

1979 No. 261

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

**European Communities Poultry Meat (Hygiene) (Amendment) Regulations
(Northern Ireland) 1979***Made* 23rd July 1979*Coming into operation* 1st September 1979

The Department(a) of Agriculture, being a department designated by the European Communities (Designation) Order 1972(b) for the purposes of section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972(c) in relation to the common agricultural policy of the European Economic Community, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by that section and of every other power enabling it in that behalf, hereby makes the following regulations:—

Citation and commencement

1. These regulations may be cited as the European Communities Poultry Meat (Hygiene) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1979 and shall come into operation on 1st September 1979.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these regulations “the principal regulations” means the European Communities Poultry Meat (Hygiene) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1977(d).

(2) The Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954(e) shall apply to these regulations as it applies to a Measure of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Amendment of the principal regulations

3. The principal regulations shall be amended as follows:—

(1) In regulation 2(1) there shall be inserted after the definition of—

(a) “carcase” the following definition:—

“‘combined poultry meat product’ means a product intended for human consumption consisting of poultry meat and other meat;”;

(b) “health marking” the following definition:—

“‘immersion chilling’ means any process designed to fulfil the washing or cooling requirements of paragraph 8 of Part II of Schedule 4 (which requires that all poultry meat shall be cleansed by washing and then cooled immediately after the evisceration and post-mortem health inspection have been concluded) by the immersion of a quantity of poultry meat at one time in a tank or tanks containing water or water and ice but does not include processes designed to wash, cool or convey by means of water, offals which are separated from poultry carcases;”;

(c) “official veterinary surgeon” the following definition:—

(a) Formerly Ministry: see 1973 c. 36 s. 40, Sch. 5 para. 8

(b) S.I. 1972/1811 (1972 III, p. 5216)

(c) 1972 c. 68

(d) S.R. 1977 No. 165 (I, p. 947)

(e) 1954 c. 33 (N.I.)

“ ‘other meat’ means the flesh or other edible parts of bovine animals, swine, sheep and goats that have been inspected and declared fit for human consumption;”;

(2) For sub-paragraph (iii) of regulation 3(1)(a) there shall be substituted:—

“(iii) it has been prepared under hygienic conditions in accordance with the requirements of Parts I and II of Schedule 4, and if subjected to an immersion chilling process, the poultry meat consists of carcasses including those from which any parts of a kind described in regulation 6(2)(b) (parts affected by localised lesions or contamination not affecting the condition of the rest of the poultry meat) have been removed, and such immersion chilling has been carried out by the use of equipment and by methods which comply with the requirements set out in Part III of Schedule 4;”.

(3) After paragraph (4) of regulation 4 the following shall be inserted:—

“(5) The occupier of a slaughterhouse which was in operation before 1 January 1978 may apply to the Department for, and the Department may grant, exemption from the provisions of paragraph (2) of regulation 10 and Part III of Schedule 4 until 15 August 1982, subject to the right of the occupier of the premises so exempted to apply to the Department for cancellation of the exemption at any time before it expires.

(6) Whilst any exemption referred to in paragraph 5 is in force at any premises, the use of the health marking, referred to in regulation 5 and Schedule 9, to mark any poultry meat produced and processed in the premises so exempted (whether in the form of whole carcasses, cut up or boned poultry meat or offal) shall be prohibited save that poultry meat prepared for sale and cooled on a separate chilling line in those premises in full compliance with these regulations, including in the case of poultry meat which is immersion chilled, Part III of Schedule 4, may be so marked.”.

(4) For regulation 10 there shall be substituted:—

“Power to remove carcasses and take samples

10.—(1) An official veterinary surgeon may remove or cause to be removed from any of the places referred to in regulation 9(1) any carcase or part of any carcase and any viscera which he believes should be the subject of further examination.

(2) An official veterinary surgeon may, when any alteration is made to any immersion chilling equipment or to its mode of operation in any establishment or when he has reason to suspect the hygiene of the operation of any immersion chilling equipment in any establishment, cause or require to be carried out a microbiological examination on samples taken from carcasses passing through the equipment at a point before the carcasses are washed by spraying in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part III of Schedule 4 and at the point where the carcasses leave the immersion chilling equipment and in the event of a comparison of the results of those examinations indicating that a satisfactory standard of hygiene has not been achieved as a result of the carcasses passing through the immersion chilling equipment the occupier shall without delay make such alterations to the equipment or to the operating methods as may be necessary to secure a reduction in the contamination of the carcasses.”.

(5) In regulation 19 for "widow" there shall be substituted "spouse."

(6) In the heading to Schedule 1, Schedule 2, Part II of Schedule 3 and Schedule 7 after the word "occupiers" there shall be inserted "and other persons responsible for the control or management."

(7) In Part II of Schedule 3 for "1. Every occupier shall ensure that—" there shall be substituted "Every occupier and other person responsible for the control or management of establishments shall ensure that—".

(8) For sub-paragraph (4) of Part II of Schedule 3 there shall be substituted:—

"(4) no establishment, or any plant, equipment, machinery or implements contained therein is used for any purpose other than that properly connected with the processing and storage of poultry meat except as is provided in the proviso to sub-paragraph (1):

Provided that the facilities of cutting premises may be utilised to cut up other meat in connection with a combined poultry meat product so long as all appropriate measures are taken to prevent contamination or adverse changes in the condition of the product; and

Provided further that cold storage and freezing facilities may be used for the storage and freezing of things other than poultry meat under conditions which avoid taint or contamination of the poultry meat;"

(9) For Schedule 4 there shall be substituted the Schedule set out in Schedule 1 hereto.

(10) For Schedule 9 there shall be substituted the Schedule set out in Schedule 2 hereto.

(11) In Schedule 10 for paragraph 2 there shall be substituted:—

"2. Every occupier or person responsible for the control or management of an establishment or a separate store shall ensure that—

(a) any poultry meat intended to be exported to another Member State; and

(b) when an official veterinary surgeon requests, any other poultry meat;

is loaded for removal from the establishment or the separate store under the supervision of an official veterinary surgeon."

(12) In the heading to Part II of Schedule 15 there shall be inserted between the words "POULTRY" and "(HYGIENE)" the word "MEAT."

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland on 23rd July 1979.

(L.S.)

W. H. Jack

Deputy Secretary

SCHEDULE 1

Regulations 2(1), 3(1)(a)(iii), 4(1)(c), (5) and (6), 10(2), 24(1), 27(1) and Schedule 7 paragraph 1(f)

SLAUGHTER HYGIENE AND EVisCERATION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements applicable to both occupiers and to persons engaged in the handling of poultry meat

PART I

Requirements prior to slaughter

1.—(1) Except as provided in sub-paragraph (2) no bird shall be slaughtered unless it is, by stunning effected by means of an instrument of a kind approved by the Department and in proper repair, instantaneously rendered insensible to pain until death supervenes.

(2) Stunning may be omitted if it is forbidden by a religious rite.

PART II

Requirements after slaughter

Occupiers and persons engaged in the handling of poultry meat shall ensure that—

1. bleeding shall be completed and so carried out that the blood does not cause contamination of poultry meat outside the place of slaughter;
2. poultry shall be plucked immediately and completely after slaughter;
3. immediately after plucking, evisceration shall be carried out in such a way as to avoid contamination. Each carcase shall be opened in such a way that the cavities and all the viscera can be inspected. For this purpose the viscera shall be brought out from the carcase to the satisfaction of the inspector and in such a way that it is not contaminated and that the natural connections of those viscera remain intact or that they remain identifiable with the carcase until after the inspection;
4. after the inspection, the viscera which have been brought out shall be separated immediately from the carcase, and the parts unfit for human consumption immediately removed. Viscera or parts of viscera remaining in the carcase shall, with the exception of the kidneys, be removed under satisfactory hygienic conditions;
5. poultry meat shall not be inflated or cleansed with a cloth nor shall the carcase except with the consent of the official veterinary surgeon be filled with anything other than edible offal from poultry slaughtered in the slaughterhouse;
6. poultry meat detained for further inspection, poultry meat declared unfit for human consumption or excluded from use for human consumption, and feathers and waste shall be handled hygienically and removed as soon as possible to the rooms, spaces, facilities or containers, as the case may be, referred to in sub-paragraphs (h), (i), (j), (k) and (aa) of paragraph 1 of Schedule 1;
7. no carcase shall be cut into portions nor shall the poultry meat be removed or subjected to any process prior to post-mortem health inspection except with the consent of the official veterinary surgeon or an inspector. The official veterinary surgeon may prescribe any other handling required for the purposes of the post-mortem health inspection;
8. all poultry meat shall be cleansed by washing and then cooled immediately after the evisceration and post-mortem health inspection have been concluded.

PART III

IMMERSION CHILLING REQUIREMENTS

Requirements applicable to both occupiers and to persons engaged in the handling of poultry meat when carcasses are subjected to an immersion chilling process

1. Carcasses of fresh poultry meat, including those from which any parts of a kind described in regulation 6(2)(b) (parts affected by localised lesions or contamination not affecting the condition of the rest of the poultry meat) have been removed, to be subjected to an immersion chilling process in accordance with the process specified in paragraph 3 shall, immediately after evisceration and post-mortem inspection, be thoroughly washed by spraying with water and shall subsequently be immersed without delay. Washing by spraying for the purposes of this paragraph shall be carried out by means of equipment which effectively washes both the internal and external surfaces of the carcasses.

2. Washing by spraying with water for the purposes of paragraph 1 shall be so carried out that the minimum usage of water by the spraying equipment during the time that carcasses are passing through that equipment shall be—

- for carcasses weighing not more than 2.5 Kg—1.5 litres per carcass;
- for carcasses weighing between 2.5 Kg and 5 Kg—2.5 litres per carcass; and
- for carcasses weighing 5 Kg or more—3.5 litres per carcass.

3. Immersion chilling equipment shall comply with the following requirements—

- (a) the carcasses to be immersion chilled shall be propelled in a direction opposite to the flow of water through one or more tanks in which water or water and ice is continually renewed;
- (b) while the immersion chilling equipment is in operation the water within the equipment at the point where the carcasses enter it shall be maintained at a temperature not exceeding 16°C and at the point where carcasses finally leave it at a temperature not exceeding 4°C;
- (c) the quantities of water (excluding the quantities of water used for the initial filling of the tank or tanks) which pass through the equipment while it is in use for the immersion chilling of carcasses shall be not less than—
 - in the case of carcasses weighing not more than 2.5 Kg—2.5 litres per carcass;
 - in the case of carcasses weighing between 2.5 Kg and 5 Kg—4 litres per carcass; and
 - in the case of carcasses weighing 5 Kg or more—6 litres per carcass;
- (d) in immersion chilling equipment comprising more than one tank the total quantity of water flowing through the equipment required by paragraph (c) shall be divided between the tanks so that the quantity passing through successive tanks decreases in the direction of the movement of carcasses and so that the flow through the last tank of the chilling process is not less than—
 - in the case of carcasses weighing not more than 2.5 Kg—1 litre per carcass;
 - in the case of carcasses weighing between 2.5 Kg and 5 Kg—1.5 litres per carcass; and
 - in the case of carcasses weighing 5 Kg or more—2 litres per carcass;
- (e) the immersion chilling equipment shall be operated in a manner designed to secure that carcasses do not remain—
 - (i) longer than half an hour in the first part of the equipment or, where the equipment comprises more than one tank, in the first tank; and
 - (ii) longer than necessary in the remainder of the equipment;
- (f) when the requirements of sub-paragraph (e) cannot be met through accident or by reason of emergency stoppage or similar circumstances steps shall be taken to secure that any carcass which becomes unfit for human consumption is treated as such;

- (g) each piece of immersion chilling equipment shall be emptied, cleansed and disinfected whenever necessary at the end of a working period, and at least once in each period of 24 hours during which the equipment is in operation;
- (h) immersion chilling equipment shall be provided with properly calibrated devices, accessible to inspection, to enable the following to be recorded—
 - (i) the volume of water consumed by the spray washing equipment required by paragraph 1;
 - (ii) the temperature of the water at the points at which carcasses enter and leave the equipment;
 - (iii) the volume of water flowing through the immersion chilling equipment and, in the case of such equipment comprising more than one tank, the last tank of the chilling process;

and the occupier of the establishment shall maintain, for a period of not less than one year, records of this information and of the numbers of carcasses passing through the immersion chilling equipment in each of the weight ranges specified in paragraphs 2, 3(c) and 3(d) in such a way that the operation of the equipment in accordance with this Part of this Schedule may be verified, and shall on demand produce such information to an official veterinary surgeon acting in accordance with his duties under regulation 24(1);

- (i) without prejudice to the proviso to paragraph 1(f) of Schedule 7, the operation of the immersion chilling equipment and the subsequent operations in the establishment shall be so conducted as to ensure that poultry carcasses shall be reduced to a temperature not exceeding 4°C within the shortest practicable time.

SCHEDULE 2

Regulations 2(1), 3(1)(a)(v) and (b)(vi), 3(3), 4(1)(b), (2) and (3), 5 and 24(1) and (3)

Health Marking

1. The health marking shall be affixed under the authority of the official veterinary surgeon who shall keep under his control for that purpose—

- (a) all necessary implements for making the health marking of poultry meat; and
- (b) in those cases where they are used, a supply of seals, labels and wrappers, each such seal, label and wrapper, as the case may be, bearing the stamp or mark referred to in paragraph 2.

2. The health marking shall consist of the following—

- (a) in legible characters 0.2 cm high:—
 - (i) on the upper part, the letters “UK”;
 - (ii) in the centre, the approval number of the slaughterhouse or cutting premises;
 - (iii) on the lower part the letters “EEC”, or
- (b) an oval mark or stamp 6.5 cm wide and 4.5 cm high containing in legible form the details referred to in sub-paragraph (a) save that the letters shall be 0.8 cm high and the figures 1.1 cm high.

3. Without prejudice to paragraph 5 the health marking referred to in paragraph 2(a) shall be made:—

- (a) to carcasses which are not individually wrapped, by means of the application of a seal or other mark which may be approved by the Department from time to time;
- (b) to wrappers or visibly beneath wrappers of carcasses which are individually wrapped;
- (c) to wrappers or visibly beneath wrappers of parts of carcasses or offal packed in small quantities.

4. Without prejudice to paragraph 5 the health marking referred to in paragraph 2(b) shall be made to large packages containing carcasses, parts of carcasses or offal marked in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 3.

5. Carcasses of fresh poultry meat, including those from which any parts of a kind described in regulation 6(2)(b) (parts affected by localised lesions or contamination not affecting the condition of the rest of the meat) have been removed, sent in large packages from slaughterhouses licensed under these regulations, to other slaughterhouses or cutting premises licensed under these regulations, the Poultry Meat (Hygiene) Regulations 1976(f) or the Poultry Meat (Hygiene) (Scotland) Regulations 1976(g) for cutting, boning or cooking in those premises or to cutting premises approved in other Member States for cutting in such premises are exempt from the requirement to be individually health marked in accordance with paragraph 3(a) and (b) subject to the following conditions:—

- (a) the occupier or person responsible for the control or management of the dispatching slaughterhouse shall indicate, or cause to be indicated, on the external surface of each large package containing the fresh poultry meat the destination and intended use of the consignment by means of a label in the following form:—

(f) S.I. 1976/1209

(g) S.I. 1976/1221 (S. 103)

<p>Intended Use—</p> <p>Address of destination:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

- (b) the health marking referred to in paragraph 2(b) shall be made on the external surface of each large package containing the fresh poultry meat;
 - (c) the health marking shall be severed or destroyed only under the supervision of the official veterinary surgeon upon the opening of the large packages;
 - (d) the occupier or person responsible for the slaughterhouse from which consignments are dispatched shall keep or cause to be kept a record of the amount, type and destination of each consignment dispatched in accordance with this paragraph and shall retain such record for one year from the date of dispatch of the consignment; and
 - (e) the occupier or person responsible for the slaughterhouse or cutting premises at which consignments are received shall keep or cause to be kept a record of the amount, type and origin of each consignment received in accordance with this paragraph and shall retain such record for one year from the date of receipt of the consignment.
6. The health marking appearing on any wrapper or packaging in the manner prescribed by paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 shall be affixed in such a way that either—
- (a) the health marking is severed when the wrapper or packaging is opened, or
 - (b) the wrapper or packaging is sealed in such manner that it cannot be re-used after opening.
7. No material used for marking shall prejudice the wholesomeness of the poultry meat.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations, but is intended to indicate their general purport.)

These Regulations amend the European Communities Poultry Meat (Hygiene) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1977 so as to implement the provisions of Council Directive 78/50/EEC (OJ No. L 15, 19.1.1978, p. 28) on the immersion chilling process, the provisions of Council directive 77/27/EEC (OJ No. L 6, 8.1.1977, p. 19) on the health marking of large packages of fresh poultry meat and to make a limited number of other minor amendments.

In particular the Regulations:—

- (1) prescribe the conditions which must be satisfied when poultry meat is immersed in water to meet the washing or cooling requirements of paragraph 8 of Part II of Schedule 4 to the European Communities Poultry Meat (Hygiene) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1977;
- (2) set down the conditions under which poultry carcasses, which are dispatched from licensed slaughterhouses in large packages, are exempt from the need for individual health marking.