Fish Harvesting Site Inspection Form

Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006;

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing,

Work schedule number

Date of visit 22nd July 2022
Address of head quarters [redacted]

Address of Harvesting site [redacted]

Location of farm site for fish being processed [redacted]

CPH: [redacted]

Species of fish Atlantic Salmon **Approximate number being harvested:** approx. [redacted]

Type of visit: Targeted routine visit

Background of complaint (if applicable): On farm welfare complain regarding [redacted] was received alleging [redacted].

Name and contact details of company/private vet: [redacted]

Present at visit: [redacted]

Assurance schemes: Numerous – RSPCA Assurance Scheme, BRC, Code of Good Practice, ISO14001, Label Rouge

Harvesting

Well-boat outflow pipe:

Monitoring for:

Oxygen: Yes

PH: Yes

Temperature: Yes

Records kept – Yes kept and available for inspection

Additional Comments (eg speed of fish being fed through): Fish are transported via wellboat (today was the [redacted] wellboat) fish are pumped from the wellboat using swim ashore method. Wellboat can monitor proceedings via CCTV which can allow them to visualise the process and adapt their speed as required, there is also constant communication between the harvest site and wellboat to ensure the speed of fish flow through is suitable to ensure stunning efficiently. Fish must only be out the water for <15secs before entering the percussive stunner. Monitoring for oxygen, pH and temperature

is continuous however it is also checked manually at numerous stages through the process, this is recorded on daily check sheets, and these were available for inspection.

Description of process: Fish are transported from site in a wellboat at [redacted] and are then pumped ashore using the swim ashore method. Monitoring points are at the beginning and end of pipe. Any issues should be picked up immediately and reported to the processing manager and site technical lead. Fish skin pH is monitored as a stress indicator.
The fish are pumped through pipework over a grading table which separates out any seawater and any cleaner fish. Then through the pre-electrical stunner if this is being used. (this was not in use today due to a technical issue which was being looked into). Following this they pass over another dewaterer before entering the stunners.

Stunning process:

Types of stunning used: Mechanical, Percussive

Set up of electrical stunning if applicable: Electrical stunning is set up at the site however was not in use during the inspection due to technical issues.

Voltage – N/A

Time – N/A

Intensity – N/A

Effectiveness – N/A

Model of percussive stunner: SI7

a. **Set up of stunning process:** There are two percussive stunners side by side with a dedicated operator for each stunner. The fish are directed into the stunner and are mechanically percussively stunned and bled immediately by SI7 mechanical process. Following this they are passed onto a bleeding belt; this is designed to be long so that the effectiveness of stunning can be monitored. A dedicated staff member is monitoring for signs of effective stunning and an additional welfare officer is overseeing the whole process.

Assessment of effectiveness of stunners:

Bleeding procedure:

Length from stunning to bleeding: SOP states time from stun to bleed must not exceed 10s. Welfare officer constantly monitoring the effectiveness of bleeding, any issues are immediately notified to the supervisor and the use of that stunner is stopped until issues rectified. No issues were noted at time of the inspection – time from stun to bleed is much shorter than 10secs due to automation.

Maintenance: Stunners are adjusted each day for the size of fish. Each machine undergoes 2 weekly servicing which is recorded and available for inspection. There are always engineers onsite due to shift working patterns, so any maintenance issues can be picked up immediately. The harvest manager has undergone additional training by Baader who manufacture the SI7.

Backup (secondary) stunning process: An additional SI7 is located at the side of the bleeding belt, this is used for secondary stunning. There is a dedicated person monitoring all fish coming onto the bleeding belt for signs of ineffective stunning. If any ineffective stunning is noted, then fish are immediately passed through the SI7.

Number of fish observed being stunned and number requiring backup stunning: Process assessed for approximately 30minutes ~400 fish going through, during my observations no fish required secondary stunning. Automated measuring of how may requiring secondary stun is in place and manual count is also done to ensure accuracy. Overall effective stunning for this harvest day was 97.21% - the accuracy of stunning was slightly reduced during this harvest due to the significant variation in size of some of the fish. Monitoring of records show effective stunning over the last few weeks is usually in region of 98%.

Additional Comments (eg on handling, welfare actions):

Overall process is running very well, there is great communication between the harvest vessel and site staff to ensure stead flow of fish through which can be stunned efficiently. Welfare officer is monitoring the effectiveness of stun/bleed process and monitoring the pH and temperature of fish flesh (which can be an indicator of stress) of at least 10 fish every hour. These are recorded in a dedicated 'Daily harvest check' sheet. Also recorded in this is first stun effectiveness for each stunner and the % of fish arriving at the stunner that are 'lively, lethargic or dead'. Daily harvest check sheets are available for inspection.

During this inspection particular attention was given to the quality and welfare indicators of the fish coming through due to the welfare allegations seen on farm – in general the fish were in excellent condition with very few showing lesions or skin/fin/eye damage. Some very small lesions indicative of calligus sea lice however not at levels to be a significant issue.

Procedure for other fish species in the line (eg cleaner fish etc):): These are described as bycatch in the company SOPs. They fall through a slatted reception chute that the fish fall on to after they exit the pipe. From here they drop down into a pipe before falling into a bin containing tricaine for euthanasia. Although I didn't observe the process at the time of visit there was a few cleaner fish in the bin which had been effectively euthanised using the tricaine. Numbers of cleaner fish are monitored during each harvest.

Staffing levels: There are approximately [redacted] staff employed at the harvesting site, daily staff with vary each harvest. Most are experienced staff and have been with the company for several years.

Staff training and records: All staff have been through external fish welfare training alongside internal training. Each staff member has an individual training record which was available for review. There is extensive training on all the required SOPs. HACCP training is also undertaken.

Monthly toolbox talks occur to ensure any issues are rectified quickly. Each staff member undertakes a competency assessment each year. Non-conformances are dealt with and recorded.

Equipment maintenance: There are usually 2-3 engineers onsite at any time during a harvest due to shift patterns. The have daily, weekly, and monthly routine checks which are all recorded. Alongside this they will respond to any additional requests from site staff.

Are Standard operating procedures available for review:

Extensive and detailed SOPs are available for all stages of the process. There are reviewed at least annually, and staff are kept up to date with reviews.

Outcome

CCTV available:

Assessment: CCTV is kept and available for 90 days following harvest. This focuses on the stunners.

Any indicator of on farm issues:

(Eg skin/fin damage, sea lice damage etc)

This visit was brought about by a complaint relating to welfare issues on [redacted] mainly significant mortalities and extensive sea lice infestation. During the harvesting process the quality of the fish coming through were observed. There was very little sea lice damage – some fish has small lesions indicative of Calligus sea lice however these were small with minimal damage so not causing significant issue. There was little evidence of any lesions on skin, damage to fins or eyes. The fish coming though were in very good condition.

Any issues found: No issues found at time of inspection.

Actions required: No actions required.

Recommendations: None.