

Poultry slaughter establishment injury rates in the US Occupational Health and Safety Administration's Injury Tracking Application, 2017-2023.

Key Findings

- Poultry slaughter establishments that received a modified line speed waiver (LSW) to operate at higher evisceration line speeds reported higher injury rates, on average, for all study years.
- 52.8% of reported injuries among processing/production workers at LSW establishments resulted from repetitive motions involving microtasks, compared to 33.6% at non-LSW establishments.
- Poultry workers who performed processing/production jobs experience higher rates of injuries characterized by sprains, strains, tears, and other related injuries, and repetitive motion injuries involving microtasks than other poultry workers.
- More than 70% of the poultry workers who reported injuries required days away from work, job transfer, or restricted duty.

Key takeaways

- Despite an overall decline in poultry industry injury rates, processing/production workers at LSW establishments were at greater risk of traumatic and repetitive motion injuries compared to those at non-LSW establishments.
- Based on these findings poultry companies should implement recently proposed mitigation strategies including reducing piece rates and implementing ergonomic injury prevention programs

Introduction

The US poultry processing industry employs approximately 250,000 people and produces more than nine billion chickens annually.^{1,2} Poultry processing jobs require repetitive, forceful hand exertions that are often repeated thousands of times per shift. Studies of poultry workers have identified elevated rates of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and symptoms, with outcomes including carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS), upper extremity MSDs, and back pain.³ Some poultry processing tasks such as deboning and cutting tasks are more hazardous than others.³ Poultry workers have also described being denied treatment for injuries and experiencing retaliation, including up to termination, for reporting occupational injuries.^{4,5}

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) operates the New Poultry Inspection System (NPIS) health inspection program for poultry slaughter establishments.⁶ In 2018, the FSIS granted line speed waivers (LSWs) to some establishments, allowing evisceration lines to operate at up to 175 birds per minute (BPM) rather than the previous maximum of 140 BPM. Workers, labor unions, and other stakeholders raised concerns that this speed increase would endanger workers, and FSIS contracted with researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, to perform the Processing Line Speed Evaluation Study (PULSE), published in 2025. The PULSE study found that increased piece rate (tasks per minute) was significantly associated with a higher exposure to measures of MSD risk, with more than 80% of workers reporting working in pain.⁷ The PULSE study recommended adjusting staffing and job-specific line speed to reduce the risk of MSDs in both LSW and non-LSW establishments.

The goal of this analysis is to assess poultry slaughter establishment injury rates and compare LSW to non-LSW establishment injuries using the US Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) Injury Tracking Application (ITA) data. This system collects work-related injury and illness recordkeeping data and makes it publicly available online. For injuries recorded since 2023, case detail data files include deidentified records on individual incidents, including job descriptions, injury narratives, and Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System (OIICS) codes from establishments with 100 or more employees in certain industries, including animal slaughtering and processing.



Study Methods

ITA establishment-level summary data for the years 2017 – 2023 and case detail data for 2023 were downloaded from the ITA website.⁸ The OIICS-coded 2024 data were not published at the time of the analysis. The publicly available USDA Meat, Poultry and Egg Product Inspection (MPI) Directory was used to identify establishments in the NPIS program and a list of establishments receiving an LSW was obtained from the USDA website.⁹ Establishments' annual summary data submissions to ITA are referred to as "annual reports" in this analysis. NPIS establishments were linked to ITA establishments through automated and manual processes. Annual reports with apparent data entry errors in reported employee numbers or total hours worked were excluded to generate the ITA-NPIS dataset. All LSW had been granted by 2020, however, some establishments may have implemented higher line speeds as early as 2018.⁷ Data on establishments' LSW grant date are not available. Total injuries per 100 full-time equivalent employees are examined with descriptive statistics.

Case detail data were extracted from the 2023 file for establishments in the ITA-NPIS dataset. Free-text job descriptions were reviewed by an occupational medicine physician who has visited numerous poultry facilities and interviewed hundreds of workers and managers. Job descriptions were classified into supervisory or administrative, processing and production, and other categories.

- Supervisory/administrative: job descriptions for workers who are typically in an office or in supervisory positions on the production floor.
- Processing/production: job descriptions indicating that the worker is on the production line performing hand- or arm-intensive tasks.
- Other workers: job descriptions for roles that support production lines but do not involve hand-or arm-intensive tasks, for example, forklift operators.

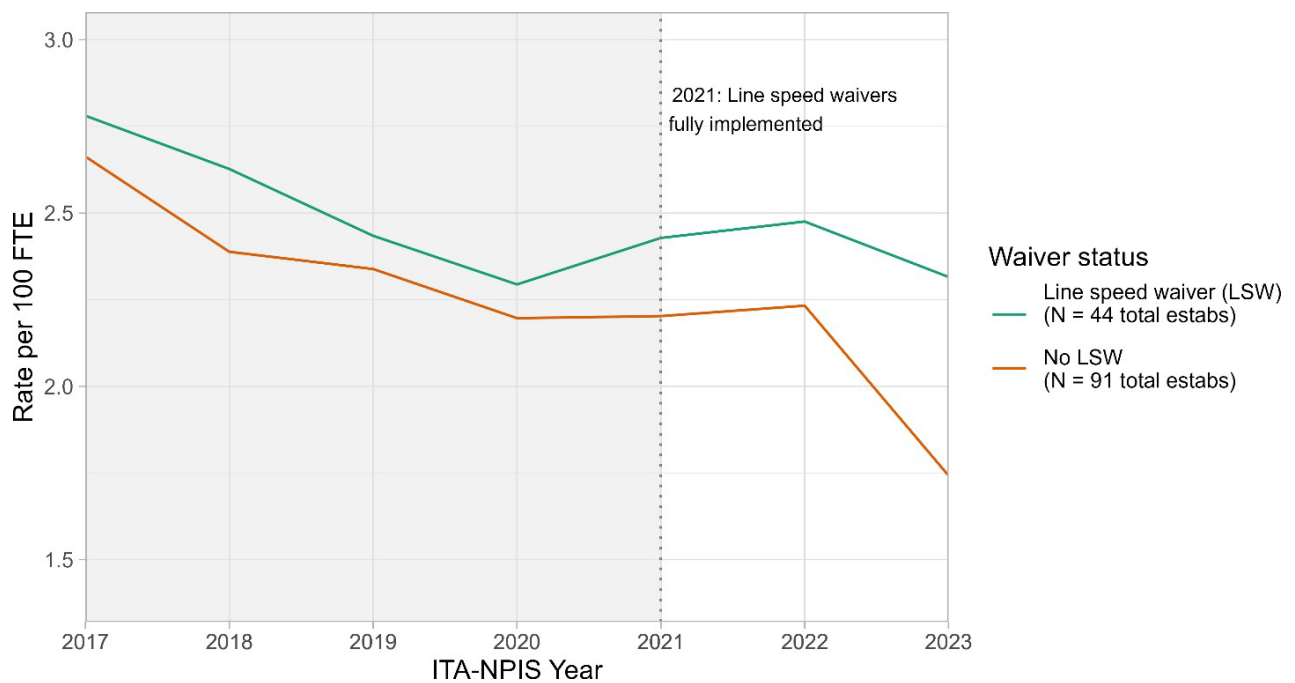
Two-digit (major category) Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System (OIICS) codes are included in the ITA case detail data file for each case. Codes describing the nature of injury or illness, part of body affected, source of injury or illness, and event or exposure were applied using a machine learning algorithm developed by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to code injuries based on free text fields.¹⁰ Cases were restricted to injuries (excluding illnesses, hearing loss, and other reportable incidents), and proportions of OIICS-coded injuries by job type and LSW status were examined using descriptive statistics.

This analysis used existing, publicly available data sources and did not require Institutional Review Board review. Data cleaning and analyses were performed using R version 4.5.2.¹¹ See Technical Documentation for a full description of methods.

Results

A total of 135 establishments were included in the ITA-NPIS annual summary dataset 2017-2023. Of these, 44 establishments were LSW recipients. Case detail data describing 2,189 injuries were submitted by 33 LSW establishments and 76 non-LSW establishments. Figure 1 shows total injury rates per 100 FTE workers by year and LSW status. Rates declined from 2017 to 2023 across all establishments. LSW establishments had higher injury rates in each year.

Figure 1. Average rate of total injuries per 100 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers at poultry slaughter establishments by line speed waiver recipient status, ITA-NPIS annual summary data, 2017-2023.



Characteristics of injuries by job type and injury type in the 2023 case detail data are shown in Table 1. The proportions of injuries are similar between LSW and non-LSW establishments. Most injuries (69%) were reported by processing and production workers at both establishment types, and injuries requiring days of job transfer or restriction (DJTR) were most common.

Table 1.

Characteristics of total injuries by line speed waiver (LSW) status, ITA-NPIS case detail data, 2023.		
	LSW N = 861	Non-LSW N = 1328
	n (%)	n (%)
Job type		
Production/processing	595 (69%)	921 (69%)
Other worker	225 (26%)	350 (26%)
Supervisor/administrative	41 (4.8%)	57 (4.3%)
Injury type		
Death	1 (0.1%)	1 (<0.1%)
DJTR injury ^a	345 (40%)	548 (41%)
DAFW injury ^b	281 (33%)	395 (30%)
Other injury	234 (27%)	384 (29%)
^a Days of job transfer or restriction.		
^b Days away from work.		

Selected OIICS codes at the two-digit (major group) level are compared across all ITA-NPIS establishments that submitted case detail data by non-supervisory job type in Table 2. Among workers experiencing a traumatic injury or disorder, processing/production workers are significantly more likely to experience sprains, strains, tears, and other soft tissue and joint injuries (27.9%) compared to 17.4% of other workers ($P < 0.001$). Other workers' traumatic injuries are more likely to be open wounds; traumatic injuries to bones, nerves, or the spinal cord; or burns and corrosions. Among injury events or exposures, production workers experienced more than 5 times the proportion of injuries caused by repetitive motions involving microtasks than other workers (42.6% vs 7.9%, $P < .001$).

Table 2.

Selected injuries among processing/production and other workers by Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System (OIICS) major group (two-digit) code and job type, ITA-NPIS case detail data, 2023.			
	Processing	Other workers	
Nature of Injury			
Traumatic Injuries and Disorders (N)	1,429	555	
	n (%)	n (%)	P^a
Strains, sprains, tears, etc. ^b	398 (27.9)	100 (18.0)	<.001
Open wounds	355 (24.8)	175 (31.5)	<.05
Other traumatic injuries and disorders	240 (16.8)	83 (15.0)	
Surface wounds and bruises	162 (11.3)	46 (8.3)	
Traumatic injuries to bones, nerves, spinal cord	122 (8.5)	84 (15.1)	<.001
Multiple traumatic injuries and disorders	117 (8.2)	33 (5.9)	
Burns and corrosions	23 (1.6)	31 (5.6)	<.001
Intracranial injuries	11 (0.8)	3 (0.5)	^c
Effects of environmental conditions	1 (0.1)	-	^c
Event or Exposure			
Overexertion and Bodily Reaction (N)	423	76	
	n (%)	n (%)	P^a
Overexertion involving outside sources	200 (47.3)	56 (73.7)	
Repetitive motions involving microtasks	180 (42.6)	6 (7.9)	<.001
Other exertions or bodily reactions	43 (10.2)	14 (18.4)	
^a Row-wise z-test with Holm correction for multiple comparisons.			
^b Major group title "Traumatic injuries to muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, etc."			
^c No significance test performed			

Comparisons of OIICS major group codes among processing and production workers by establishment LSW status are shown in Table 3. Injuries reported by LSW establishments had a significantly higher proportion of sprains, strains, tears, and other soft-tissue and joint injuries, with 33.9% at LSW establishments compared to 23.8% at non-LSW establishments ($P < .001$). Workers at LSW establishments also had a higher proportion of injuries caused by repetitive motions involving microtasks (52.8% vs 33.6%, $P < 0.001$).

Table 3.

Selected injuries among poultry processing and production workers by Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System (OIICS) major group (two-digit) code and establishment line speed waiver (LSW) status, ITA-NPIS case detail data, 2023.			
	LSW	Non-LSW	
Nature of Injury			
Traumatic Injuries and Disorders (N)	569	860	
	n (%)	n (%)	<i>P</i>^a
Strains, sprains, tears, etc. ^b	193 (33.9)	205 (23.8)	<.001
Open wounds	130 (22.8)	225 (26.2)	
Other traumatic injuries and disorders	84 (14.8)	156 (18.1)	
Surface wounds and bruises	72 (12.7)	90 (10.5)	
Traumatic injuries to bones, nerves, spinal cord	42 (7.4)	80 (9.3)	
Multiple traumatic injuries and disorders	34 (6.0)	83 (9.7)	
Burns and corrosions	10 (1.8)	13 (1.5)	
Intracranial injuries	4 (0.7)	7 (0.8)	^c
Effects of environmental conditions	-	1 (0.1)	^c
Event or Exposure			
Overexertion and Bodily Reaction (N)	197	226	
	n (%)	n (%)	<i>P</i>^a
Repetitive motions involving microtasks	104 (52.8)	76 (33.6)	<.001
Overexertion involving outside sources	82 (41.6)	118 (52.2)	
Other exertions or bodily reactions	11 (5.6)	32 (14.2)	<.05
^a Row-wise z-test with Holm correction for multiple comparisons.			
^b Major group title "Traumatic injuries to muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, etc."			
^c No significance test performed			

See Supplementary Tables A and B for all injuries by single-digit division level OIICS codes by job type and establishment LSW status.

Conclusions

Average injury rates per 100 FTE workers declined among ITA-NPIS establishments across the study period. This finding is consistent with estimates for poultry processing establishments published in the BLS Survey of Occupational Injury and Illness (SOII) for 2017-2023.¹² Establishments in this analysis that had received an LSW as of 2021 had higher injury rates for all study years.

Examining the case detail dataset revealed significant differences in injuries reported by processing/production and other workers at LSW and non-LSW establishments. Processing/production workers at LSW establishments have higher proportions of traumatic injuries to muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, etc. and injuries caused by repetitive motions involving microtasks than at non-LSW establishments. This is consistent with previous research, which has demonstrated that poultry processing workers experience elevated prevalence of pain, symptoms, and upper extremity injuries with contributing factors including repetitive movements, awkward posture, and speed of work.^{3,7}

The repercussions of these preventable injuries include lost wages, healthcare costs, pain, and ill health experienced by workers, families, and communities, as well as impacts on employers, including lost productivity, healthcare costs, and insurance costs. Interventions, including reduced piece rates, implementing ergonomics programs, and effective medical management of injuries, may be effective strategies for preventing injuries and reducing costs.^{13,14}

Limitations

The ITA-NPIS dataset is likely to represent an undercount of the true number of injuries in the poultry industry, caused by both underreporting of injuries by workers to employers and underreporting by employers to recordkeeping systems like ITA.¹⁵ A 2016 report on the meatpacking industry by the US Government Accountability Office acknowledged these overall improvements in injury rates but found that underreporting and insufficient data continued to be barriers to improving poultry worker health.¹⁶ Establishments with well-managed occupational health and safety programs could accurately identify and report more injuries than others, resulting in the appearance of higher injury rates. These factors should be examined, rather than penalizing employers based solely on injury rates. Establishment LSW status was determined using authoritative USDA data sources, but data on evisceration line speeds and piece rate are unavailable and line speeds may vary between LSW establishments. It is possible that misclassification is present in the job type categorization, although line-level manual review by an occupational health expert was performed to accurately identify jobs.

Authors

Stella Beckman, PhD, MPH^a

Sheiphali Gandhi, MD, MPH^{b,c}

Beki Jackson, MPH^a

Carisa Harris, PhD, CPE^{b,d}

Robert Harrison, MD, MPH^{a,b}

Affiliations

- a) Occupational Health Branch, California Department of Public Health, Richmond, CA
- b) Division of Occupational, Environmental, and Climate Medicine, University of California San Francisco, San Francisco, CA
- c) Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care, Allergy, and Sleep Medicine, University of California San Francisco, San Francisco, CA
- d) Division of Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA

Disclaimer

The findings and conclusions in this article are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the California Department of Public Health or the California Health and Human Services Agency.

References

1. US Department of Agriculture. Poultry Slaughter 2024 Summary. 2025. <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/pg15bd88s>
2. US Bureau of Labor Statistics. BLS Data Viewer: All Employees, Thousands, Poultry Processing, Not Seasonally Adjusted. 2025. Accessed September 19, 2025. <https://data.bls.gov/dataViewer/view/timeseries/CEU3231161501>
3. Harmes JL, Engelbrecht JC, Bekker JL. The impact of physical and ergonomic hazards on poultry abattoir processing workers: a review. *Int J Env Res Public Health*. 2016;13:197. doi:10.3390/ijerph13020197.
4. Stuesse A. When They're Done with You: Legal Violence and Structural Vulnerability among Injured Immigrant Poultry Workers. *Anthropol Work Rev*. 2018;39(2):79-93. doi:10.1111/awr.12148
5. Constance DH, Choi JY, Hendrickson MK. The Southern Model Revisited: The Intersection of Race, Ethnicity, Immigration, and Health and Safety in Poultry Processing. *Sustainability*. 2023;15(18):13945. doi:10.3390/su151813945
6. US Department of Agriculture. Meat, Poultry and Egg Product Inspection Directory. September 2, 2025. Accessed September 4, 2025. <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/inspection/establishments/meat-poultry-and-egg-product-inspection-directory>
7. Harris-Adamson C, Harrison R, Afterman, M., et al. Poultry Processing Line Speed Evaluation Study (PULSE). 2025.
8. Establishment Specific Injury and Illness Data (Injury Tracking Application) | Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Accessed July 27, 2023. <https://www.osha.gov/Establishment-Specific-Injury-and-Illness-Data>
9. US Department of Agriculture. Meat, Poultry and Egg Product Inspection Directory. September 2, 2025. Accessed September 4, 2025. <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/inspection/establishments/meat-poultry-and-egg-product-inspection-directory>
10. US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Automated Coding of Injury and Illness Data. April 9, 2025. Accessed March 4, 2026. <https://www.bls.gov/iif/automated-coding.htm>
11. R Core Team. R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing; 2025. <https://www.R-project.org/>
12. US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Injuries, Illnesses, and Fatalities (Historic Data). Accessed September 26, 2025. <https://www.bls.gov/iif/nonfatal-injuries-and-illnesses-tables/soii-summary-historical.htm>

References

13. US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Prevention of Musculoskeletal Injuries in Poultry Processing. 2013. Accessed October 3, 2025.
<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3213.pdf>
14. Crandall PG, O'Bryan CA, McFadden BR, et al. A review of successful workplace interventions to mitigate work-related musculoskeletal disorders in poultry processing plant workers: current knowledge and future prospects. Saf Health Work. Published online September 2025:S2093791125000770. doi:10.1016/j.shaw.2025.09.004
15. US Government Accountability Office. Workplace Safety and Health. Safety in the Meat and Poultry Industry, While Improving, Could Be Further Strengthened.
<https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-16-337>
16. US Government Accountability Office. Workplace Safety and Health. Additional Data Needed to Address Continued Hazards in the Meat and Poultry Industry. U.S. Government Accountability Office; 2016. Accessed September 23, 2025.
<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-16-337.pdf>

Supplementary Tables

Supplementary Table A. Total injuries among non-supervisory workers by Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System (OIICS) major division (single-digit) code and job type, ITA-NPIS case detail data, 2023.

	Processing/ production N = 1516	Other worker N = 575	P^a
	n (%)	n (%)	
Nature of Injury			
Traumatic Injuries and Disorders	1429 (94.3)	555 (96.5)	<.05
Systemic Diseases or Disorders	87 (5.7)	16 (2.8)	<.05
Symptoms, Signs, and Ill-defined Conditions	-	3 (0.5)	^b
Uncoded	-	1 (0.2)	^b
Part of Body Affected			
Upper Extremities	583 (38.5)	239 (41.6)	
Lower Extremities	195 (12.9)	81 (14.1)	
Trunk	156 (10.3)	63 (11.0)	
Head	127 (8.4)	70 (12.2)	
Multiple Body Parts	65 (4.3)	24 (4.2)	
Uncoded	390 (25.7)	98 (17.0)	<.001
Source of Injury			
Persons, Plants, Animals, and Minerals	369 (24.3)	46 (8.0)	<.001
Structures and Surfaces	317 (20.9)	126 (21.9)	
Containers, Furniture, and Fixtures	263 (17.3)	65 (11.3)	<.01
Tools, Instruments, and Equipment	183 (12.1)	64 (11.1)	
Machinery	111 (7.3)	60 (10.4)	
Parts and Materials	83 (5.5)	84 (14.6)	<.001
Vehicles	75 (4.9)	39 (6.8)	
Other Sources	33 (2.2)	32 (5.6)	<.01
Chemicals and Chemical Products	13 (0.9)	16 (2.8)	<.05
Uncoded	69 (4.6)	43 (7.5)	
Event or Exposure			
Contact with Objects and Equipment	619 (40.8)	286 (49.7)	<.01
Overexertion and Bodily Reaction	423 (27.9)	76 (13.2)	<.001
Falls, Slips, Trips	341 (22.5)	137 (23.8)	
Exposure to Harmful Substances or Environments	69 (4.6)	45 (7.8)	<.05
Transportation Incidents	25 (1.6)	17 (3.0)	
Violence and Other Injuries by Persons or Animals	24 (1.6)	5 (0.9)	
Uncoded	15 (1.0)	9 (1.6)	

^aRow-wise z-test with Holm correction for multiple comparisons.

^bNo significance test performed

Supplementary Tables

Supplementary Table B. Total injuries among poultry processing/production workers (N = 1,516) by Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System division (single-digit) codes and establishment line speed waiver (LSW) status, ITA-NPIS case detail data, 2023.

	LSW N = 595	Non-LSW N = 921	p^a
	n (%)	n (%)	
Nature of Injury			
Traumatic Injuries and Disorders	569 (95.6)	860 (93.4)	
Systemic Diseases or Disorders	26 (4.4)	61 (6.6)	
Part of Body Affected			
Upper Extremities	228 (38.3)	355 (38.5)	
Lower Extremities	68 (11.4)	127 (13.8)	
Trunk	66 (11.1)	90 (9.8)	
Head	53 (8.9)	74 (8.0)	
Multiple Body Parts	25 (4.2)	40 (4.3)	
Uncoded	155 (26.1)	235 (25.5)	
Source of Injury			
Persons, Plants, Animals, and Minerals	173 (29.1)	196 (21.3)	<.01
Structures and Surfaces	117 (19.7)	200 (21.7)	
Containers, Furniture, and Fixtures	90 (15.1)	173 (18.8)	
Tools, Instruments, and Equipment	69 (11.6)	114 (12.4)	
Machinery	37 (6.2)	74 (8.0)	
Parts and Materials	30 (5.0)	53 (5.8)	
Vehicles	28 (4.7)	47 (5.1)	
Other Sources	10 (1.7)	23 (2.5)	
Chemicals and Chemical Products	6 (1.0)	7 (0.8)	
Uncoded	35 (5.9)	34 (3.7)	
Event or Exposure			
Contact with Objects and Equipment	211 (35.5)	408 (44.3)	<.01
Overexertion and Bodily Reaction	197 (33.1)	226 (24.5)	<.01
Falls, Slips, Trips	128 (21.5)	213 (23.1)	
Exposure to Harmful Substances or Environments	29 (4.9)	40 (4.3)	
Transportation Incidents	12 (2.0)	13 (1.4)	
Violence and Other Injuries by Persons or Animals	7 (1.2)	17 (1.8)	
Uncoded	11 (1.8)	4 (0.4)	^b

^aRow-wise z-test with Holm correction for multiple comparisons.

^bNo significance test performed

Technical Documentation

Data selection and record linkage

ITA establishment-level summary data for 2017 – 2023 and case detail data for 2023 were downloaded.¹ The 2016 summary data file was excluded due to underreporting during the first year of the data system, and 2024 case detail data was not included because OIICS codes were unavailable at the time of the analysis. Records with the NAICS code 311615 (Poultry Processing) were selected, and the USDA MPI Directory was used to identify establishments in the NPIS program where young chicken is slaughtered in high volume (> 10 million birds in the previous year).² The list of establishments receiving a modified line speed waiver (LSW) was obtained from the USDA website.² Companies may have more than one establishment, and each establishment may submit annual summary data to one or more years of the data system. Establishments' annual summary data submissions to ITA are referred to as "annual reports" in this analysis. Annual reports with apparent data entry errors in reported employee numbers or total hours worked were excluded. All LSW had been granted by 2020, however, some establishments may have implemented higher line speeds as early as 2018.⁷ Data on establishments' LSW grant date are not available.

NPIS establishments were linked to ITA establishments; manual review was required due to inconsistencies in ITA establishment data – while certain values, such as total injury counts, are validated,⁴ other information like company name and address may differ from year to year. NPIS company, establishment name and address data were deemed to be authoritative. First, establishments were linked by city, state, and keywords for the company or establishment name. These matches were manually reviewed to identify name and street address matches. Of these matches, ITA establishment name keywords were used to exclude establishments not engaged in processing (e.g., "corporate office" or "wastewater"). Finally, when multiple establishments at a single street address appeared to be engaged in poultry slaughter, a unique identifier was appended to the NPIS establishment identifier. The combined data are referred to as "ITA-NPIS" in this report.

Establishment summary data

Some annual records were excluded due to ineligibility and likely data entry errors: establishments with fewer than 20 employees are not required to report to ITA and were excluded, as were records exceeding OSHA's threshold for hours worked per employee.⁵ Full-time equivalent (FTE) employment was calculated, and records reporting greater than 8760 hours worked per employee⁴ or below the 1st percentile for FTEs worked per employee were excluded as likely data entry errors. Total reportable injuries are reported per 100 FTE. Annual summary data does not contain information about specific injuries or workers.

Case detail data

Case detail data were extracted from the 2023 file for establishments in the ITA-NPIS dataset. Establishments with fewer than 100 employees are not required to submit case detail data and were excluded from case detail-level analyses. Analyses were restricted to injuries. The ITA case detail provides a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code for each record, generated using the NIOSH Industry and Occupation Computerized Coding System (NIOCCS) machine learning algorithm with a portion of cases reviewed manually.⁴

Because a high proportion of jobs were uncoded (30%, data not shown) and manual review indicated that many processing workers were assigned SOC codes not relevant to the industry, unique job descriptions were reviewed by an occupational medicine physician (RH) who has visited numerous poultry facilities and interviewed hundreds of workers and managers. Job descriptions were classified into supervisory or administrative, processing and production, and other categories.

- Supervisory/administrative: job descriptions for workers who are typically in an office or in supervisory positions on the production floor.
- Processing/production: job descriptions indicating that the worker is on the production line performing hand- or arm-intensive tasks.
- Other workers: job descriptions for roles that support production lines but do not involve hand- or arm-intensive tasks, for example, forklift operators.

Non-terminal two-digit (major category) OIICS codes are included for each case. Codes describing the nature of injury or illness, part of body affected, source of injury or illness, and event or exposure were applied using a machine learning algorithm developed by BLS to code injuries based on free text fields.⁶ Injuries that were not codable by the BLS algorithm are recorded as “Uncoded”, as the BLS auto-coder may fail to assign codes based on text that otherwise contains sufficient information for coding. Two-digit terminal codes were not provided to OSHA.⁴ Part of the body had a greater number of terminal two-digit codes and, therefore, less complete coding than nature, source, and event or exposure codes.

This analysis used existing, publicly available data sources and did not require Institutional Review Board review. Data cleaning and analyses were performed using R version 4.5.2.⁷

References

1. Establishment Specific Injury and Illness Data (Injury Tracking Application) | Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Accessed July 27, 2023. <https://www.osha.gov/Establishment-Specific-Injury-and-Illness-Data>
2. US Department of Agriculture. Meat, Poultry and Egg Product Inspection Directory. September 2, 2025. Accessed September 4, 2025. <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/inspection/establishments/meat-poultry-and-egg-product-inspection-directory>
3. US Department of Agriculture. Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection. March 6, 2025. Accessed September 4, 2025. <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/inspection/inspection-programs/inspection-poultry-products/modernization-poultry-slaughter>
4. US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Injury Tracking Application (ITA) Data Users Guide. Accessed September 26, 2025. https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/ITA_data_users_guide.pdf
5. US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Injury Tracking Application API Documentation. Accessed May 17, 2023. https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/osha_ita_api_documentation_revised.pdf
6. US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Automated Coding of Injury and Illness Data. April 9, 2025. Accessed March 4, 2026. <https://www.bls.gov/iif/automated-coding.htm>
7. R Core Team. R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing; 2025. <https://www.R-project.org/>