

1 Scope

This code covers the handling and processing of hatching eggs from the time of receiving up to the dispatch of day-old chicks/poults in hatchery operation. This code also includes the hatching eggs from game fowl.

2 Objectives

This standard sets out the general principles of good practice and minimum requirements for the production of safe and disease-free day-old chicks/poults in hatchery operations.

This also aims to promote food safety, workers health and animal welfare through mitigating contamination.

3 References

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments applies).

Republic Act 10631, Amended Animal Welfare Act of 1998

4 Definition of terms

4.1

competent authority

bureau or agency, mandated by law to implement Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures

4.2

hatchery

establishment which incubates and hatches eggs and supplies day-old chicks/poults

4.3

poult

A young domestic chicken, turkey, pheasant, or other fowl being raised for food

4.4

rejected chicks/poults

injured chicks/poults and/or those with congenital defects

4.5

veterinary drugs

any substance applied or administered to any food-producing animal, whether used for therapeutic, prophylactic, or diagnostic purposes, or modification of physiological functions or behavior

5 Minimum requirements

5.1 site selection

The hatchery should:

- 5.1.1 Be within the approved land use plan of the local government and should be compliant with national regulations, e.g. DENR, etc., and other regulatory bodies.
- 5.1.2 Have a continuous supply of adequate power, potable drinking water (water quality) and all-weather road.
- 5.1.3 Not be prone to flooding. Perimeter canals that drain to a closed lagoon may be constructed to prevent runoff from contaminating bodies of water and/or adjacent farms/establishment.
- 5.1.4 Not be near slaughterhouse facilities, dressing plants and processing plants.
- 5.1.5 Not be on a site that could be a possible source of physical, chemical and microbiological hazards.
- 5.1.6 Existing hatchery that are not in compliance with 5.1.1 to 5.1.5 should have full control of the risks and ensure that there are mitigation measures in place.

5.2 Hatchery facility

- 5.2.1 The fence, including its posts and gates, should be effectively designed to prevent entry of unauthorized person and stray animals. Keep doors and gates locked at all times during off hours.
- 5.2.2 The hatchery should be physically and operationally separate from poultry rearing facilities, if the hatchery is within the poultry rearing establishment.

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- 5.2.3 The hatchery should be constructed and maintained to provide a safe and clean environment for chicks/poults.
- 5.2.4 The hatchery should be appropriately and effectively ventilated.
- 5.2.5 Internal temperature of chick/poults holding areas should be controlled and monitored.
- 5.2.6 Surfaces within hatchery should be in good condition and can be easily cleaned.
- 5.2.7 Drains in production areas should be accessible and easy to clean.
- 5.2.8 Hatchery should be lit to allow normal behaviors, rest and effective inspection of chicks/poults.
- 5.2.9 Chick area should be of sufficient size.
- 5.2.10 An alternative power supply should be available which is capable of supplying all essential electrical systems within the hatchery.
- 5.2.11 Electrical installations should be tested regularly.
- 5.2.12 Incubation equipment should have an alarm system in case of failure.
- 5.2.13 Fire prevention measures should be taken.
- 5.2.14 The hatchery should have a dedicated egg store and a designed setter room.
- 5.2.15 There should be an emergency water supply.

5.3 Animal Health and welfare

Hatchery should comply with the provisions stated in amended Animal Welfare Act of 2013 (RA 10631).

- 5.3.1 Hatcheries should have a monitoring program for diseases recommended by the competent authority.
- 5.3.2 Chicks/poults should be handled in a way that avoids injury and minimizes stress.

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5.3.3 All persons looking after the health and welfare of chicks/poults should be competent.

5.3.4 Rejected chicks/poults should be handled and disposed in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act.

5.4 Veterinary drugs

5.4.1 Veterinary drugs should be administered by a licensed veterinarian or trained personnel.

5.4.2 Veterinary drugs should be kept in a designated area in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

5.4.3 Empty vials/containers and used needles and blades should be stored safely pending disposal and be disposed of responsibly.

5.4.4 Records pertaining to use of veterinary drugs should be kept and maintained.

5.5 Staff and labour providers

5.5.1 Systems should be in place to ensure that all new staff are effectively trained and deemed competent to carry out the activities they are employed to do.

5.5.2 The performance and competence of staff should be regularly reviewed and refresher training implemented as required.

5.5.3 Records of training should be kept.

5.6 Biosecurity and disease control

5.6.1 Control measures should be in place to minimize the spread of disease within the hatchery and between other hatcheries and farms.

5.6.2 Inside traffic should always flow from "clean" areas to "dirty" areas.

5.6.3 Access to the hatchery should be limited to essential visitors only. Visitor logbook should be kept and maintained.

5.6.4 Appropriate working uniform/attire and footwear should be provided to workers or visitors who need to be at the processing area.

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- 5.6.5 Foot bath and hand washing facilities should be available at entry and exit points. Regular monitoring of such measures should be implemented and maintained.
- 5.6.6 Wash rooms should be available and kept clean at all times.
- 5.6.7 There should be a dedicated vehicle transporting hatching eggs from breeder farm to hatchery. Vehicle should be cleaned and disinfected inside and outside.
- 5.6.8 There should be wheel dips or wheel spraying facilities at the entrance and only necessary vehicles should be allowed onto the premises. Use an appropriately disinfectant solution. Replace the wheel dip regularly to avoid dilution or contamination.
- 5.6.9 Ensure that all new and used equipment is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before entering the hatchery. Mobile equipment brought onto the site from other hatcheries or units should be washed, disinfected, and dried before entering.
- 5.6.10 Staff should not keep or have contact with other poultry or any avian species.
- 5.6.11 The establishment should have a designated area for smoking, eating and drinking.

5.7 Sanitation program

- 5.7.1 The entire hatchery should be kept in a neat, orderly condition, and cleaned and disinfected after each hatch.
- 5.7.2 The egg room walls, ceilings, floors, air filters, drains, and humidifiers should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- 5.7.3 The incubator/hatcher room walls, ceilings, floors, fan grills, vents and ducts should be cleaned and disinfected after each set or transfer. Do not use incubator/hatcher rooms for storage.
- 5.7.4 Egg trays should be cleaned and disinfected after each transfer.
- 5.7.5 The following should be cleaned and disinfected:
- 5.7.5.1 Processing equipment and rooms after each hatch;
 - 5.7.5.2 Chick/poult boxes before reusing; and
 - 5.7.5.3 vaccination equipment after use.

- 5.7.6 Hatchery waste, such as chick/poult down, eggshells, infertile eggs, and dead eggs (penoy), should be disposed of properly and in a manner approved by the competent authority.
- 5.7.7 Chicks/poults should be kept separately from the incubation room for a period of time after hatching.
- 5.7.8 Any nutritive material provided to chicks/poults should be certified free of avian pathogens.
- 5.7.9 The egg room walls, ceiling, floor, door, heater, and humidifier should be cleaned and disinfected after every pickup. The egg processing area should be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- 5.7.10 Ensure that egg processing building or area is designed, located, and constructed of materials that allow for proper egg sanitation procedures and easy, effective, and routine sanitation of the building itself.

5.8 Vermin control

- 5.8.1 The hatchery's construction should be as vermin-proof as possible – including protection against rodents, wild birds, or insects that are destructive, annoying or injurious to health.
- 5.8.2 Maintain a vermin control plan that includes frequent monitoring of rodent, bird, or insect activity. Install adequate rodent bait and traps when there is evidence of rodent activity. Bait should be used responsibly.
- 5.8.3 There should be an insect control program. Use insecticide if necessary and as per manufacturer's instructions.
- 5.8.4 Keep the area around the hatchery free from vegetation, debris, and unused equipment.
- 5.8.5 Pets and other animals should not have access to hatchery buildings.

5.9 Hatchery eggs

5.9.1 Incoming hatchery eggs

- 5.9.1.1 Hatchery eggs should be free from diseases specified by the competent authority (e.g. Salmonella, ND, AI).

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- 5.9.1.2 All incoming eggs should be from accredited breeder farms or certified farms.
- 5.9.1.3 One way product flow should be maintained from egg receipt to chick dispatch.
- 5.9.1.4 Incoming air should be filtered. A positive airflow from eggs to chicks/poults should be maintained.
- 5.9.1.5 Differentiation should be maintained between clean and dirty areas.
- 5.9.1.6 All eggs should be fumigated or sanitized prior to setting.
- 5.9.1.7 Incubation hatcher and setter equipment should be easy to clean, in good working order and sealed to the floor.
- 5.9.1.8 Egg should be stored in a temperature and humidity controlled room.
- 5.9.1.9 Hatching eggs should be identifiable.
- 5.9.1.10 The hatchery should retain production records for each consignment of eggs.

5.10 Transport of Day-old chicks/poults

- 5.10.1 Chicks/poults should be loaded onto clean chick boxes.
- 5.10.2 All vehicles used for transporting eggs or chicks/poults should be cleaned and disinfected after use.
- 5.10.3 Eggs should be collected and chicks/poults should be delivered in purpose built vehicles.
- 5.10.4 A vehicle cleaning and sanitation policy should be in place.

5.11 Records and Documentation

- 5.11.1 Chicks/poults should be identified and records kept to maintain traceability.
- 5.11.2 A documented plan for the effective management of serious incidents and potential emergency situations that threaten the welfare of workers and birds, food safety or the environment should be in place.

Bibliography:

DA-BAI Administrative Circular No. 7 Series of 2016, Guidelines in the BAI Certification of Poultry Hatchery Facilities

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USDA, Best Management Practices Handbook

Red Tractor Assurance, Chicken Standards: Hatchery, October 1, 2017