

**Subpart I—Operating Procedures****§ 381.65 Operations and procedures, generally.**

(a) Operations and procedures involving the processing, other handling, or storing of any poultry product shall be strictly in accord with clean and sanitary practices and shall be conducted in such a manner as will result in sanitary processing, proper inspection, and the production of poultry and poultry products that are not adulterated.

(b) Materials which create any condition that may result in adulteration of poultry products shall not be handled or stored in rooms, compartments, or other places in any official establishment where any poultry product is processed, otherwise handled, or stored.

(c) Poultry shall be slaughtered in accordance with good commercial practices in a manner that will result in thorough bleeding of the carcasses and assure that breathing has stopped prior to scalding. Blood from the killing operation shall be confined to a relatively small area.

(d) Kidneys of mature chickens and mature turkeys (poultry defined in § 381.170(a) (1)(vi) and (vii) and (2)(iv)) shall be removed from their carcasses after the inspectors complete their post-mortem inspection of the poultry viscera, but before completion of the eviscerating operations, and shall not be used for human food.

(e) Poultry carcasses contaminated with visible fecal material shall be prevented from entering the chilling tank.

(f)–(g) [Reserved]

(h) Thawing poultry in water:

(1) *Ready-to-cook poultry.* When frozen ready-to-cook poultry is to be thawed in water, the thawing practices and procedures shall be such as will prevent the product from becoming adulterated by the absorption of moisture and such poultry shall be thawed by one of the following methods:

(i) The poultry may be thawed in continuous running tap water of sufficient volume and for such limited time as is necessary to thaw such poultry. The thawing media shall not exceed 70 °F. in temperature. Complete thawing is necessary to permit thorough exam-

ination of ready-to-cook poultry prior to any further processing.

(ii) The practice of placing frozen ready-to-cook poultry into cooking kettles, without prior thawing, is permitted only when a representative sample of the entire lot has been thawed and found to be sound and unadulterated. Thawing may be accomplished in cookers where the water can be heated to enable the cooking process to begin immediately following completion of thawing. Thawing practices and procedures shall result in no net gain in weight over the frozen weight. When whole carcasses or parts are thawed for repackaging as parts, it is not acceptable to recool the parts in slush ice. However, they may be held in tanks of crushed ice with the drains open, pending further processing or packaging.

(iii) The poultry may be thawed in recirculated water, maintained at a temperature not in excess of 50 °F., for such limited time as is necessary to thaw such poultry.

(2) [Reserved]

(i) Cuts for the removal of the viscera shall be limited to those necessary for proper processing operations and inspection. With respect to roaster-style evisceration, opening cuts shall be made in such a manner that the skin between the thighs and rib cage will not be cut or torn open during the drawing operation. No additional cuts shall be made prior to chilling other than those necessary to perform the complete evisceration of the bird. The “bar-cut” method of evisceration may be used only when permitted by the inspector in charge upon his determination that this method can be used at the official establishment without contaminating the poultry. With respect to poultry that is to be opened by the “bar-cut” method, particular care shall be exercised in making transverse cuts so that the thigh areas will not be opened and the flesh at the posterior end of the keel will not be exposed. An occasional bird that is unintentionally opened in the aforesaid areas will be permitted. The type of opening cut is part of the chilling procedure and any change in such cut requires establishing a new procedure under § 381.66.

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(j) The area at the junction of the neck with the body of the eviscerated bird shall be positively opened prior to final washing so that water will drain freely from the body cavity and not become trapped in the area between the neck skin and the neck.

(k) Ready-to-cook poultry shall be adequately drained after chilling, to remove ice and free water prior to packaging or packing.

(l) Cut-up poultry shall be processed from chilled carcasses and the parts shall not be rechilled in ice and water or water, but may be temporarily held in containers of crushed ice which are continuously drained pending further processing and packaging. Upon approval by the Administrator, and under such conditions as he may prescribe in specific cases, cut-up poultry may be processed from unchilled eviscerated poultry. Such poultry parts shall not be chilled in water and ice, but may be chilled either in ice in continuously drained containers or by immediate entry into a freezer. Such poultry parts shall be chilled as provided in § 381.66(b)(2).

(m) All offal resulting from the evisceration operation shall be removed from the official establishment as often as necessary to prevent the development of an insanitary condition.

(n) Containers to be used for packaging poultry products shall be clean, free from substances and odors that would result in adulteration of the products and of sufficient strength and durability to protect the products adequately during normal distribution.

(o) Paper and other material used for lining barrels or other containers in which poultry products are packed shall be of such kinds as do not tear readily during use but remain intact when moistened by the products. Wooden containers to be used for packing poultry products shall be fully lined except when the poultry products to be packed therein are fully wrapped.

(p) Protective coverings shall be used for poultry products while they are in any official establishment or are being transported between official establishments, which are adequate to protect the products against contamination by any foreign substances (including, but not being limited to, dust, dirt, and in-

sects) considering the means employed in transporting the products.

(q)(1) Detached ova may be collected for human food in the official establishment provided it is done in a sanitary manner: *Provided*, The identity of such ova with the carcass shall be maintained past the point of inspection and ova from condemned carcasses shall likewise be condemned and treated as required in § 381.95: *And provided further*, That ova for human food are cooled, packaged, and otherwise handled so as to be fit for human food.

(2) Detached ova harvested for human food may leave the official establishment only for movement to an egg products processing plant for processing as allowed in § 59.440 of the regulations (7 CFR 59.440) under the Egg Products Inspection Act and when moved from the official establishment shall bear labeling which indicates that the ova were harvested under sanitary supervision of the Inspection Service.

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### § 381.66 Temperatures and chilling and freezing procedures.

(a) *General*. Temperatures and procedures which are necessary for chilling and freezing ready-to-cook poultry, including all edible portions thereof, shall be in accordance with operating procedures which insure the prompt removal of the animal heat and will preserve the condition and wholesomeness of the poultry and assure that the products are not adulterated. A description of the chilling and freezing procedures used at the official establishment shall be filed with the inspector in charge at the establishment.

(b) *General chilling requirements*. (1) All poultry that is slaughtered and eviscerated in the official establishment shall be chilled immediately after processing so that the internal temperature is reduced to 40 °F. or less, as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section unless such poultry is to be frozen or cooked immediately at the official establishment. Eviscerated poultry to be shipped from the establishment in packaged form shall be maintained