

STANDARDS OF CHINA ASSOCIATION T/CAS  
FOR STANDARDIZATION 267-2017

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Farm animal welfare requirements:

Meat-type chicken

2017-07-14 issued

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Index number  
T/CAS 267-2017 (E)

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## Foreword

China Association for Standardization (CAS) is a nationwide public organization that organizes and carries out activities about domestic and international standardization. Developing CAS Standard to meet the needs of enterprises and promote the work of enterprise standardization is one of CAS' work contents. Both groups and individuals at home can offer the suggestion on developing or revising CAS standard, and participate in the relevant work.

CAS standard is managed according to "Management Rules for the Standards of CAS", and developed on the basis of CAS 1.1 "*Rules for the structure and drafting of standards of CAS*".

The draft of CAS Standard is open to the society for suggestion. Only with the vote of more than 75 percent experts and members who attend the Meeting can the draft be issued as the CAS Standard.

Given that some clauses of this standard may involve patent right, China Association for Standardization shall not be responsible for the identification of any of such patent rights.

It is the first time to issue the standard.

In the process of implementing the standard, please mail the opinion and relevant materials to CAS if you find something to be revised or complemented.

## Introduction

### 0.1 General rules

In order to ensure the quality and safety of animal-derived food, healthy and good sustainable development of livestock husbandry industry, and fill the gaps in our farm animal - meat-type chicken welfare standard, specially develop this standard.

Based on the international advanced farm animal welfare concept and by combining with China's existing scientific and technological and socio-economic conditions, this standard specifies the farm animal - meat-type chicken welfare production requirements.

This standard is the requirements of the whole process of farming, transport and slaughter of meat-type chickens in farm animal welfare requirements.

### 0.2 Basic principles

Five basic principles of animal welfare are the basis of the farm animal welfare standards, the five basic principles include:

- a) Provide animals with clean drinking water and feed needed for keeping their health so as to protect them from hunger and thirst;
- b) Provide adequate shelter and comfortable habitat for animals to protect them from discomfort;
- c) Carry out disease prevention for animals and implement timely diagnosis and treatment for sick animals so as to protect them from pain and injury;
- d) Ensure that animals have the conditions and disposal modes to avoid psychological pain so that they are protected from fear and mental pain;
- e) Provide adequate space, appropriate facilities and companions for animals so that they can freely express their normal behavior.



# Farm animal welfare requirements:

## Meat-type chicken

### 1 Scope

This standard specifies the terms and definitions of meat-type chicken welfare, chicks, feeding and drinking water, farming environment, feeding management, health plan, transport, slaughtering and record and traceability.

This standard applies to the animal welfare management of the whole process of farming, transportation and slaughtering of meat-type chicken.

### 2 Normative reference documents

The following documents are essential for the application of this standard. For any dated reference, only the version dated will be applicable for this standard. For undated references, the latest version (including all amendments) applies to this standard.

GB 5749 Standards for Drinking Water Quality

NY / T 388 Environmental Quality Standard for the Livestock and Poultry Farm

### 3 Terms and definitions

The following terms apply to this document.

#### 3.1 Animal welfare

Provide animals with appropriate nutrition and environmental conditions; scientifically treat animals; properly dispose animals; reduce pain and stress response of animals and improve their life quality and health level.

#### 3.2 Farm animals

Animals for the production of food (meat, eggs and milk), processing of hair, fur and skin or other purposes, and those bred and fed in the farm environment or similar environment.

#### 3.3 Farm animal welfare

Farm animals are well taken care of in the farming, transportation and slaughter to avoid unnecessary scare, pain, suffering, illness or injury.

#### 3.4 Environmental enrichment

Through the providing of natural and man-made objects or environment for social

contact, entertainment, seeking and exploration of animals so as to enhance the animal body and psychological stimulation and achieve the management mode of meeting normal expression of animal behavioral habits, psychological and physical health needs.

### **3.5 Abnormal behavior**

A kind of repeated behavior without obvious purpose or that causing harm to themselves and companions when the psychological or physiological needs of the meat-type chicken are not met.

### **3.6 White feather meat-type chicken**

Fast-growing white feather meat-type chicken usually refer to those slaughtered at 35-42 days of age and weighing more than 1.8kg, also known as big fast-growing meat-type chicken.

### **3.7 Yellow feather meat-type chicken**

Usually according to the growth rate and days of age of them coming into the market, meat-type chicken with yellow feathers or colored feathers are divided into fast type (8 to 10 weeks), medium speed type (10to 13 weeks) and slow type (more than 13 weeks).

### **3.8 Free-range farming**

The farming mode that the meat-type chickens are free to enter and leave the poultry house, free to run, free to eat and drink water, and are sheltered.

### **3.9 Feeding on litter floor**

The farming mode that meat-type chickens are fed on litter floors in the poultry house.

### **3.10 Feeding on the net rack**

The farming mode of meat-type chickens bred on the net rack (single layer or multiple layers) that are manually installed in the poultry house.

### **3.11 Feeding in the large cage**

The farming mode of meat-type chickens bred in a single layer or multi-layer cage in the poultry house.

### **3.12 Stunning slaughter**

The slaughtering method that the animal is in a completely unconscious state prior to bloodletting by using the stunning device.

## **4 Chicks**

### **4.1 Source**

Chicks shall be from the meat-type chicken hatchery with the breeding livestock and poultry production and operation license; the chicks are the healthy chick flocks after

disease purification.

## 4.2 Disposal

4.2.1 Male and female identification should be carried out for chicks on the same day; the identification method of sex-linked inheritance identification method is appropriate. If the anal opening identification method is used, identification workers shall carry out sanitation and disinfection work.

4.2.2 Immunization of the relevant vaccines shall be implemented on the day of the brooding.

4.2.3 It should implement the beak trimming on the day of brooding. The infrared beak cutting technology is appropriate. The beak cutting operators should be trained specially to master relevant animal welfare knowledge.

4.2.4 Chicks shall use the standard chick boxes for storage and transport; the occupied area of 100 chicks is not less than 0.25m<sup>2</sup>.

4.2.5 The room temperature for storage of chicks is between 22°C~26°C, humidity: 60%~70%, storage time should not exceed 4 hours. It should use special transport vehicles to transport chicks, the compartment temperature is controlled at 22°C~26°C and the ventilation is good.

## 5 Feeding and drinking water

### 5.1 Feed

5.1.1 The use of feed and feed raw materials shall comply with the requirements of relevant national laws, regulations and standards.

5.1.2 The feed supply shall comply with the characteristics of meat-type chicken breeds and their nutritional needs in physiological phase, and meet the requirements for maintaining good physical condition, normal growth and development of meat-type chickens.

5.1.3 The formula feed purchased by the meat-type chicken farm shall have the document record of raw material composition and nutrient content of the feed of the supplier; when you formulate the feed by yourselves, you shall keep the feed formula and ingredient list; the source of feed raw material should be traceable.

5.1.4 The feed of mammal or avian animal protein source (excluding dairy products) shall not be used. Except for the purpose of treatment, it is not allowed to use antibiotics or raw materials containing similar antibiotics in feed.

5.1.5 Feed must be safely and hygienically transported, stored and conveyed to prevent pests, moisture, deterioration and pollution.

## 5.2 Feeding

5.2.1 Adequate eating space shall be provided, linear trough: 5 cm for each chicken (single side) or 2.5 cm for each chicken (double sides); round trough (according to its circumference) shall not be less than 1.8 cm for each chicken.

5.2.2 The feeders shall be evenly distributed in the poultry house. The distance from the meat-type chicken to the nearest feeder shall not exceed 4 m. The optimum height of the feeder shall be set according to the days of age and size of the chicken; it is appropriate for the height to be equal to the back height of the chicken.

5.2.3 The feeding equipments shall be kept clean, clean up the residual feed in time to prevent deterioration of residual feed.

5.2.4 In accordance with different breeds or growth requirements of meat-type chickens, provide appropriate amount of gravel to help digestion on time.

5.2.5 The drugs for prevention and treatment of meat-type chickens and the withdrawal period before they come into the market shall strictly implement relevant provisions of the relevant state departments.

## 5.3 Drinking water

5.3.1 Provide adequate, clean and fresh drinking water; the water quality shall meet the requirements of GB 5749.

5.3.2 The drinkers shall be evenly distributed; the maximum distance from the chicken to the drinker does not exceed 2m.

5.3.3 It shall be ensured that each chicken has enough drinking space; the minimum number of drinkers: a bell-type drinker for 50~ 60 chickens; a nipple drinker for 10 chickens.

5.3.4 The height of the drinker shall be set according to different production modes, the days of age and size of chickens; it is appropriate for the height of the nipple drinker to be equal to the sight line of the chicken; it is appropriate for the height of the bell-type drinker to be equal to the back height of the chicken.

5.3.5 The water supply system shall be regularly detected, cleaned, disinfected and maintained, and has perfect health management measures. The water storage facilities used in the drinking water system must be closed and regularly cleaned and disinfected.

5.3.6 If the free range farming is adopted, it shall be ensured that water supply facilities or water sources provide adequate, clean and fresh drinking water. If natural water source is used, the risk of potential disease shall be assessed.

5.3.7 According to the advice of the veterinarian, when drugs or anti-stress agents

need to be added in the drinking water, special equipments shall be used, and adding records shall be made.

## 6 Farming environment

### 6.1 Facilities

6.1.1 The planning, design and construction of the meat-type chicken farm shall meet the requirements related to animal welfare.

6.1.2 The construction of the meat-type chicken farm shall meet the requirements of biosafety; the boundary among the living area of the farm workers, feeding area and the sports ground shall be obvious; the fence or separation net shall be installed. The quarantine zone shall be set outside the meat-type chicken farm; there are special clean passage and polluted passage connected to the outside; the clean passage and polluted passage shall not cross.

6.1.3 The dead chicken autopsy room and harmless treatment facilities for waste shall be set at the farm.

6.1.4 Non-toxic and harmless materials shall be used for the poultry house and facilities in it; the electrical equipments, wires and cables in the poultry house shall be consistent with relevant specifications, and there are protective measures to prevent chickens from getting close to and being bitten by rodents.

6.1.5 The poultry house shall meet the temperature requirements, and has thermal insulation function; the floors and walls shall be easy to clean and disinfect.

6.1.6 Noise of equipments inside and outside the poultry house shall be strictly controlled; the total noise of the equipments shall not exceed 70dB at runtime.

6.1.7 All the feeding facilities contacting with the flocks, such as the fence, separation net, troughs and drinkers at the meat-type chicken farm, shall not cause injury to the flock.

6.1.8 The facilities preventing rats, cats, dogs and other animals from entering the poultry house shall be installed to avoid panic or injury and other emergencies of meat-type chicken flock.

### 6.2 Floor and litter

6.2.1 The floor of the poultry house shall be smooth and dry, and is easy to clean and disinfect effectively.

6.2.2 For the feeding on litter floor, it shall be covered with the litter to facilitate the chickens to find, explore, dig food and other activities. The average thickness of the litter: 2cm ~ 5cm in summer, and 5cm ~ 10cm in winter. Shall Add fresh litter in time to

keep the surface dry.

6. 2. 3 The litter shall be clean, dry, fragile and loose without hardening.

6. 2. 4 For feeding on the net rack, it is appropriate to use the bottom net of wooden, bamboo or plastic products; it is appropriate for the mesh diameter to be 1.5cm ~ 1.8cm. The net surface should be divided into several small zones; the area of each small zone is not less than 4m<sup>2</sup>.

6. 2. 5 For the feeding in large cage, it is better for the number of layers not to be more than 4 and the spacing between layers not to be less than 75cm; and effective separation should be carried out to prevent the mutual pollution between the layers.

### 6. 3 Lighting

6. 3. 1 It is better for the poultry house to introduce the natural light and be equipped with adequate lighting facilities to ensure adequate and uniform light. Light intensity in brooding period: 20lx ~ 30lx, growth period: 10lx ~ 20lx.

6. 3. 2 For white feather meat-type chickens, it should be use continuous lighting system or intermittent lighting system; continuous lighting time is longer than or equal to 8 hours, dark time is longer than or equal to 2 hours. For yellow feather meat-type chickens, it should be use natural light or intermittent lighting system, that is, ratio of light to darkness: 8: 4, or 12:12.

6. 3. 3 The opening and closing of the artificial light source shall be carried out in a gradual manner to ensure that the flock adaptation time is longer than or equal to 15 minutes.

### 6. 4 Temperature, humidity and ventilation

6. 4. 1 Shall according to different growth stages of meat-type chickens, implement the best temperature required to avoid sudden change in temperature.

6. 4. 2 The poultry house shall be effectively ventilated; relative humidity shall be controlled between 50% and 70%.

6. 4. 3 Shall keep the good quality of air in the poultry house, the harmful ingredients comply with regulations in NY / T 388.

### 6. 5 Feeding density

6. 5. 1 Shall provide adequate feeding space to ensure the requirements of life, sleeping and other activities of the meat-type chicken flock.

6. 5. 2 The maximum farming density of white feather meat-type chickens and yellow feather meat-type chickens is shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1 Maximum feeding density of white feather meat-type chickens

Unit: number of meat-type chickens per square meter

Feeding mode	Maximum feeding density	
	0~3weeks	4~6weeks
Feeding on the litter floor	28	13
Feeding on the net rack	30	14
Feeding in the large cage	32	16

Table 2 Maximum feeding density of yellow feather meat-type chickens

Unit: number of meat-type chickens per square meter

Feeding mode		Maximum feeding density				
		0~2 weeks	3~4 weeks	5~7 weeks	8~11 weeks	>11 weeks
Free-range farming	Fast type	25	15	13	9	-
	Medium speed type		19	15	11	9
	Slow type			19	15	13
Feeding on the litter floor	Fast type	30	19	13	11	11
	Medium speed type		23	17	14	11
	Slow type			21	15	13
Feeding on the net rack	Fast type	42	25	14	12	12
	Medium speed type		34	19	13	12
	Slow type			21	13	12

## 6.6 Yard outside the poultry house

6.6.1 The free-range farming shall have the yard with enough space outside the poultry house; its minimum area should be bigger than or equal 2 square meters for each chicken.

6.6.2 Attention shall be paid to the safety and sanitation of the yard outside the poultry house; keep dry, and good drainage measures should be taken.

6.6.3 Within the range of 20m around the poultry house, the shed or artificial

shelter area not less than 8m<sup>2</sup> for every 1000 chickens shall be provided for chickens, and the layout shall be reasonable.

6.6.4 For a flock of 600 chickens, at least 2 entrances and exits shall be set; the height is bigger than or equal to 45 cm and the width is bigger than or equal to 50 cm.

6.6.5 If there are steps at the base of the entrance and exit, the ramp shall be set so that the chickens can get in or out easily.

6.6.6 The entrance and exit shall be closed at night to prevent the invasion of animals.

#### 6.7 Environment enrichment

6.7.1 Environmental enriched materials, such as perches (roost), sand bath, pecking food (wooden blocks, suspended and knotted ropes), toys, brassicas-like vegetables or non-toxic plants, shall be provided as early as possible (generally no later than 7 days of age). The reused enriched materials shall be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

6.7.2 Slow type yellow feather meat-type chickens should be provided a perch (henroost). Perches (roost) shall be provided for slow-type yellow feather meat-type chickens; the total length of the perch shall ensure at least 20% of the meat-type chicken flock inhabit freely; the spacing among several rows of perches is at least 30cm; the distance between the perch parallel to the wall and the wall is at least 20cm; the vertical space of the roost is 30cm~40cm. The perches should not be placed above the water trough and feed trough.

## 7 Feeding management

### 7.1 Personnel requirements

The meat-type chicken farm management and farming personnel shall be trained about animal welfare knowledge, master basic knowledge of animal health and welfare, and be able to do what they are responsible for.

### 7.2 Catching chickens

Chickens shall be caught in low light or at night; catch the wings or feet of the meat-type chicken; shall not grasp the head; gently grasp and put down; the action is mild so as to reduce the meat-type chicken's fear and stress response.

### 7.3 Daily management

7.3.1 Daily management of flocks shall adopt the mild manner; and all activities must be slow and careful so as to reduce the fear, damage and unnecessary scare of the flock.

7.3.2 The poultry house shall be cleaned every day, including drinking water, feeding facilities and the floors.

7.3.3 Iron wire, plastic cloth, wire and other debris that may be eaten by the flocks mistakenly in the poultry house and the surrounding environment shall be removed at any time.

7.3.4 The equipments in the poultry house shall be check every day, such as waterline, feed line, temperature control device, ventilation equipment, dung cleaning system, etc. If the faults are found, solve the problems immediately.

7.3.5 Minimize the implementation time of beak cutting, beak repairing, immunization, treatment (such as injection), weighing, loading and transportation.

7.3.6 The flocks shall be check every day, if the poor health or injury and other welfare problems are found, promptly identify the reasons and take measures of isolation, elimination and others to properly dispose.

7.3.7 The meat-type chicken farm shall identify emergencies such as natural disasters, extreme weather and others that may adversely affect animal welfare, and develop response programs.

7.3.8 The contents of the routine inspection shall be record and save.

## 8 Health plan

8.1 The meat-type chicken farm shall develop the veterinary health and welfare plan that complies with the requirements of laws and regulations; the content shall include at least:

- Biosecurity measures;
- Disease prevention and control measures;
- Drug use and residue control measures;
- Harmless treatment measures for dead or sick chickens and waste;
- Other measures involving animal welfare and health.

8.2 The meat-type chicken farm shall regularly check the implementation of the health plan and update or revise it in time.

## 9 Transport

### 9.1 Management

9.1.1 The transport party shall meet the requirements of relevant national laws, regulations and standards, and formulate measures for transport contingency plan.

9.1.2 The personnel (drivers and escort personnel) catching, handling and

transporting meat-type chickens shall be guided and trained to understand the basic knowledge of veterinary and animal welfare, and can do the work.

## **9.2 Catching**

9.2.1 The fasting time shall be controlled between 6h and 8h; water supply shall be stop 1h before transport.

9.2.2 Catching of meat chickens when they grow to market weight shall be carried out in dark or blue light; adopt appropriate barriers to prevent crowding or trampling of the flocks. For multi-layer fed flocks, shall prevent flocks from falling from high altitude in catching. Quietly get close to flocks, try to reduce noise, dust and confusion, and avoid tension and fear of flocks.

9.2.3 The capture can adopt single hand method (grasp the feet) and two –hand method (cling to the chest and hold the wings). Shall not grasp the head of the chicken; the operation shall be gentle and careful to avoid congestion, bleeding or fracture of thighs, shanks and wings of chicken.

## **9.3 Transport**

9.3.1 All surfaces of transport vehicles and cages contacting with flocks shall not have sharp edges or protrusions; they must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before and after use. When the cages are cleaned, live chickens are not allowed to be in them.

9.3.2 The standard transport cage shall be used, the cage height shall not be less than 28cm. Loading density (calculate according to the cage bottom area): for white feather meat-type chickens, bigger than or equal to 500 square centimeters/ each; for yellow feather meat-type chicken: bigger than or equal to 400 square centimeters/ each.

9.3.3 Laying hens shall be avoided transport in extreme weather, in case of bad weather, there are protective measures (wind board and canvas). When the temperature is higher than 25 °C (humidity is greater than 75%) or lower than 5 °C, appropriate measures shall be taken to reduce the stress response of flocks caused by too high or too low temperature.

9.3.4 The drivers shall drive smoothly and reduce the noise during transport; and the transport time shall be controlled within 2 hours. Escort personnel during transport shall pay attention to observe the situation of meat-type chickens to avoid their death.

## 10 Slaughter

### 10.1 Management

10.1.1 The slaughter enterprise shall meet the requirements of relevant national laws, regulations and standards.

10.1.2 The personnel of the slaughter enterprise shall have the skills of stunning slaughter.

10.1.3 Stunning and slaughter equipments shall be safe, efficient and reliable, and be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before and after use.

10.1.4 The slaughter equipments shall be checked by specially-assigned personnel before use so that they are in good condition.

### 10.2 Waiting lairage

10.2.1 Requirements for temperature and humidity of the waiting lairage for slaughter are suitable for normal requirements of chickens; its ventilation shall be good; low light or blue lighting shall be used; there are measures for preventing direct sunlight and bad weather, which minimizes the stress risk of meat-type chickens.

10.2.2 After meat-type chickens are transported to the slaughterhouse, the slaughter should be arranged as soon as possible and it is not suitable for the waiting time for slaughter to exceed 2 hours.

### 10.3 Hanging meat-type chickens

10.3.1 Workers hanging meat-type chickens shall be trained and then can do the work, and they are familiar with meat-type chicken sedation techniques so as to reduce unnecessary pain or tension of meat-type chickens.

10.3.2 The time interval between the hanging of meat-type chickens for waiting for slaughter and the slaughter shall not exceed 30 seconds.

### 10.4 Stunning and bloodletting

10.4.1 The stunning mode shall make the meat-type chickens to lose the consciousness and pain instantly until the slaughter process is completed.

10.4.2 It should not use DC stunning mode for the stunning process.

10.4.3 It is not appropriate for the time interval between stunning and bloodletting to exceed 10 seconds. Equipment bloodletting or manual bloodletting can be adopted. The checkers shall be arranged in the position within 5 seconds after bloodletting to use knives to continue the bloodletting for chickens whose bloodletting is not sufficient.

10.4.4 The time from bloodletting to hot scalding is not less than 3 minutes.

10.4.5 If, for religious or cultural reasons, the meat-type chickens are not allowed to be unconscious before slaughter, but are slaughtered directly, they shall be slaughtered as soon as possible in a peaceful environment.

## **11 Record and traceability**

11.1 Besides the usual farming records, the welfare-related content of the whole process of farming, transportation and slaughter of meat-type chickens shall be recorded and traceable.

11.2 Records may be electronic, papery or other feasible modes.

11.3 Relevant records of the whole process of farming, transportation and slaughter of meat-type chickens shall be kept for at least three years.

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T/CAS 267-2017

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ICS 65.020.30; 67.120

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**Keywords:** Animal welfare, farm animal, meat-type chicken

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