

# Considerations Unique to Mobile Red Meat Slaughter


FSIS NetConference  
Red Meat Slaughter Units

Greg L. Sherman, DVM  
USDA-FSIS

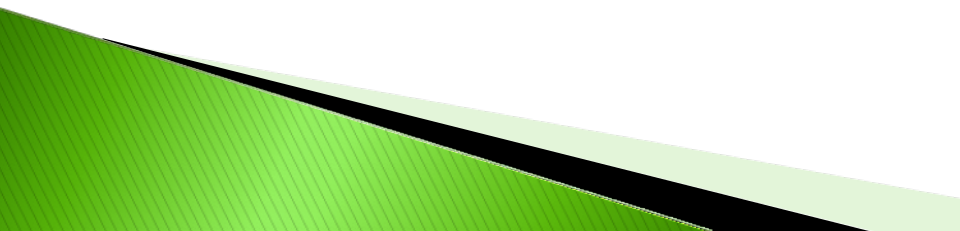
# Considerations Unique to Mobile Red Meat Slaughter

- ▶ In general, the evolution of a mobile slaughter facility requires a great deal of creative thinking and problem solving because the Federal Regulations are based on fixed slaughter facilities.

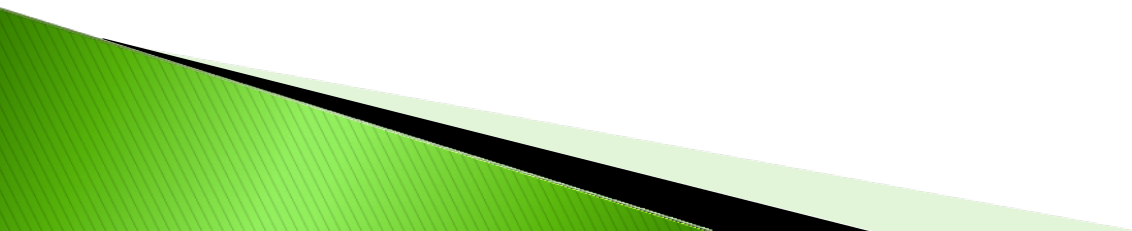
# Island Grown Food Coop

- ▶ First mobile slaughter unit under Federal inspection in the country
  - ▶ First to address unique challenges of mobile slaughter
  - ▶ Established baseline for units that have followed
  - ▶ Each unit still has their own issues
- 


# Puget Sound Meat Producers Coop

- ▶ Second mobile unit in Western Washington
  - ▶ Similar Cooperative approach as IGFC
    - Coop concept greatly helps standardization among members
    - Organic operation also provides challenges
- 

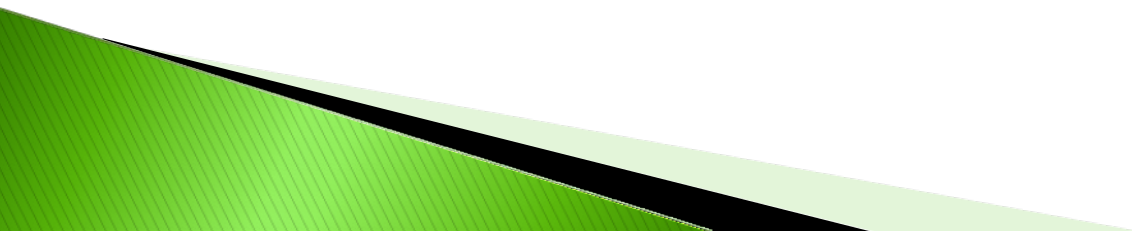
# IGFC and PSMPC

- ▶ Common issues
    - Inspection
    - Facility
    - Water
    - Staffing
    - Pest and Rodent Control
    - Bleeding and Inedible Control
    - Sanitary Dressing
    - Personal Issues
- 


# Inspection Issues

- ▶ Grant of Inspection
    - Official address for Grant, PBIS, etc.
  - ▶ Inspector Duties
    - Location of slaughter
    - Overtime for travel
    - Ferry schedule (IGFC)
  - ▶ Computer and Telephone Access
    - Data entry
    - Email
- 

# Grant of Inspection

- ▶ The issue of official address has been resolved by using the address of the land based cut and wrap operation and/or by using the home address of the project manager.
  - ▶ Sample materials and mail are hand delivered to the IPP in the latter case by the project manager.
- 

# Inspector Duties

- ▶ Slaughter location
    - Location of slaughter is communicated to IPP one week in advance
    - Directions are provided as needed
    - Sites for PSMPC are pre-approved
  - ▶ Slaughter schedule has IPP travel time built in to minimize overtime
  - ▶ Management at IGFC incorporates ferry schedule into their slaughter schedule as well to preclude overtime
- 



# Computer and Telephone Access

- ▶ Computer access was a problem at first, but with the advent of EVDO wireless cards this is generally not an issue.
- ▶ Cell phones provide telephone service, although usually the IPP use personal phones.
  - Some remote locations have no access for either, but that is the exception rather than the rule.

# Facility Issues

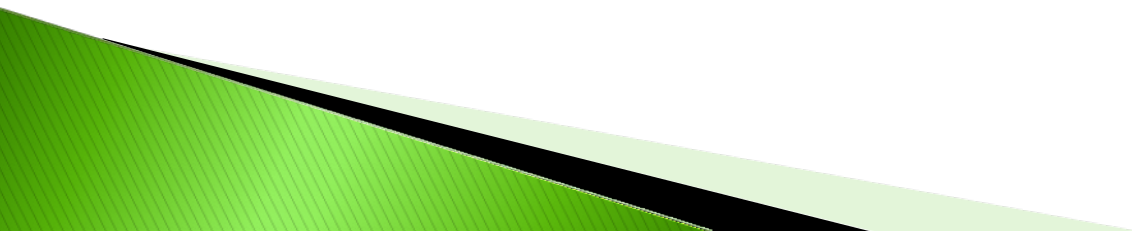
## ▶ Internal

- Hoist
- Inspection of viscera, heads, edible offal
- FSIS carcass inspection

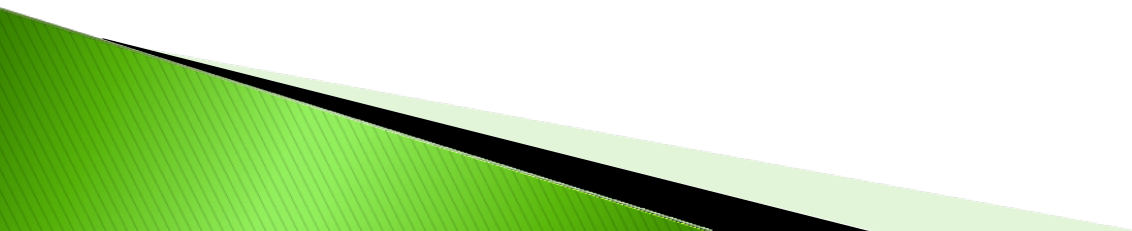
## ▶ External

- Landing site for the trailer
  - Solid site
  - Address blood, water, manure runoff
- Stalls for AM inspection of animals
- Adequate restraint for humane stunning

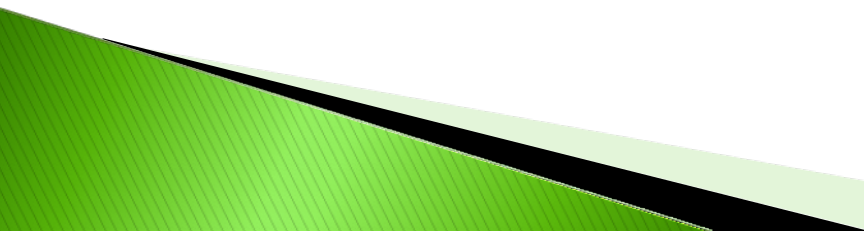
# Internal Facility

- ▶ IGFC tried several different hoist and location combinations
    - Added a ramp to pull animals up
  - ▶ Removable head rack added to allow beef head inspection
  - ▶ Drained tray used for edible offal inspection
- 

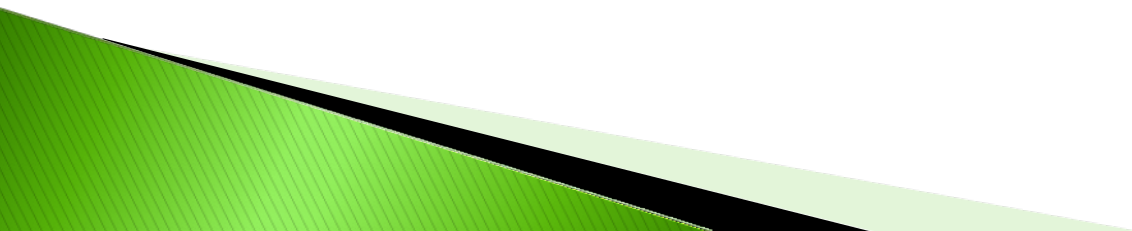
# Internal Facility

- ▶ Inedible offal is inspected on the floor because there is no room for the traditional gut buggy.
  - ▶ Carcass inspection is performed on the rail after trimming has been completed but prior to washing.
- 

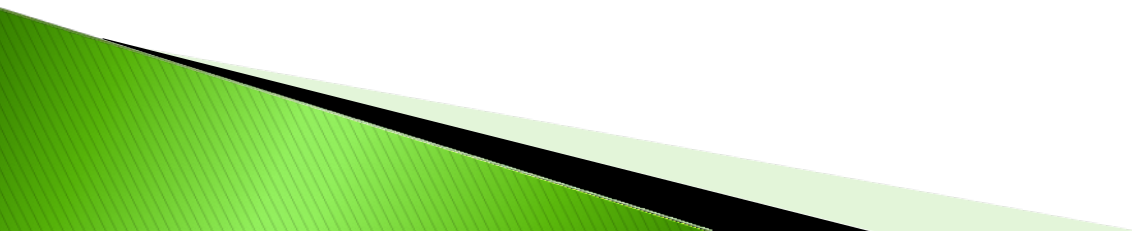
# External Facility

- ▶ The Coop has enforced their own standards for the most part
  - ▶ Trailer parked on either gravel or concrete pad
    - Gravel allows blood and water to percolate thru and solid materials are then picked up
    - Concrete pads are sloped with drain fields for runoff
    - No discharge into sewers or storm drains
- 


# External Facility

- ▶ Ante mortem is conducted in pens adjacent to the trailer landing site
  - ▶ Stunning is accomplished in pens that restrict movement
  - ▶ FSIS enforces humane handling requirements
- 

# Water

- ▶ Water must be potable and certified so
  - ▶ Multiple slaughter sites requires advance planning
  - ▶ Some sites have limited water availability
- 

# Water

- ▶ Each mobile unit has capacity for 500 gallons of water
  - ▶ The tank is only filled at certain locations where water potability certificates have been obtained
  - ▶ Water from the local farm may be used for cleaning outside the mobile unit
  - ▶ There are also holding tanks to contain up to 500 gallons of waste water
- 



# FSIS Staffing

- ▶ **Public Health Veterinarian**
  - Saves need for calling in PHV for carcass disposition
  - Not cost effective if there is little pathology
  
- ▶ **Consumer Safety Inspector**
  - Cannot make disposition of carcasses
  - Typically perform slaughter inspection in small combination assignments.

# FSIS Staffing

- ▶ IGFC has been staffed since inception with a Consumer Safety Inspector that is supervised by a local SPHV
  - Very low pathology because animals are hand selected for slaughter
- ▶ PSMPC is currently staffed by a SPHV as part of a mini-circuit
  - Again, very low rate of pathology for the same reason as IGFC

# Pest and Rodent Control

- ▶ Mobile unit is under inspection, but there is no official establishment premise
- ▶ Rodent harborage
  - Mobile unit management is responsible for acceptable slaughter site
- ▶ Fly control
  - Door is open while animal is hoisted into the mobile unit
  - Allows fly entry that establishment must address

# Rodent Control

- ▶ Slaughter operations cannot occur if there is rodent infestation
  - Most slaughter sites are in fields where rodent activity is unlikely because of prior site preparation
    - Vegetation cut short or eliminated to create open space around the truck and trailer
    - Gravel or concrete site for the unit
  - Farm buildings must be free of rodents and harborage if slaughter truck is parked inside a barn
- ▶ Coop management is responsible for meeting SPS requirements

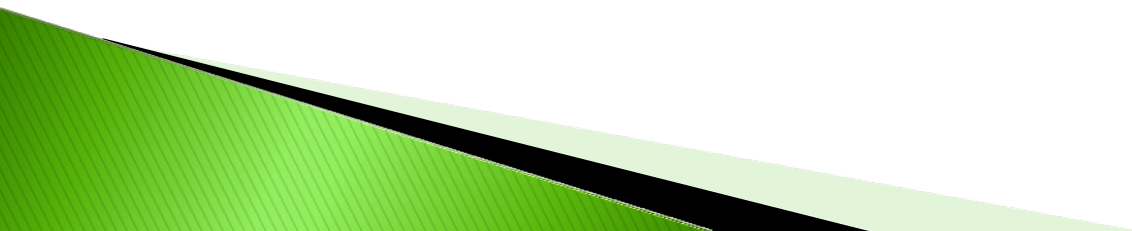
# Fly Control

- ▶ Door is left open only long enough to bring in stunned and bled animal.

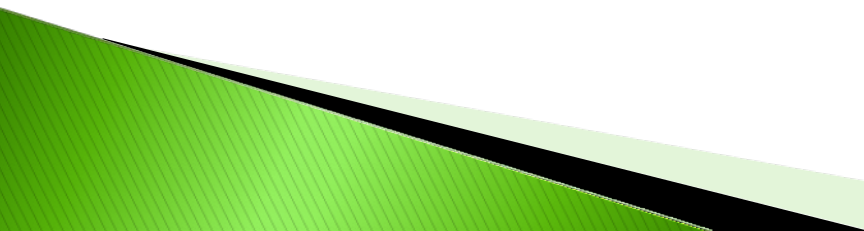


- Prior carcass is already in cooler
- ▶ Animal is washed prior to entering the mobile unit to reduce fly load
- ▶ Mineral oil in hand sprayer is used to immobilize flies on cattle or in the air
  - No insecticides are allowed because of organic operation


# Bleeding and Inedible Control

- ▶ Carcass washing results in muddy areas and manure accumulation
  - ▶ Blood pooling creates an insanitary condition
  - ▶ Rumen contents and viscera are bulky and difficult to deal with
  - ▶ Inedible materials can attract flies and vermin if not promptly disposed
- 

# Bleeding and Inedible Control

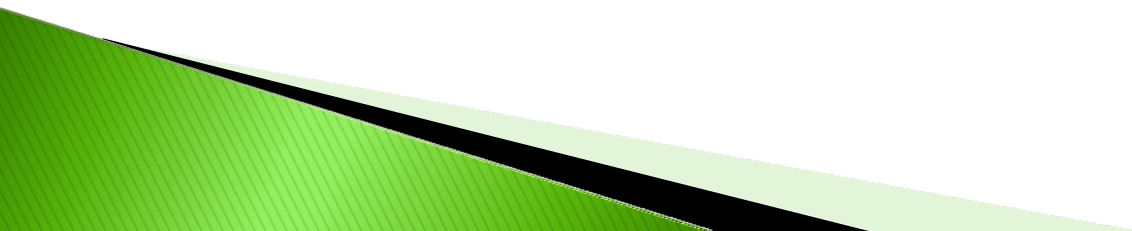
- ▶ Washington Dep't of Ecology provided help to mobile units to ensure compliance with their statutes
  - ▶ Gravel allows blood and water to filter thru and not pool
  - ▶ Concrete pads equipped with lines to drain field
  - ▶ Inedible materials are typically emptied into a front end loader directly from the mobile unit and are composted per Dep't of Ecology standards under the Farm Waste variance
- 

# Sanitary Dressing

- ▶ Flies can enter the unit as the carcass is hoisted into the unit
  - ▶ Facility is small and challenging to move about inside
  - ▶ Sterilizers and hot water
  - ▶ Butcher typically is not experienced in working with FSIS regulations
- 



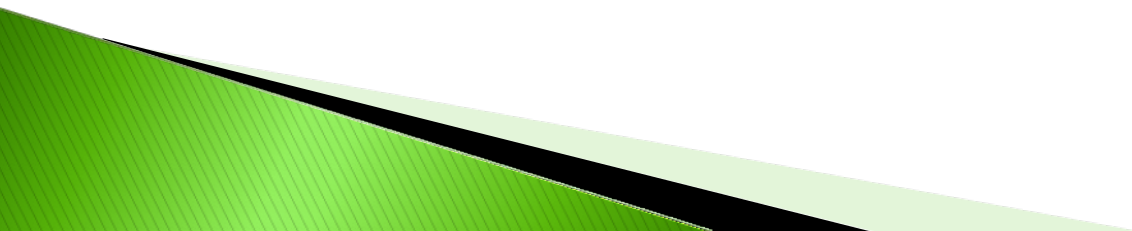
# Sanitary Dressing

- ▶ Fly control as previously shown; mineral oil in a hand spray bottle effectively controls flies on carcasses and in flight
  - ▶ The mobile unit has cold water, a heat exchanger to produce 120 degree hot water, and electric sterilizers to achieve 180 degree water
  - ▶ IPP closely monitor sanitary dress and perform zero tolerance on all carcasses
- 

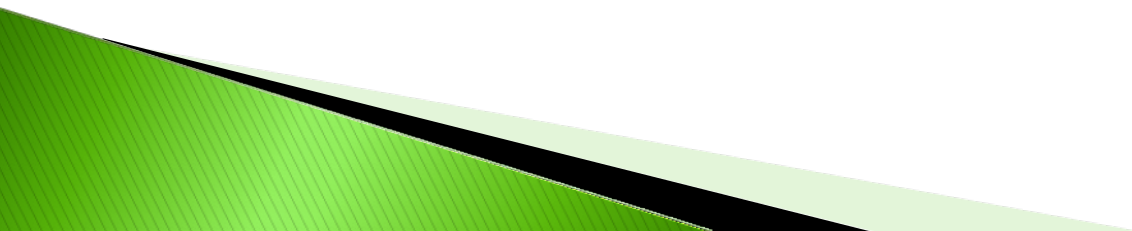
# Personal Issues

- ▶ Isolated locations
  - ▶ Lavatory access
  - ▶ Inspector office
  - ▶ Food availability
- 

# Lavatory

- ▶ There are no rest room facilities on the mobile unit
  - ▶ Some sites have a portable rest room for use
  - ▶ Most slaughter sites allow use of the lavatory in the house
  - ▶ Rate of slaughter also allows travel to nearby convenience store if one exists
- 

# Inspection Office

- ▶ The front of the trailer has space for the water tanks, compressors, heat exchanger and electrical panel.
  - ▶ Company provides a file cabinet, storage cabinet and horizontal space for gov't records, computer and printer use, brands, and supplies
- 

# Isolated Locations

- ▶ IPP are aware in advance if working in remote locations
- ▶ Food can be prepared in advance and brought along.