
 STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1984 No. 2056

POULTRY

HUMANE SLAUGHTER

The Slaughter of Poultry (Humane Conditions) Regulations 1984

<i>Made - - - -</i>	20th December 1984
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>	21st January 1985
<i>Coming into Operation</i>	
<i>Regulations 8 and 11</i>	11th February 1986
<i>Remainder</i>	11th February 1985

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Secretary of State for Wales, acting jointly, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the Slaughter of Poultry Act 1967 (a) and now vested in them (b), and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf, after consultation with such persons and bodies as seem to them representative of the interests concerned in accordance with subsection (6) of the said section 3, hereby make the following regulations:—

Title and commencement

1.—(1) These regulations may be cited as the Slaughter of Poultry (Humane Conditions) Regulations 1984 and, subject to paragraph (2) below, shall come into operation on 11th February 1985.

(2) Regulation 8 (operation of shackle-line) and regulation 11 (manual back-up of automatic machinery) shall come into operation on 11th February 1986.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these regulations—

“approved instrument” means an instrument of a kind approved by the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Secretary of State for Wales, acting jointly, under section 1(1) of the Slaughter of Poultry Act 1967;

“bird” means a turkey kept in captivity or a domestic fowl, guinea-fowl, duck, goose or quail so kept.

(2) Any provision of these regulations which applies to a bird awaiting slaughter applies until the bird is dead.

Scope

3.—(1) These regulations shall not apply in relation to the slaughter of a bird—

(a) for a purpose other than a commercial purpose;

(a) 1967 c.24; section 3 was substituted by section 6 of the Animal Health and Welfare Act 1984(c.40).

(b) In the case of the Secretary of State for Wales, by virtue of S.I.1978/272.

- (b) in pursuance of powers conferred by, or by any instrument made or having effect as if made under, the Animal Health Act 1981 (a);
 - (c) in the course of an experiment in respect of which restrictions are imposed by the Cruelty to Animals Act 1876 (b), being an experiment performed subject to any restrictions so imposed; or
 - (d) by a person registered in the register of veterinary surgeons or the supplementary veterinary register, or a person acting under his direction, where the person so registered is acting in the exercise of his profession.
- (2) A bird is slaughtered for a commercial purpose if slaughtered—
- (a) in the course or furtherance of a business or for reward; or
 - (b) by, or on behalf of, the purchaser of the bird on premises belonging to, occupied by or under the control of, the seller of the bird; or
 - (c) in a market place.

Requirements prior to slaughter

4. No person shall cause unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress to any bird awaiting slaughter, or permit any such pain or distress of which he knows or may reasonably be expected to know.

5. The occupier or person in charge of any premises shall ensure that any bird on those premises awaiting slaughter—

- (a) is slaughtered as soon as is practicable;
- (b) is protected from the direct rays of the sun and from adverse weather;
- (c) is provided with adequate ventilation;
- (d) is, if found, because of injury or any other cause, to be in a condition in which it may reasonably be supposed to be suffering unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress, immediately slaughtered.

Requirements as to lighting

6. The occupier of any premises at which birds are slaughtered shall provide—

- (a) in those parts of the premises where birds are awaiting slaughter, lighting which is adequate for the inspection of such birds, and
- (b) in those parts of the premises where birds are slaughtered, at all times when birds are being slaughtered, lighting which is adequate for the efficient carrying out of such slaughter.

Placing of birds in shackles

7. No person shall, in connection with the slaughter of any bird, place or cause or permit to be placed the bird in a shackle—

- (a) in such a manner as to cause it unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress; or
- (b) if the bird, because of injury or any other cause, is in a condition in which it may reasonably be supposed it will suffer unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress if placed in the shackle.

(a) 1981 c.22.

(b) 1876 c.77.

Operation of shackle-line

8.—(1) No person shall operate or cause or permit to be operated any shackle-line unless—

- (a) each bird suspended from it is kept clear of any object which may cause it unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress until it is stunned by means of an approved instrument or slaughtered;
- (b) adequate provision is made for action to be taken for the purpose of relieving any unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress which a bird suspended from the shackle appears to be suffering or for removing such bird from the shackle; and
- (c) the shackle-line is operated at such a speed that any act or operation intended to be performed in relation to or on any bird suspended from it can be performed without causing the bird unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress.

(2) No person shall, in connection with the slaughter of any bird, use or cause or permit to be used any shackle-line, machine or other equipment unless—

- (a) there is unimpeded access to its control mechanism, and
- (b) except in an emergency to relieve suffering, it is used in connection with the slaughter of birds of the type, size and weight for which it was designed.

Requirements as to slaughter

9. No person shall suspend, or cause or permit to be suspended, any turkey kept in captivity or any domestic fowl so kept for more than 6 minutes in the case of a turkey, or for more than 3 minutes in the case of a domestic fowl before such turkey or fowl is slaughtered or is stunned by means of an approved instrument for the purpose of slaughter.

10. No person shall cause or permit any turkey kept in captivity or any domestic fowl so kept which has had severed one or more of the major blood vessels of its neck to be immersed in a scalding tank or to be plucked before a period of not less than 2 minutes in the case of a turkey or of not less than 90 seconds in the case of a domestic fowl has elapsed after such severance.

Manual back-up of automatic machinery

11.—(1) No person shall, in connection with the slaughter of any bird, operate or cause or permit to be operated any machine or other equipment the function of which is, by automatic means, to slaughter birds or to sever one or more of the major blood vessels of the neck with the object of causing death unless a person is present when the machine or other equipment is operated who is able to ascertain whether or not it has been effective in slaughtering the bird or, as the case may be, in severing one or more of the major blood vessels of its neck.

(2) In the event of the machine or other equipment not being effective in slaughtering the bird or, as the case may be, in severing one or more of the major blood vessels of its neck, the occupier or the person in charge of the premises on which the machine or other equipment is situated shall ensure that the bird is immediately slaughtered.

Penalties

12. A person who contravenes or fails to comply with any of the

provisions of these regulations shall, unless he proves that by reason of an accident or other emergency such contravention or non-compliance was necessary for preventing physical injury or suffering to any person or bird, be guilty of an offence against these regulations, and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding £400 (a).

Revocation

13. The Slaughter of Poultry (Humane Conditions) Regulations 1971 (b) and the Slaughter of Poultry (Humane Conditions) (Amendment) Regulations 1983 (c) are revoked.

In Witness whereof the Official Seal of the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is hereunto affixed on 12th December 1984.



Michael Jopling,
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries
and Food.

George Younger,
Secretary of State for Scotland.

18th December 1984.

Nicholas Edwards,
Secretary of State for Wales.

20th December 1984.

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- (a) The amount of fine which may be specified under section 3(2) (e) and (4) of the Slaughter of Poultry Act 1967 was increased to £400 (level 3) by S.I. 1984/447 in relation to England and Wales and by S.I. 1984/526 in relation to Scotland.
(b) S.I. 1971/661.
(c) S.I. 1983/687.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This Note is not part of the Regulations.)

These regulations re-enact the Slaughter of Poultry (Humane Conditions) Regulations 1971 with amendments.

The regulations continue to protect poultry awaiting slaughter against unnecessary pain or distress (regulation 4) and against bad weather, direct sunshine, lack of ventilation and delays in slaughtering (regulation 5). The requirements as to lighting (regulation 6) and as to the maximum periods during which birds may be suspended before being slaughtered or stunned (regulation 9) and the minimum periods which must elapse before the birds are immersed in a scalding tank or plucked after slaughter (regulation 10) are also continued.

The changes of substance are—

1. The scope of the regulations is no longer confined to the slaughter of poultry for the purposes of preparation for sale for human consumption (regulation 3).
2. The regulations have been extended to apply to guinea fowls, ducks, geese and quails in addition to turkeys and domestic fowls (regulation 2(1)).
3. The regulations now include provisions concerning the placing of birds in shackles, the operation of shackle-lines, and manual back-up of automatic machinery (regulations 7, 8 and 11).
4. The maximum fine which may be imposed for an offence against the regulations has been increased from £200 to £400 (regulation 12).

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