



Global Animal Partnership's Animal Welfare Standards for Farmed Atlantic Salmon Slaughter Facilities v1.0

About Global Animal Partnership's (G.A.P.) Animal Welfare Certified™ Program

G.A.P.'s Animal Welfare Certified™ program assesses the welfare of animals throughout the lives of both terrestrial farm animals and, with the release of this standard, aquaculture species. Any salmon farm that is G.A.P. Certified must also use a slaughter facility that is G.A.P. certified under these standards.

As the standard-setter, Global Animal Partnership does not conduct audits nor make certification decisions but rather accredits third-party certifiers to administer the Program. G.A.P. authorized, third-party certifiers perform the audits and issue certificates, as appropriate. As such, producers, consumers, and retailers alike can be confident that G.A.P. certification is fair, accurate, and free of conflict of interest.

About G.A.P.'s Animal Welfare Standards for Farmed Atlantic Salmon Slaughter Facilities v1.0

G.A.P.'s Animal Welfare Standards for Farmed Atlantic Salmon Slaughter Facilities v1.0 was issued on June 8, 2022. The development process included consultation with industry representatives, G.A.P.'s Farmed Salmon Technical Working Group, producers, guidance from our Scientific Advisory Committee¹ and our third-party certifiers, and review and approval by the Global Animal Partnership Board of Directors. The standards will be reviewed and revised according to the protocol outlined in the G.A.P. Policy Manual.

About Global Animal Partnership

Global Animal Partnership (G.A.P) is one of the largest, and most respected animal welfare standards and labeling organizations in North America. Established in 2008, G.A.P. impacts the welfare of over 400 million animals each year through third-party certification of more than 4,000 farms. G.A.P. believes that meaningful label claims, validated by third-party audits on every farm, are key to influencing the industry, raising consumer expectations, and creating long-lasting change for farm animals. For more information, contact us at info@globalanimalpartnership.org or 877.427.5783.

¹ For more information on G.A.P.'s Scientific Advisory Committee, please visit www.globalanimalpartnership.org.

Slaughter Facility Program Overview

G.A.P.'s Animal Welfare Standards for Farmed Atlantic Salmon Slaughter Facilities covers the management and slaughter of salmon during the harvesting process. A Slaughter Facility is defined as a structure, whether permanent, mobile, and/or on-farm, where salmon are slaughtered.

Any farmed Atlantic salmon intended to be marketed as G.A.P. Certified must be slaughtered at a G.A.P. Certified facility. G.A.P. certification of a slaughter facility will consist of an annual on-site audit conducted by an accredited third-party certifier to G.A.P.'s Animal Welfare Standards for Farmed Atlantic Salmon Slaughter Facilities v1.0.

How to Read these Standards

Each standard is numbered within each Section. There are several symbols throughout the standards that are indicators of additional information.

In the example below, the ⓘ symbol prefaces additional information provided to aid in the understanding of the standard. The ⓘ symbol indicates the standard is considered a **core criteria**. If a core criteria standard is not met at audit, the facility automatically fails the audit:

1.1.2 ⓘ ⓘ	The slaughter facility must use a G.A.P. approved method of stunning and slaughter – see Appendix II. ⓘ [1.1.2]: <i>If a facility uses a method of slaughter or stunning not listed in Appendix II, written approval from Global Animal Partnership must be received prior to use in order to meet this Standard.</i>
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A ⓘ symbol indicates the standard is considered a **secondary criteria**. If a secondary criteria standard is not met, the facility will need to provide a satisfactory corrective action plan to the G.A.P. approved third-party Certifier in order to pass the audit.

2.2.2 ⓘ ⓘ	The slaughter facility must keep a record of staff training (whether full-time, part-time, seasonal or contractual), including dates of training and topics covered.
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Program Requirements

The following is applicable to **each** slaughter facility applying for certification to G.A.P.'s Animal Welfare Standards for Farmed Atlantic Salmon Slaughter Facilities v1.0.

1. General

- a. The standards in this document are requirements.
- b. The G.A.P. Policy Manual is a companion document to the standards and details additional program requirements and terms of certification beyond that which is included in the standards. A copy of the G.A.P. Policy Manual can be found at www.globalanimalpartnership.org.
- c. No standard in this document supersedes governmental regulations or laws, whether local, regional, state, provincial, territorial, federal, national, or other; however, the specific standard(s) must be disclosed to G.A.P. and the Certifier.
- d. All program documents are available on G.A.P.'s website - www.globalanimalpartnership.org.

2. Applications

- a. Each slaughter facility is required to complete G.A.P.'s Animal Welfare Slaughter Facility application initially and at renewal the facility is required to complete a recertification application.
- b. Applications must be completed online through G.A.P.'s FoodLogiQ portal. To request access to this portal please contact G.A.P. at foodlogisupport@globalanimalpartnership.org.

3. Audit and Certification

- a. A G.A.P. accredited third-party certifier will conduct an on-site audit of the slaughter facility.
- b. Certification to this standard will result in a pass/fail designation. If the slaughter facility passes the audit, the certifier will issue a "G.A.P. Certified" certificate that allows them to slaughter salmon for G.A.P. Certified Salmon farms.
- c. These standards apply to any slaughter facility used to slaughter G.A.P. certified salmon, whether the facility is a permanent structure or a mobile harvest wellboat.
- d. Each slaughter facility must be audited once every 12 months.
- e. The slaughter facility may continue to market animals as G.A.P. Certified if the recertification process was initiated prior to the current certificate expiring.
- f. On-site audits must observe salmon being slaughtered at the typical processing speed.
- g. Salmon being slaughtered during the audit do not need to come from a G.A.P. certified operation, as long as G.A.P certified salmon will be slaughtered in the same manner as that which is observed.
- h. If the facility fails the initial audit, salmon cannot be marketed as G.A.P. certified until the facility passes a re-audit.

- i. If the facility fails a renewal audit, the facility can seek a re-audit. The re-audit must occur and the facility must be certified within 90 days of the initial failed audit in order to continue to market G.A.P. Certified Salmon.

5. Labeling

- a. Any use of the G.A.P. label or logo must meet the requirements of G.A.P.'s Brand Book, licensing agreement and be approved by G.A.P. prior to use. Please contact lpa@globalanimalpartnership.org for further details.

1 CORE CRITERIA

① Each of the following standards in this Section are considered core criteria and must be met to pass the audit – see Appendix I. Failure to meet any of the core criteria will result in an automatic denial of certification.

1.1 Slaughter Requirements	
1.1.1 CC	Willful acts of abuse and/or egregious acts towards salmon are prohibited. Examples of these behaviors include, but are not limited to kicking, throwing, striking, hitting, deliberately dropping salmon, or only holding by gills, fins or tail.
1.1.2 CC	The slaughter facility must use a G.A.P. approved method of stunning and slaughter – see Appendix II. ① [1.1.2]: If a slaughter facility uses a method of slaughter or stunning not listed in Appendix II, written approval from Global Animal Partnership must be received prior to use in order to meet this Standard.
1.1.3 CC	Prior to entering the stunning and slaughter equipment, the flow of salmon must be managed to prevent piling up. ① [1.1.3]: Salmon can pile and fall off equipment if the flow rate or pumping speed is too fast.
1.1.4 CC	Salmon must enter the stunning and slaughter machine in the correct orientation per the manufacturer’s instructions.
1.1.5 CC	Salmon must be stunned and rendered insensible prior to exsanguination. ① [1.1.5]: See Standard 2.2.1 for training and Appendix III for signs of insensibility.
1.1.6 CC	A backup stunning and slaughter method must be available and implemented during the slaughter process if the automated system stops working for any reason. ① [1.1.6 a]: The backup stunning and slaughter method does not need to be the same as the main stunning and slaughter method used. ① [1.1.6 b]: See Appendix II for approved methods of stunning and slaughter.
1.1.7 CC	Live salmon must not enter the bleed tank. ① [1.1.7]: Slaughter facilities may choose to use a manned and/or monitored open conveyor following exsanguination to ensure fish are visible and accessible.

2 SECONDARY CRITERIA

① *The following standards in this Section are considered secondary criteria. If any standard is not met, the facility will need to provide corrective action to the G.A.P. approved third-party Certifier to pass the audit.*

2.1 Audits and Plans	
2.1.1 S C	The slaughter facility must have a G.A.P. audit every 12 months.
2.1.2 S C	The slaughter facility must carry out monthly self-audits that include all standards in Section 1.1. Records must be kept. ① [2.1.2] <i>Records of self-audits must be kept for at least 12 months.</i>
2.1.3 S C	The slaughter facility must have a written plan describing emergency procedures that includes, at a minimum, how the facility would manage salmon onsite during: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) natural disasters; ii) fire; iii) water shut off; iv) equipment breakdown; v) labor shortages; and vi) power failure (if applicable).
2.2 Training	
2.2.1 S C	The slaughter facility must provide training to all staff responsible for handling live salmon and/or performing stunning and slaughter that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is written and/or hands-on; b. is provided in all necessary languages; c. describes all aspects of the individual's responsibilities; d. describes emergency procedures; e. is provided prior to the individual's handling of any fish at the facility; f. describes signs of an ineffective stun or kill (see Appendix III); g. describes the proper use of the stunning and slaughter equipment; and h. is on-going as necessary and, at a minimum, when any changes affecting the welfare of salmon are implemented. ① [2.2.1]: <i>This standard covers the training of all staff responsible for the handling, stunning, and slaughter of live salmon, including full-time, part-time, seasonal, or contractual staff.</i>
2.2.2 S C	The slaughter facility must keep a record of staff training (whether full-time, part-time, seasonal or contractual), including dates of training and topics covered.

2.3 Equipment	
2.3.1 SC	All stunning and slaughter equipment must be calibrated for the size of the salmon processed following the manufacturer’s instructions.
2.3.2 SC	Stunning and slaughter equipment must be maintained according to the manufacturer’s instructions and kept in good working order.
2.4 Water Quality	
2.4.1 SC	If salmon are held in holding tanks, there must be a mechanism in place to monitor temperature and oxygen saturation regularly while there are live salmon in holding tanks.
2.5 Pumping at Slaughter	
2.5.1 SC	Any sick or injured salmon observed before pumping starts, must be euthanized either using anesthetic overdose or by a manual percussive stun (e.g. small baton or priest with a weighted end) followed by exsanguination within ten seconds.
	① [2.5.1 a]: <i>If there are no sick or injured salmon at the time of the audit the slaughter facility will not be required to euthanize a fish in order to show compliance with this standard, but they must be able to describe the protocol they would implement and the method.</i>
	① [2.5.1 b]: <i>Administration of anesthetics on salmon must not violate any local, state, provincial, territorial, federal, national, or other laws and regulations.</i>
	① [2.5.1 c]: <i>If the slaughter facility wishes to use a method of euthanasia not listed above, written approval from Global Animal Partnership must be received prior to facility use.</i>
2.5.2 SC	The slaughter facility must be able to observe salmon clearly during pumping.
	① [2.5.2]: <i>This may include observation windows in the pump or cameras placed inside pipes during pumping.</i>
2.5.3 SC	Flow rate or pumping speed during the pumping process must not cause salmon to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. collide with other salmon; b. collide with the pipe; c. gasp; or d. twist or turn around.
	① [2.5.3]: <i>The intent of this standard is to minimize any injuries or stress to salmon in the pumping pipe.</i>
2.5.4 SC	The pipe must be fully flushed at the end of each pumping event to ensure no salmon are left in the pipe.

2.6 Quality Grading at Slaughter	
2.6.1 S C	The slaughter facility must conduct a G.A.P. Quality Grading assessment (see Appendix IV) for each processing event of G.A.P. Certified salmon.
	① [2.6.1]: See Appendix IV for sampling and grading criteria.
2.6.2 S C	After each processing event, the slaughter facility must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. provide a copy of quality grade records to the G.A.P. Certified salmon farm; and b. keep a copy of the record on file.
	① [2.6.2]: Records must be kept for at least 12 months.

APPENDIX I: Slaughter Facility Assessment for Core Criteria

Per Section 1.1, the slaughter facility must meet or exceed the “acceptable” scores below, for each core criteria.

Failure to meet, at a minimum, the “acceptable” score for each core criteria will result in the slaughter facility failing the audit and a re-audit will be required.

Core Criteria	Excellent	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Egregious or willful acts of abuse	No	No	Observed
Using a G.A.P. approved method of stunning and slaughter	Yes	Yes	No
Salmon falling off equipment (out of 500 salmon)	≤ 1.0%	1.1 – 3.0%	≥ 3.1%
Correct Orientation (out of 500 salmon)	≥ 99.0%	97.0-98.9%	≤ 96.9%
Effective stunning (out of 500 salmon)	≥ 99.0%	97.0-98.9%	≤ 96.9%
Back up Stunning and Slaughter Method Available	Yes	Yes	No
Salmon dead entering bleed tank (out of 500 salmon)	100%	100%	≤ 99.9%

APPENDIX II: Stunning and Slaughter Methods

Per Standard 1.1.2, a slaughter facility must use an approved stunning and slaughter method. If a slaughter facility uses a method not listed below, written approval from Global Animal Partnership must be received prior to use.

Method	Approved method of stunning and slaughter?
Automated percussive stunning followed by exsanguination within ten seconds	YES
Electrical stunning (electronarcosis) followed by exsanguination within ten seconds	YES
Manual percussive stunning (e.g. small baton or priest with a weighted end) followed by exsanguination within ten seconds	ONLY as back up method
Carbon Dioxide narcosis	NO
Ice bath or ice slurry (salt or fresh water)	NO
Live chilling	NO
Exsanguination or gill cutting without prior stunning	NO
Suffocation in air	NO
Anesthetic overdose	NO

APPENDIX III: Signs of Insensibility

Per Standard 1.1.5, it is important to know the signs of insensibility in salmon to determine an effective stun. There are a number of indicators that help determine whether a salmon is insensible - the most reliable and effective signs of insensibility are the loss of the eye roll reflex and the loss of the breathing reflex (note that even when salmon are insensible sometimes irregular, random movements of the operculum may occur).

Reflex	Signs of Insensibility
Eye Roll	Eyes do not move as salmon is rotated
Breathing	Irregular, random or no movement of the operculum
Swimming	No movement or attempt to swim
Equilibrium	Salmon will not right themselves
Reaction to stimuli	Salmon will not swim away from stimulus

From Humane Slaughter Association: (<https://www.hsa.org.uk/signs-of-recovery/signs-of-recovery>)

APPENDIX IV: G.A.P. Quality Grading Assessment of Farmed Atlantic Salmon

Per Section 2.6, for each processing event of G.A.P. Certified salmon, the slaughter facility will quality grade **100 salmon**, keeping a record of the percentage in each grade and sharing the results with the G.A.P. Certified salmon farm. This quality grading assessment focuses on welfare outcomes rather than meat quality grading.

The table below outlines the criteria for each grade. A salmon must meet all criteria in the grade, or drop to the next applicable grade.

Criteria	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C
Punctures	None	None	≥ 1
Bruises	None	≤ 1 and < 0.5in (1.3 cm) in diameter	> 1 or ≥ 0.5 inch (1.3 cm)
Fins	Whole fins intact	Some spread fin rays without soft tissue	Damaged, non-existent, or bleeding fins
Open Sores	None	None	≥ 1
Scale Loss	≤ 15%	≤ 25%	≥ 26%
Eyes	Clear	Dull	Cloudy/milky
Deformities	None	None	Deformed jaw, crooked backbone, or shortened operculum

Adapted from: (http://yousyokuburi.com/pdf/Quality_grading_of_farmed_salmon.pdf) and (<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/36115537/salmon-grades-tables-alaska-seafood-marketing-institute>)