



Maker of these premium natural chicken brands:



Just **BARE** Chicken

OUR ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY, AUDIT PROCESS & PERFORMANCE: Assuring the Humane Care and Welfare of our Chickens

GNP Company™ recognizes our ethical obligation to provide for the well-being and humane care of our chickens—and we take that responsibility very seriously. From breeding to hatching to processing, our policy is straightforward—GNP Company has zero tolerance for any deliberate abuse or mistreatment of our chickens.

OUR HUMANE CARE POLICY

For the production of all of our products (regardless of brand), we are respectful of our chickens and their welfare. To that end, we take many steps to ensure our practices and processes are humane from hatching through processing. GNP Company:

- 1) Follows Animal Welfare Guidelines set forth by the American Humane Certified® Farm Program (AHC), the National Chicken Council (NCC), the American Veterinarian Medical Association (AVMA), industry experts and university scientists;
- 2) Validates and/or certifies our conformance to AHC standards by conducting annual third-party, independent audits of all facilities and processes involved in the raising, handling and processing of our chickens;
- 3) Drives accountability back to individual animal caretakers with regular internal audits conducted to monitor and continuously improve individual caretaker performance;
- 4) Requires rigorous, regular training for all team members responsible for animal care or handling in proper welfare practices. Part of that training includes the understanding that any deliberate mistreatment of chickens can and will lead to immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination; and
- 5) Abides by AHC and NCC Animal Welfare Standards for humane slaughter. This means humanely rendering chickens unconscious prior to slaughter using methods established and approved by the AVMA. When applicable, animal welfare processes are further third-party inspected by USDA.



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CHICKEN
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OUR HUMANE CARE HISTORY

- In October 2011, our Just BARE® products were officially certified under the rigorous American Humane Certified® Farm Program standards and remain certified today (certificate attached, expires Oct. 1, 2014).
- Since then, GNP Company has transitioned from relying on NCC standards to audit and verify our animal welfare practices to using the AHC standards across all broiler production processes and operations.
- In October 2013, the company expanded our AHC audits to include ALL of our contracted family farm partners/grow-out barns—not just those responsible for the care of Just BARE flocks.
 - ALL of our family farm broiler partners/grow-out barns have been audited and have passed.
 - Annual program auditing requirements moving forward are as follows: all new family farm partners/grow-out barns will undergo full audits; AHC will randomly select one-third of all previously audited family farm partners/grow-out barns to be fully audited and an additional one-third to undergo “walk-through” audits.
- Only our Just BARE products are officially certified. This is because the added cost of certification and licensing are not feasible based on current market pricing of our Gold'n Plump® products. We will continue to monitor consumer attitudes to see if third-party certification becomes a market-supportable attribute in the future.

THE ANNUAL ANIMAL WELFARE AUDIT PROCESS & OUR PERFORMANCE

Each year, both of our primary production plants, hatcheries, ALL new family farm partners/grow-out barns, and one-third of our previously audited contracted family farm partners/grow-out facilities (randomly selected) are audited and graded against the more than 200 standards of the American Humane Certified® Farm Program—more than 30 of which focus specifically on the four major areas of processing. An independent auditing agency conducts the audits. An overall total score of at least 85% is needed to pass.

In 2013, all GNP Company primary production plants, hatcheries and audited family farm partners/grow-out barns PASSED with a score of 87% or better. More specifically:

- **Production:** Cold Spring, MN Plant scored 94%, Arcadia, WI Plant scored 99%;
- **Hatcheries:** Independence, WI Hatchery scored 99%, St. Cloud, MN Hatchery scored 99%;
- **Audited MN and WI Family Farm Partners/Grow-out Barns:** Passed with scores ranging from 87% to 97%.

DETAILED RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

WHAT WE STRIVE TO PROVIDE EVERY DAY

QUALITY OF LIFE: Bird Health & Comfort are our Priorities.

All GNP Company™ chickens are raised with the utmost care by experts in animal science, nutrition and rearing. They are cared for by independent family farm partners whose average tenure working with our company is more than 20 years. All family farm partners are required to participate in the company's Active Grower Management Program, overseen by our company veterinarian, Dr. Deirdre Johnson, DVM, MAM, DACPV (pictured here). The program includes tracking and measuring individual performance pertaining to bird health.



HUMANE CATCHING, TRANSPORT & PROCESSING:

Caught and Transported With Care.

Chickens raised for GNP Company™ are handled with care from our grower barns, through catching, transporting and processing. Here's how:

- About half of our birds are hand-caught and about half caught using automated chicken-catching technology. The latter uses long rubber fingers to gently ease chickens into modular bins for safe transport. Both methods are highly effective and meet or exceed the established performance standards.
- Chickens are transferred to modular bins for transporting, based on size and weight to prevent overcrowding;
- These bins are designed to ensure birds don't hurt themselves or other birds and allow air to circulate. Ongoing checks prevent stacking of birds and pinched wings or legs;
- Conditions are monitored to ensure proper temperatures (cooling and heating) and ventilation at all times;
- Additional precautions and measures are taken in summer and winter to maintain proper temperatures and provide added comfort during transport.

Humanely Handled and Slaughtered.

The process of slaughtering is a reality of our business—a necessary step that allows us to bring safe, wholesome, affordable and nutritious chicken products to market. When done in accordance with established AHC, NCC and AVMA standards, the process is humane.

- Routine training and rigorous standards of care help minimize stress and discomfort of the chickens;
- Chickens are handled in low light conditions, using proven methods to keep them calm;
- Chickens are rendered unconscious, prior to being slaughtered;
- Technology makes slaughter extremely quick to minimize discomfort. We consistently exceed performance standards for humane care during this process.
- There are specific time standards that we adhere to and routinely monitor to verify the compliance and effectiveness of our systems;
- We're committed to getting all processes right, every time. Though the exception, failures can happen, but they are never acceptable. For this reason, routine monitoring provides accurate performance assessments of our processes and systems. Additionally, we've added back-up processes with human intervention in case of mechanical failures.

RIGOROUS, REGULAR ANIMAL WELFARE TRAINING: Conducted with New Hires & Annually.

All GNP Company team members responsible for animal care or handling are regularly trained in proper animal welfare practices. This includes new hire orientation, department-specific training, and training presentations by our company veterinarian. During training, we reinforce our zero-tolerance policy to drive home the understanding that any deliberate mistreatment of chickens can and will lead to immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination. Team members sign an acknowledgement form indicating they've received training, and are aware that it is their responsibility to report any mistreatment they may witness.

AMERICAN HUMANE CERTIFIED® FARM PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The AHC Farm Program is a known, respected certifier for animal welfare. Key strengths include:

- 1) It was the first and is the fastest-growing farm animal welfare program in the U.S.;
- 2) It is backed by the American Humane Association™ (AHA) which has a long history (founded in 1877) of using a moderate, science-based and solutions-driven approach to protect animals and children;
- 3) It is built around a comprehensive set of science-based standards and sound research which are reviewed regularly by a Scientific Advisory Committee of respected animal welfare experts;
- 4) It does not take an elitist approach to animal welfare. It believes the culture not the size of an operation is the real indicator of its animal welfare stewardship.