



24 October 2024

CHABAD CENTRE OF CAPE TOWN

Dear Rabbi Popack,

RE: KAPPAROT AT CHABAD CENTRE OF CAPE TOWN

The Cape of Good Hope SPCA hereby expresses its sincere gratitude for the opportunity to monitor the Kapparot ceremony at the Chabad Centre of Cape Town on Thursday, 17 October 2024 and commends your consideration of animal welfare. Your invitation allowed us to engage with the community and ensure that the practices adhered to both religious and animal welfare standards.

While we respect and honour the tradition of Kapparot, we must address concerns observed during the ceremony that must be rectified for future events. Our goal is to ensure compliance with the Animals Protection Act No 71 of 1962 and the Poultry Regulations under the Meat Safety Act 40 of 2000, while upholding the dignity of the animals and people involved.

Concerns observed:

- **Overcrowding of Crates:** Many chickens were observed overcrowded, particularly when sorted into groups. Overcrowding must be prevented. We recommend doubling the number of crates used and ensuring that larger, more-suitable (species-specific) crates are utilised to provide confined chickens with adequate space and ventilation.
- **Access to Water:** Chickens did not have access to potable water while waiting for the ceremony. All animals must be provided with potable water at all times.
- **Handling of Chickens:** Inexperienced members struggled to handle the chickens humanely and had to be taught how to humanely capture and handle on the day of the ceremony. We suggest that individuals selected for handling undergo training on humane catching and handling techniques prior to the ceremony. The SPCA is willing to assist by providing education and again demonstrating humane capture and handling of chickens.
- **Shelter from Weather Extremes:** As the day progressed, it became necessary to move crates to shaded areas to protect the chickens from heat. Adequate shelter must be established for all holding areas to shield animals from temperature and weather extremes.
- **Slaughter Procedures:** While Rabbi Ziegler performed the slaughter competently, larger chickens remained conscious for an extended time post-slaughter. We strongly urge you to consider the SPCA's assistance in implementing post-stunning techniques, which will alleviate suffering during the bleed-out process.

Considerations for Next Year:

- **Transportation:** Source chickens from nearby farms using appropriate transport crates to minimise stress and prevent overcrowding.
- **Holding Facilities:** Prepare holding facilities that provide adequate space, shelter, and ventilation well in advance of the chickens' arrival.

- Feed and Water Provisions: Ensure that sufficient supplies of feed and potable water are readily available for all confined chickens.
- Treatment of Sick/Injured Animals: Inspect chickens upon arrival for any health issues, establishing protocols for immediate care (which includes immediate slaughter as a form of treatment).
- Staff Competency and Handling: Train staff on humane handling techniques, and minimising noise and distractions to reduce animal stress. SPCA personnel will again be able to demonstrate humane handling and capture of chickens.
- Slaughter Procedures: Ensure all necessary equipment is ready prior to a chicken being caught and handled thereby minimising the period of stress experienced by the chicken.

Importance of Post-Stunning:

We strongly advocate for the consideration of post-stunning methods. This practice can significantly reduce suffering and stress for the chickens involved. While Jewish law may preclude pre-slaughter stunning, there is no prohibition against post-stunning, which aligns with our shared commitment to compassion.

By adopting this method, you can demonstrate that your faith can evolve to incorporate enhanced humane practices without compromising its core values.

In conclusion, we appreciate your attention to these welfare considerations. By working together to implement these recommendations, we can ensure that the Kapparot practice reflects your deepest values of compassion while respecting your religious traditions.

Thank you for your consideration. The Cape of Good Hope SPCA looks forward to further collaborating with you to promote humane practices in the future.

Kind regards,



Nicole Venter
Inspector
Cape of Good Hope SPCA