

Inspection of Cekmece ET in Hadimkoy (Turkey) October 30 2010 and June 10 & 11, 2013



Oct.2010: unloading of downer bull

SUMMARY: Since 2010 teams from Animal Welfare Foundation and Eyes on Animals have regularly been at the EU/Turkey border, inspecting cattle and sheep trucks from the EU heading towards slaughterhouses in Turkey. A combination of exporters and transporters cheating and border bureaucracy lead to hours, days and even weeks of animals waiting on board vehicles at the border. Some improvements have been achieved with stricter enforcement and small provisional control posts being set up on the Turkish side. This time we wanted to see what the welfare conditions were like for the animals once they arrived at the slaughterhouses in Turkey. Three of the six we tried to visit would not let us in (Elif Et, Apikoglu and Ornek Mah. Evren Oto San.Sit) but three were open to us. Cegmize ET was one of them. We chose this plant because we had been here back in 2010, after trailing an EU livestock truck. On board there was a downer bull that was seriously injured and could not move his hind legs anymore. Late at night, upon arrival at this plant he was seriously mistreated- workers hit him and dragged him out. We never found out how his life ended as we were told to leave. We wanted this time to have an official tour and speak to the veterinarians, to see what the current situation is like.

Conditions inside are very worrisome, with bulls mounting each other in the raceway and falling down. The animals in line for slaughter can see the slaughter process up ahead. Sheep and cattle here are hung by one leg while still fully conscious. Cattle are forced to fall down via the chute's trip-floor. Animals arriving unable to walk are not humanely killed or euthanized there where they lay but made to enter the slaughterhouse.

In this report we describe what we observe and propose several concrete steps the plant could take to alleviate some of the suffering. We also list violations to the Dzabiha, EU and OIE regulations.

Violations to Dzabiha (Halal regulations)

- The animal should be handled gently and individually
- The animal should not be slaughtered in front of other animals and no blood seen so that no stress or discomfort has been caused to the animal
- The animal must be healthy and free from injury at the time of slaughter.

1. Observations

Facts

Name and address of plant: Cekmece Et, Sazli Bosna Yolu 1km. Hadimkoy – Istanbul

Date and time of visit: October 30 2010 and June 10 and June 11, 2013

Animals

Both cattle and sheep are slaughtered here. 200 cattle and 2000 sheep per week. Many cattle coming from Europe are slaughtered here. During our visit in 2013 there were also cattle originally from Australia and Ukraine being slaughtered. These cattle were not arriving directly from Australia and Ukraine, they had first spent some time in Turkey being fattened.

Photos/Footage

During our tour of the plant in June 2013 we were not allowed to take photos or footage. We will do our best for this report to describe in words what we saw. In this report you will however find photos taken in 2010 when we trailed an EU truck with cattle to this plant late at night and watched part of the unloading.

Descriptions of pens and raceway:

The outdoor waiting pens have a roof and are attached to the slaughterhouse. The floor of the pens has dirt, feces and some garbage on it. However, because it is slightly uneven, it has perhaps some anti-slip qualities. We see some troughs with water, but not in each cattle-pen. The Turkish bulls were tied on in the pens, the others were not as “they are too wild, not used to human handling”. We see men hitting and screaming at some of the cattle to get them to move. We express our concern about this behaviour but are told that the men are not from the slaughterhouse, they are the owners of the cattle, so it is not up to the slaughterhouse to tell them how to be.

The sheep had some bedding and plenty of water and some feed. The pens were not crowded and the temperature inside was comfortable. We did not notice too many flies and the air seemed fresh enough.

The raceway towards the chute has open side walls (metal gates), risking bulls getting their legs caught when mounting each other in the gangway (this happened) and creating shadows plus giving the bulls the opportunity to see what was going on in the kill room and also see men up ahead, frightening them. Much better is what Dr. Temple Grandin proposes- solid side walls. The floor of the raceway is uneven concrete, but it remains very slippery because it has a lot of wet manure and urine on it. The bulls are put in a single-file, 4 at a time (four bulls each one behind the other). They are tightly packed in the raceway, leading to stress. They want to move forward and try pushing each other forward. The one in the front has no place to go, so he repeatedly falls under the weight of the one behind him mounting him. We saw his legs bend briefly the wrong way backwards (thought he was going to break them). He fell also with his nose forward onto his front knees. The plant should have placed a divider between each bull to avoid mounting behaviour and risk of injury, or moved only one at a time towards the kill-floor. It is normal that bulls will mount each other when nervous or when trying to establish a hierarchy.

The first bull in line has view onto the kill floor and can see a bit of what is going on in the trip-floor chute. This adds to his stress and hesitation to move forward when it is his turn to enter the chute.

Description of slaughter installations and process:

Floor of trip-floor chute is extremely slippery. We observed three bulls entering it and all 3 slipped as soon as they entered. Basically just a big sheet of smooth metal. The floor then tilts up to guarantee that the animal falls down and remain down. A chain is then placed on the leg of the animal, the wall of one side of the box opens so the bull falls out and with the chain around his leg he is immediately hoisted part-way up. Only the front part of his body is touching the ground. His head glides in the pool of blood found on the slaughter floor. Roughly 2 inches of blood and other body fluids is on the floor. The slaughterer then stretches the head back and cuts the throat. The knife appears sharp, the slaughterer makes two cuts. Immediately after the cut is made, the bull is hoisted all the way upwards until no part of his body is touching the ground, despite still being conscious.

During our tour we did not see the actual slaughter of sheep, but were shown the equipment. The sheep are brought through a raceway towards what looks like a conveyor restrainer that moves the sheep automatically off the ground and brings them slower higher-up- like a long upwards ramp. The conveyor is about 10 metres long. At the end of this conveyor restrainer there is nothing though, it looks like the sheep will just fall out at the end. They explain that a chain is placed around the back leg of the sheep as it exits the conveyor restrainer, it then swings on the chain and gets hoisted up higher via its back leg. The slaughterer can then grab its head and cut its throat, while in a position for the blood to flow out (hanging upside down). Again, animals are being hoisted by one leg while conscious.

Description of unloading and local transports arriving:

During our tour in June 2013 we did not witness the unloading of animals. However, we did ask the veterinarians of the plant what actions they take when an animal arrives that is injured and not able to walk. We are told that they are driven down directly to the side access door of the slaughter-floor. Here the distance is not so far, so they can be killed without having to walk down the ramps and raceway. Nevertheless, they still must somehow get off the truck and enter the plant. No stunning is used and the animal is never killed on the truck.

We noticed that the driveway leading to the side access door of the plant is very narrow, and doubt that large international livestock trucks could get through.

On October 30 in 2010 a team trailed three animal transporters (German and Polish transport Companies) to the slaughterhouse. In the Polish truck was an injured downer bull, who could not get up anymore. He appeared to have his hips broken.

This truck did not drive to the side access door in order to unload the bull, instead unloaded at the ramp. Workers from the slaughterhouse used repeatedly an electrical prod on all parts of the bull, even on his face, genitals and the anus. A worker in a red overall poked his fingers in the eyes of the bull, but he could not move at all. In the end workers and drivers pulled the bull from the truck (see photos below).

We asked the workers to stop with the torture and slaughter the bull right on the spot, but we were send away from the premises and could not see what happened in the end to the bull.



Oct. 2010: unloading of non-ambulatory bull



Oct.2010: Non-ambulatory bull at the unloading ramp

2. Violations

2.1. Violations to Dzabiha (Halal regulations)

- **The animal should be handled gently and individually** (The cattle are forced to enter a chute with a trip-floor, making it fall down. The bovine in the raceway could see the animal in front of it fall down in the chute as well as the kill floor, causing fright. Bulls are moved through the single-file raceway in groups of four, resulting in them mounting each other, falling and risking serious injury. The bovine and sheep are hoisted while still conscious by just one

leg. The bulls high up until they could only touch the floor with the tips of the hooves. Animals arriving injured are still put through the slaughter process instead of humanely euthanized there where they lay, or at least stunned first and then put through the slaughterline).

- The animal should not be slaughtered in front of other animals and no blood seen so that no stress or discomfort has been caused to the animal (as of walking into the trip-floor chute, the bovine can see the entire slaughter process of the previous animals. There is tons of blood on the kill floor and some in the raceway.
- The animal must be healthy and free from any injury at the time of slaughter. (the bull in 2010 was not able to stand up and we are told that all injured animals continue to be accepted and put through the slaughter process).

2.2. Non-compliance with OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (2012), Chapter 7.5. Slaughter of animals

In Chapter 7.5. of the OIE Code you find the following recommendations regarding general conditions and treatment of animals, as well as distractions in the raceway and the chute.

Article 7.5.1.

4. Distractions and their removal

Distractions that may cause approaching *animals* to stop, baulk or turn back should be designed out from new facilities or removed from existing ones. Below are examples of common distractions and methods for eliminating them:

- b) dark entrances to chutes, races, stun boxes or conveyor restrainers – illuminate with indirect lighting which does not shine directly into the eyes of approaching *animals* or create areas of sharp contrast;
- c) *animals* seeing moving people or equipment up ahead – install solid sides on chutes and races or install shields;
- f) uneven floors or a sudden drop in floor levels at the entrance to conveyor restrainers – avoid uneven floor surfaces or install a solid false floor under the restrainer to provide an illusion of a solid and continuous walking surface;
- h) clanging and banging of metal objects – install rubber stops on gates and other devices to reduce metal to metal contact;

Article 7.5.2.

1. General conditions

e) *Animals* should be handled in such a way as to avoid harm, distress or injury. Under no circumstances should *animal handlers* resort to violent acts to move *animals*, such as crushing or breaking tails of *animals*, grasping their eyes or pulling them by the ears. *Animal handlers* should never apply an injurious object or irritant substance to *animals* and especially not to sensitive areas such as eyes, mouth, ears, anogenital region or belly.

4. Provisions relevant to restraining and containing animals

a) Provisions relevant to restraining *animals* for stunning or slaughter without stunning, to help maintain animal welfare, include:

- i) provision of a non-slippery floor;
- ii) avoidance of excessive pressure applied by restraining equipment that causes struggling or

vocalisation in *animals*;

iv) absence of sharp edges in *restraining* equipment that would harm *animals*;

b) Methods of *restraint* causing avoidable suffering should not be used in conscious *animals* because they cause severe pain and stress:

i) suspending or hoisting *animals* (other than *poultry*) by the feet or legs;

iv) breaking legs, cutting leg tendons or blinding *animals* in order to immobilise them;

2.3. Violations against Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing

Article 15: Handling and restraining operations at slaughterhouses

3. The following methods of restraint shall be prohibited:

(a) suspending or hoisting conscious *animals*;

(b) mechanical clamping or tying of the legs or feet of *animals*;

ANNEX II: LAYOUT, CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT OF SLAUGHTERHOUSES

(as referred to in Article 14)

2. Lairage facilities for *animals* not delivered in containers:

2.5. Floors shall be built and maintained in such a way as to minimise the risk of *animals* slipping, falling or injuring their feet.

3. Restraining equipment and facilities

3.1. Restraining equipment and facilities shall be designed, built and maintained to:

(a) ...

(b) prevent injury or contusions to the *animals*;

(c) minimise struggle and vocalisation when *animals* are restrained;

(d) minimise the time of restraint.

ANNEX III : OPERATIONAL RULES FOR SLAUGHTERHOUSES (as referred to in Article 15)

1.8. It shall be prohibited to:

(a) strike or kick the *animals*;

(b) apply pressure to any particularly sensitive part of the body in such a way as to cause *animals* avoidable pain or suffering;

(c) lift or drag the *animals* by the head, ears, horns, legs, tail or fleece, or handle them in such a way as to cause them pain or suffering;

(d)

(e) twist, crush or break the tails of *animals* or grasp the eyes of any *animal*.

1.11. *Animals* which are unable to walk shall not be dragged to the place of slaughter, but shall be killed where they lie.

According to the criterias of the OIE and the Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 the method of hoisting and suspending the conscious *animals* by one leg, is forbidden.

3. Recommendations for quick improvements

Ideally, Eyes on Animals and Animal Welfare Foundation would like to see Turkish slaughterhouses adopt stunning the animals properly before slaughtering them. However, as this is a long on-going debate with many obstacles, we will just focus in this report on improvements that the plant should take immediately to reduce a lot of the suffering that takes place before the cut is made to the throat.

- 1. Close the gap between the raceway and the chute to prevent the animals from seeing the kill floor.**
- 2. Make the floor of the chute anti-slip (for example, install rubber mat of similar colour to floor).**
- 3. Make the sides of the raceway taller and solid, to reduce shadows and view of workers.**
- 4. Make the back door of the chute solid to the floor, so those waiting in line cannot see what is happening inside the chute (box).**
- 5. Keep the floor of the raceway clean and dry so that the anti-slip grooves fulfill their purpose. This can be done by cleaning the floor more regularly and sprinkling sand down.**
- 6. When moving bulls through the raceway, place either dividers (metal doors dividing the bulls physically from each other) between each one to prevent mounting or pushing, or just move one bull at a time through the raceway. Do not leave a group of 4 bulls in a single file for such a long time as seen in June 2013, as bulls naturally mount each other when nervous or when trying to establish dominance. This causes serious bruising (bad for meat quality and welfare) and risks slipping and falling.**
- 7. Install much more drainage and clean the kill floor more regularly, to keep it cleaner and drier.**
- 8. Never force or drag or prod injured animals. They should instead be humanely killed or euthanized where they lay. As the Dzabiha regulations forbid slaughtering an injured animal anyhow, these animals should not need to be forced to go through the normal slaughtering process inside.**
- 9. Never make animals fall on purpose nor hoist conscious animals by one leg. This causes all sorts of injury to the hip, leg and joint plus terror in the animals. It is a serious welfare concern but also leads to poor-quality meat.**

We encourage the plant to seek advice from slaughter experts and animal scientists, as to what is the best available alternative restraint system on the market, whereby the animals can be slaughtered without being hoisted alive or made to fall on a trip floor.

Here are some websites of experts on animal-welfare during slaughter. You can contact them.

(Feel free to ask us for help with translation if needed as these sites are mostly just in English or English and German. We would be glad to assist).

www.grandin.com in particular see:

<http://www.grandin.com/ritual/evaluation.restraint.methods.kosher.halal.html>

www.hsa.org.uk

<http://www.bsi-schwarzenbek.de>