



the **Animal Activist** **Legal Defense** *project*

1. Failing to ensure lambs are unconscious on the slaughter line.

This practice – whether through neglect, recklessness, or done knowingly – violates the Humane Method of Slaughter Act, 7 U.S.C. §§ 1902 (a)—(b), as well as Colorado’s prohibition on torturing and causing unnecessary or unjustified pain to an animal. C.R.S. §§ 18-9-201(3), 18-9-202(1)(a).

Temple Grandin, who [designed](#) the slaughterhouse and trained SF’s workers, says that lambs “[absolutely](#)” should not lift their heads after being stunned. The North American Meat Institute’s guidelines also note that properly stunned sheep’s heads should be “[limp and floppy](#).”

2. Transporting and slaughtering animals with broken bones.

Undercover footage shows one sheep that appears to be non-ambulatory with a broken leg. Such condition exemplifies, at minimum, neglect causing unnecessary pain and suffering of an animal in violation of Colorado law. The American Veterinary Medical Association [states](#) that “[a]nimals that are down should be euthanized immediately and not taken to slaughter.”

While the USDA has only codified a rule related to the slaughter of non-ambulatory calves, they [noted](#) that prohibiting the slaughter of downed animals would improve compliance with the Humane Method of Slaughter Act. Colorado law prohibits the sale of any livestock at a public livestock market if the animal is “injured, disabled, or diseased beyond recovery, or if such injury or disease permanently renders the animal unfit for human consumption.” CO ST § 35-55-113(4). This specifically includes “any animal that is unable to rise to its feet by itself.” *Id.*

3. Failure to properly treat, or euthanize, animals with serious injuries.

As discussed above, one sheep was non-ambulatory with a broken leg upon unloading. Another sheep observed in undercover footage with a uterine prolapse, which is an emergency requiring [veterinarian intervention](#) under appropriate [epidural anesthesia](#).

Failure to treat serious injuries – such as a broken leg or [uterine prolapses](#) - before transporting animals unreasonably permits the unnecessary and unjustified pain of the animal. Such neglect constitutes animal mistreatment and, in certain cases, results in the torture of an animal in violation of Colorado law.

4. Needlessly beating, kicking and throwing of animals.

Workers were observed beating, kicking, dragging, and throwing sheep. These acts were unnecessary and caused unjustified pain and therefore violate Colorado's prohibition against unnecessarily or cruelly beating or otherwise mistreating an animal. C.R.S. §§ 18-9-201(3) (defining mistreatment), 18-9-202(1)(a) (prohibited acts). Dragging, kicking, and throwing animals are also violations of [industry policy](#).

5. Violation of halal requirements.

Superior Farms touts that “all lambs” at their Denver facility are certified Halal. Undercover footage undermines this claim. Notably, workers are seen utilizing multiple cuts to kill the sheep – in violation of Halal protocol. Halal Food Standards Alliance of America, [The Vertical Cut Slaughter Method](#). Selling non-Halal food as halal [can be criminal](#) in certain states.

The [Animal Activist Legal Defense Project](#) at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law works to empower and defend animal advocates through activist defense, affirmative litigation, and training law students to join and transform the field of Animal Law. Learn more at [AALDP.com](#) and follow us on [Twitter/X](#) and [Instagram](#) at @AALDP_DU.