

**Establishment number:** M47420+V47420

**Establishment name:** Western Heritage Meat Company

42 East Ridge Rd., Sheridan, WY

**Inspection date:** 2025-03-24

**Description:** HATS Category: Electric Prod, Alternative Object Use

On Monday March 24, 2025, at approximately 0723 hours, while performing the “Livestock Humane Handling” task, I observed a non-establishment employee (who was not the lambs owner) striking 10 lambs in the holding pen with a metal stick with a mini-red flag on the end.

The 10 lambs were in a group and refusing to move to the stun box. The two establishment employees tried to lure the lambs away with food and tried to separate the group to go to the stun box. Upon the arrival of a second lamb owner, who was to unload his truck and drop off his lambs. This second owner also notices the struggle of the two establishment employees with the 10 lambs from the first owner. However, the owner of the first 10 lambs was not present, thereby leaving the lambs in the hands of the establishment. The second owner, who is not an establishment employee, stepped in to assist the two establishment employees by grabbing his metal stick with a mini-red flag on the end, being approximately 2 foot long. I observed this second lamb owner physically pushing, shoving, and striking at all 10 lambs, making contact with the head, face, and back multiple times of multiple lambs with the metal end of the flag stick causing a whipping sound effect. I observed the lambs vocalizing and attempting to move away from this second lamb owner. I did not observe any injuries. Eventually, the lambs were relocated to the next pen close to the stun box. A regulatory control action was not taken.

This is in violation of Title 9 CFR 313.2(a) which states: “Driving of livestock from the unloading ramps to the holding pens and from the holding pens to the stunning area shall be done with a minimum of excitement and discomfort to the animals. Livestock shall not be forced to move faster than a normal walking speed.” In addition, Title 9 CFR 313.2(b) states “Electric prods, canvas slappers, or other implements employed to drive animals shall be used as little as possible in order to minimize excitement and injury. Any use of such implements which, in the opinion of the inspector, is excessive, is prohibited.”

I notified the establishment employee and plant manager verbally of the noncompliance and again in writing with the issuance of this Noncompliance Record. The District Veterinary Medical Specialist was contacted through supervisory channels. This establishment operated under a robust systematic approach to the humane handling of livestock.