to the customer. Additionally the Ministry of Health will be responsible for the display of a health notice in this area to inform customers on certain requirements for the safe holding of the product. (See Appendix III)





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PROCESSING

1. Only healthy birds can be slaughtered and offered for sale.
2. Ideally, birds must not be fed at least six (6) hours before slaughter.
3. Birds must be allowed to bleed properly for at least one and a half (1.5) to two (2) minutes.
4. Where scalding is done in containers, particular care must be taken to ensure that hygienic standards are maintained. The containers must be emptied as often as necessary during the working period to ensure that the water does not become too polluted. The water must be maintained at a temperature (60 degrees centigrade) that would adequately remove feathers, while preventing damage to skin.
5. Bleeding tunnels and blood containers must be constructed of suitable material which is easy to clean. They must be regularly cleaned; at least at the end of each working day.
6. Plucking machines should be designed to control the scattering of feathers as much as possible.
Particular care should be taken in the eviscerating process not to contaminate the carcass, with crop contents, faeces or gall.
8. Carcasses should be washed after plucking and again after evisceration.
9. Hand washing should be done after every evisceration.
10. Storage containers for entrails must be leak proof, constructed of suitable impervious material, and easy to clean.



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PROCESSING

11. One of the criteria of an acceptable operation is that it becomes cleaner and cleaner as it moves from the holding or live bird area, to the point where the birds are bagged and offered for sale
12. All plumbing and waste disposal lines must be large enough to carry peak loads. Traps for solid matter should be installed where water waste enters the drainage system.
13. Some degree of clean up should be done during major breaks. The movement of workers between clean and dirty areas should be restricted. Sumps or solid matter traps including the drainage system within the establishment should be emptied and cleaned as often as necessary and at the end of the working day.
14. The removal of all wastes (feathers, blood, entrails and dead birds) should be done continuously, to be stored in suitable covered containers pending daily disposal at the authorized dump in accordance with the EMA Act.
15. Processed birds should be chilled pending their sale to customers. They should be cooled by firstly immersing in an ice bath with an appropriate sanitizer and subsequent storage in a display chiller or on chipped ice in an appropriate ice tray. The temperature of dressed birds should be reduced to and maintained at or below 4 degrees centigrade within one hour of slaughter.
16. All equipment should be operated in a manner to ensure safety of the operating personnel as well as to prevent transmission of hazards to the consumer.
17. Records shall be kept by operators as determined by the relevant authority



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PERSONAL HYGIENE AND FOOD HANDLING PRACTICES

1. All persons in the poultry trade must be medically examined and duly registered as food handlers with the Public Health Department/Inspectorate.
2. All food handlers must maintain a high degree of personal hygiene while on duty.
3. Clothing, including suitable head dress must be appropriate to the duties being performed and be kept cleaned.
4. Hands must be washed as often as necessary to conform to hygienic operating practices.
5. Spitting is prohibited in food handling areas.
6. Precautions must be taken to prevent contamination of the finished product from waste or any other foreign substances.
7. Cuts and abrasions on hands must be properly treated and protected with suitable water proof dressing.
8. Adequate first aid facilities must be provided.



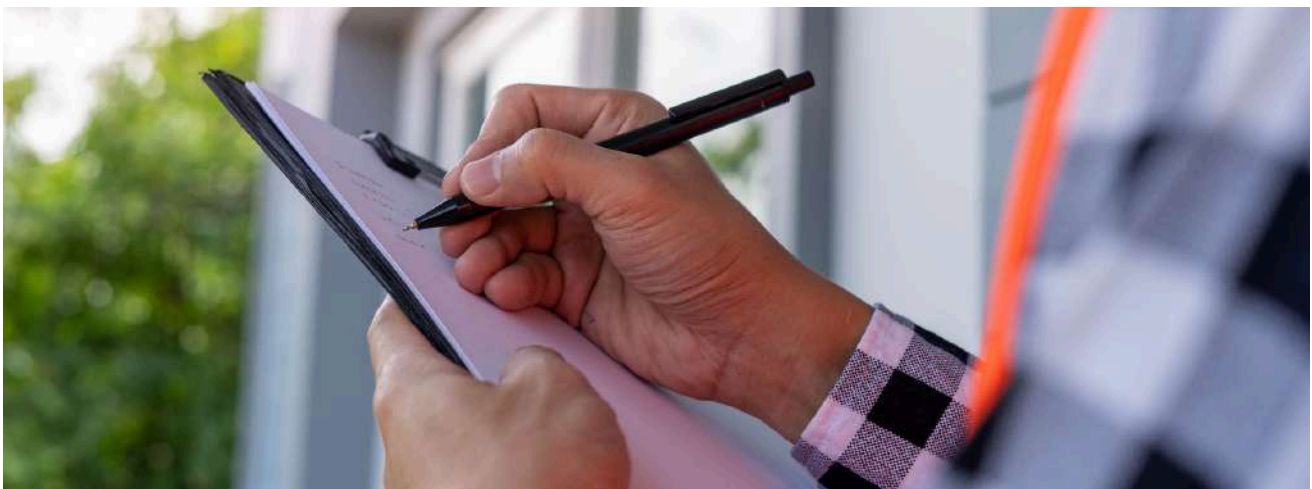


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OPERATING PRACTICES AND INSPECTION

1. Workers handling live birds or unfit material must not be permitted to work parts of the premises where poultry is slaughtered and processed, unless adequate cleaning measures are taken by the individual.
2. All sick birds must be removed from the pluck shop.
3. An independent ante mortem and post mortem examination should be carried out on each bird to ensure that the consumer receives a wholesome product.
4. In order to maintain good hygienic conditions and to prevent hazards to the consumer, all poultry pluck shops and depots must undergo periodic inspections to be carried out by the Public Health Inspectorate.

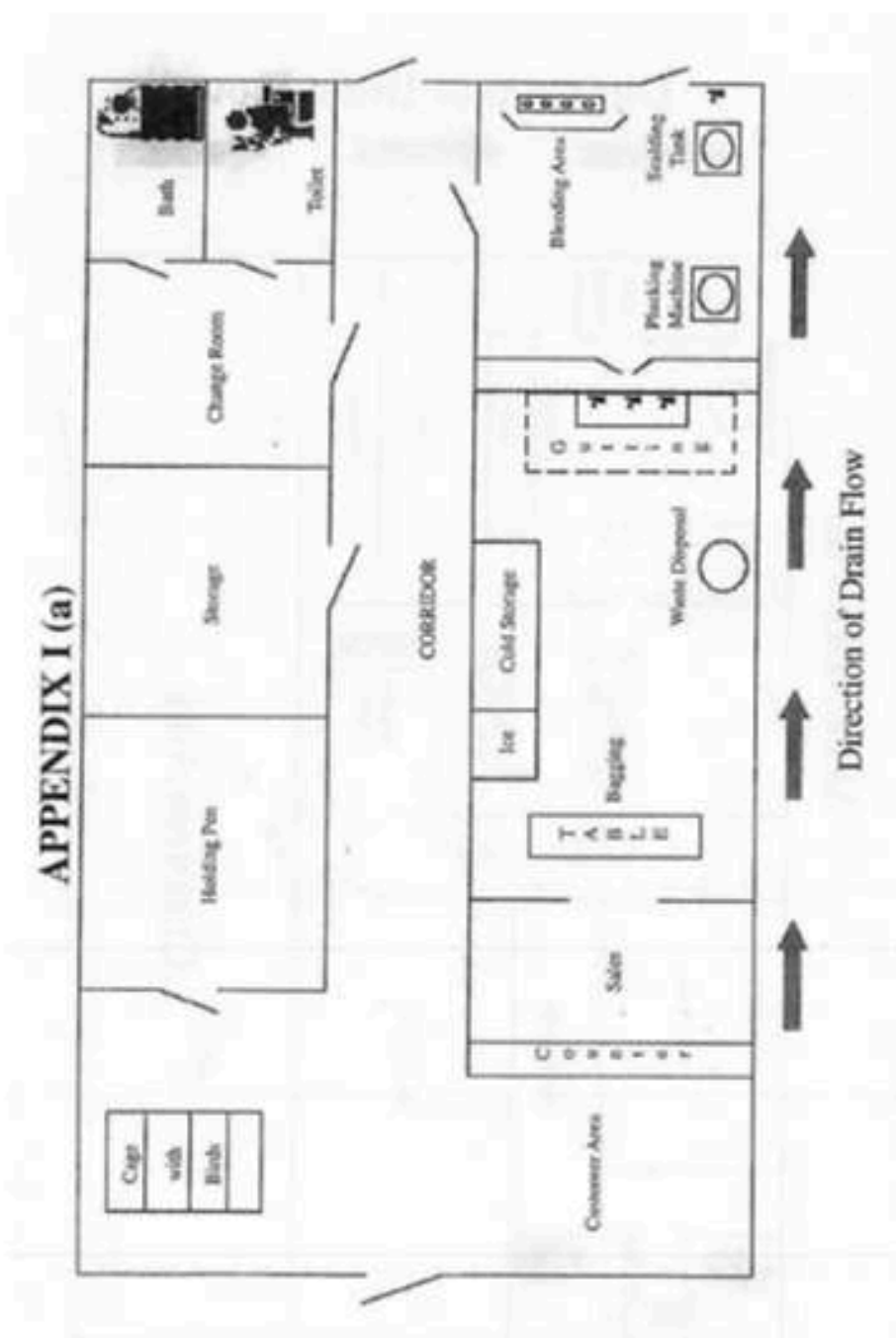




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Guidelines for Hygienic Practices for Pluck Shop/Pluck Depots

Appendix I (a)





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Appendix I (b)





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Appendix II

PRICING INFORMATION			
	BROILER	BREEDER/LAYER	DUCKS
Live weight/Kg (lbs.)			
Processing Charges			
● Pluck/Gut			
● Cut-up			
● Singeing			
Dress weight/Kg (lbs.)			



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Appendix III

The Ministry advises that in order to receive a wholesome product consumers should:

- Select their bird of choice and ensure that the premises and processing are maintained in a sanitary manner.
- If purchasing an already processed bird ensure that the product is:
 - a) not off-coloured (bruised, red, bluish, etc.)
 - b) properly cleaned (free from all pin feathers)
 - c) chilled or on ice and feel cool to the touch
- ensure that product is packaged in clear plastic bags only.
- cook or refrigerate product within one (1) hour of purchase.

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