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VETERINARY SERVICES ACT

(CAP. 437)

Public and Animal Health Problems relating to the Killing and the Placing on the Market of Wild Game Meat Rules, 2004.

IN exercise of the powers conferred by article 10 of the Veterinary Services Act, the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Environment, after consultation with the Minister of Health, the Elderly and Community Care, has made the following rules:-

Title and scope

1. (1) The title of these rules is the Public and Animal Health Problems relating to the Killing and the Placing on the Market of Wild Game Meat Rules, 2004.

(2) The scope of these rules is to implement the rules found under European Union Council Directive 92/45/EEC of the 16th June, 1992 on public health and animal health problems relating to the killing of wild game and the placing on the market of wild-game meat in accordance with article 10 of the Veterinary Services Act.

CHAPTER I
General provisions

Applicability of rules.

2. (1) Without prejudice to any rules relating to hunting, these rules lay down public health and animal health rules applicable to the killing of wild game and to the preparation and placing on the

market of wild game meat.

(2) These rules shall not apply to:

(a) small numbers of wild game, un-skinned or un-plucked, and, in the case of small wild game, ineviscerated, supplied directly by the hunter to the consumer or to the retailer;

(b) small quantities of wild-game meat supplied directly to the final consumer;

(c) the cutting and storage of wild-game meat in retail shops or in premises adjacent to sales points, where the cutting and storage are performed solely for the purpose of supplying the consumer directly on the spot. The above operations shall continue to be subject to the public health checks provided for in national rules governing retailing.

(3) The provisions of these rules concerning trade or imports from third countries shall not apply to trophies or to killed wild game carried by travellers in their private vehicle provided that only a small quantity of small wild game or a single large wild game animal is involved and the circumstances indicate that there is no question of the meat of such game being intended for trade or commercial use, and provided that the game in question does not come from a country or a part of a country trade from which is prohibited pursuant to Rules 12 (2) and (3) or by decision of European Community.

(4) These rules shall not affect European Community rules adopted for the conservation of wildlife.

Definitions.

3. (1) For the purposes of these rules, the following definitions shall apply:

"collection centre" means any place where killed wild game is kept in accordance with the hygiene rules in Schedule I, Chapter IV (2) prior to being transported to a processing house;

"the competent authority" means the Veterinary Services;

"large wild game" means wild ungulates;

"placing on the market" means holding or displaying for sale, offering for sale, selling, delivering or any other form of placing on the market of wild game meat for human consumption in the European Community, excluding supplies pursuant to rule 2 (2);

"small wild game" means wild mammals of the Leporidae family and wild game birds intended for human consumption;

"trade" means trade between Member States within the meaning of the Treaty on European

Community;

"wild game" means wild land mammals which are hunted (including wild mammals living within an enclosed area under conditions of freedom similar to those enjoyed by wild game) and wild birds which are not covered by Article 2 of Council Directive 91/495 EEC concerning public health and animal health problems affecting the production and placing on the market of rabbit meat and farmed game meat;

"wild-game meat" means all parts of wild game which are fit for human consumption;

"wild game processing house" means an establishment approved in accordance with rule 8 in which wild game is processed and wild game meat is obtained and inspected in accordance with the hygiene rules laid down in these rules.

(2) For the purposes of these rules the definitions in Article 2 of Directive 89/662 EEC and Directive 90/425 EEC and the definition of fresh meat in Article 2 (b) of Council Directive 64/433 EEC shall apply as necessary.

CHAPTER II

Provisions applicable to Community production and trade

Placing of wild game on the market.

4. (1) In the territory of Malta there shall only be placed on the market wild game meat which:

(a) comes from wild game which:

(i)has been killed in a hunting area by means authorised under national legislation governing hunting,

(ii) does not come from a region subject to restrictions pursuant to Council Directive 72/461/EEC of 12 December 1972 on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in fresh meat, Council Directive 91/494/EEC of 26 June 1991 on animal health conditions governing intra-Community trade in and imports from third countries of fresh poultry-meat and Council Directive 91/495/EEC or from a hunting area subject to restrictions pursuant to rules 11 and 12 of these rules,

(iii) immediately after killing has been prepared in accordance with Schedule I, Chapter III, and transported within a maximum of 12 hours to a processing house as referred to in (b) or to a collection centre where it must be chilled to the temperatures specified in Schedule I, Chapter III, and from which it must be taken to a processing house as referred

to in paragraph (b) hereof within 12 hours or, in the case of remote regions where climatological conditions so permit, within a period to be fixed by the competent authority to enable the official veterinarian of the said processing house to carry out the post mortem inspection provided for in Schedule I, Chapter V, under satisfactory conditions; Veterinary Services shall implement the specific rules decided by European community applicable to collection of wild game under special climatic conditions;

(b) is obtained:

(i) either in a wild game processing house fulfilling the general conditions of Schedule I, Chapters I and II, and approved for the purposes of the present Chapter in accordance with Article 8;

(ii) in the case of large wild game, in an establishment approved in accordance with Article 10 of Directive 64/433/EEC, or, in the case of small wild game, in accordance with Article 5 of Council Directive 71/118/EEC of 15 February 1971 on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultry-meat provided that:

(A) such game is skinned in rooms separate from those reserved for meat covered by those Directives, or at different times,

(B) such establishments are given special approval for the purposes of these rules'

(C) such measures are taken to allow clear identification of meat obtained pursuant to the present rules and meat obtained pursuant to Directives 64/433/EEC and 71/118/EEC;

(c) comes from killed animals which have undergone visual inspection by the official veterinarian:

(i) to detect any anomalies. The official veterinarian may base his diagnosis on any information supplied by the hunter, where appropriate on the basis of a certificate laid down by the authority responsible for hunting rules, on the behaviour of the animal before killing,

(ii) to check that death is not due to causes other than hunting;

(d) comes from wild game which:

(i) has been handled under satisfactory hygiene conditions, in accordance with Schedule I, Chapters III and IV,

(ii) has undergone, in accordance with Schedule I, Chapter V, post-mortem inspection by an official veterinarian or, by auxiliaries holding the professional qualifications specified in accordance with requirements of the European Community, acting under the supervision of the official veterinarian,

(iii) has not shown any change except for traumatic lesions which occurred during killing or localised malformations or changes, provided that it is established, if necessary by appropriate laboratory tests, that these do not render the meat unfit for human consumption or dangerous to human health,

(iv) on which, in the case of small wild game which has not immediately after killing been eviscerated in accordance with Schedule I, Chapter V (1), an official veterinary health inspection has been carried out on a representative sample of animals from the same source.

If the official veterinarian finds a disease communicable to man or defects as referred to in Schedule I, Chapter V (4), he must carry out more checks on the entire batch. In the light of the results of these further checks, he must either exclude the entire batch from human consumption or inspect each carcass individually.

(2) The official veterinarian must ensure that wild game meat is excluded from human consumption:

(i) if it is found to contain defects as referred to in Schedule Chapter V (3) (e), or if it has been seized in accordance with paragraph 4 of that Chapter;

(ii) if the checks provided for in rule 4(1)(d)(iii) have revealed the presence of a disease communicable to man;

(iii) if it comes from animals which have ingested substances which are likely to make the meat dangerous or harmful to human health and on which a decision has been taken according to Council Rule (EEC) 2377/90 of the 26th June 1990 laying down a community procedure for the establishment of maximum residue limits of veterinary medicinal products in foodstuffs of animal origin.. Pending the implementation of such a decision, national rules on these substances shall remain in force, subject to the general provisions of the Treaty on European Community;

(iv) if, without prejudice to any European Community legislation applicable to ionisation, it has been treated with ionising or ultraviolet radiation or by means of substances likely to affect its organoleptic properties or using colourings other than those used for health marking.

(3) Meat of wild boar or of other species susceptible to trichinosis must undergo analysis by the digestion method in accordance with Council Directive 77/96/EEC of the 21st December, 1976 on the examination for trichinae (trichinella spiralis) upon importation from third countries of fresh meat derived from domestic swine, or a trichinoscopic examination with microscopic observation of several samples from each animal taken from the jaw and diaphragmatic muscles, from the muscles of the lower front leg, from the intercostal muscles and the tongue muscles at least. The Veterinary Services shall implement any provisions lay down by the European Community concerning the methods for the analysis by digestion which are suitable for detecting trichinosis in wild boar or other species of wild game susceptible to trichinosis; the same procedure shall apply with regard to the trichinoscopic or microscopic examination for the detection of trichinosis.

(4) Wild game meat declared fit for human consumption must:

(i) bear a health mark in accordance with Schedule I, Chapter VIII. A decision may be taken, where appropriate, to amend or supplement the provisions of the aforementioned Chapter in accordance with requirements of European Community and in accordance with the procedure provided, in article10 of the Veterinary Services Act, in order to take into account notably the different forms of commercial presentation, providing they conform to the hygiene rules laid down in these rules. The provisions of point 68 of Chapter XII of Directive 71/118/EEC on the health marking of large packaging shall be applicable mutatis mutandis to meat of small wild game.

(ii) after post-mortem inspection, be stored in accordance with Schedule I, Chapter X, under satisfactory hygiene conditions in wild game processing houses approved in accordance with Article 8 of these rules, or in establishments approved in accordance with Article 10 of Directive 64/433/EEC or Article 5 of Directive 71/118/EEC, or in cold stores approved and inspected in accordance with Article 10 of Directive 64/433/EEC;

(iii) be accompanied during transportation by:

(A) an accompanying commercial document as authorised by the official veterinarian. This document must:

(i) in addition to the particulars provided for in Annex I, Chapter VII (2), including in the case of frozen meat the month and year of freezing in clear, bear a code number by which the official veterinarian can be identified,

(ii) be kept by the consignee for at least one year so that it can be produced at the request of the competent authority. Detailed rules for applying this point, and in particular those concerning the allocation of code numbers and the compilation of one or more lists identifying the official veterinarians, shall be adopted in accordance with the European Community requirements,

(B) a public animal health certificate corresponding to the specimen in Annex II, in the case of meat from a wild game processing house situated in a restricted region or area or meat to be sent to another Member State after transit through a third country in a sealed lorry;

(iv) be transported under satisfactory hygiene conditions in accordance with Schedule I, Chapter XI;

(v) in the case of parts of carcasses or boned meat of small wild game birds, also be obtained in conditions similar to those provided for in Article 3 B. of Directive 71/118/EEC, in establishments specially approved for this purpose in accordance with rule 8 of these rules;

(vi) without prejudice to Council Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 20th March, 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, be labelled with an indication of the animal species.

Meat to be distinguished.

5. (1) In the territory of Malta, Veterinary Services shall ensure that:

(a) meat declared unfit for human consumption can be clearly distinguished from meat declared fit for human consumption;

(b) meat declared unfit for human consumption is treated in accordance with Rule (EC) No 1774/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 3rd October, 2002 laying down health rules concerning animal by-products not intended for human consumption.

(2) Meat from an area subject to animal health restrictions shall be subject to specific rules to be determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with requirements of European Community and in

accordance with the procedure laid down in article 10 of the Veterinary Services Act.

(3) Detailed rules for implementing this rule shall if necessary be determined in accordance with requirements of European Community and in accordance with the procedure laid down in article 10 of the Veterinary Services Act.

Meat subject to trade.

6. Only the following are the subject to trade with Member States and in the territory Malta:
(1) skinned and eviscerated wild game meeting the requirements of rules 4 and 5, or fresh wild game meat;

(2) unskinned or unplucked and uneviscerated small game, not frozen or deep-frozen which is controlled in accordance with rule 4(1)(b)(ii)(C) ,provided it is handled and stored separately from fresh meat covered by Directive 64/433/EEC, poultry meat and skinned or plucked game meat;

(3) unskinned large game which:

(a) meets the requirements of rules 4(1)(a)(i) and 4(1)(a)(ii), rule 4(1)(c), and rule 4(1)(d)(i);

(b) the viscera of which have undergone post-mortem inspection in a wild game processing house;

(c) is accompanied by a health certificate corresponding to a specimen drawn up by the European Community, signed by the official veterinarian to certify that the result of the post mortem inspection provided for in paragraph (b) was satisfactory and that the meat has been declared fit for human consumption;

(d) has been cooled to a temperature of between 1 °C and:

(i) +7 °C and kept at that temperature during transportation to a processing house within a maximum period of seven days from the post mortem inspection referred to in paragraph (b),

or,

(ii) +1 °C and kept at that temperature during transportation to a processing house within a maximum period of 15 days from the post-mortem inspection referred to in paragraph (b). Meat from such unskinned wild game cannot bear the health mark provided for in rule 4(4)(i) unless, after skinning in the processing house of destination, it has undergone

post mortem inspection in accordance with Schedule I, Chapter V, and has been declared fit for human consumption by the official veterinarian.

Wild game.

7. Veterinary Services shall ensure that:

(b) wild game processing houses which do not meet the standards laid down in Schedule I, Chapter I, and which are not covered by the derogation provided for in rule 9 cannot be approved in accordance with rule 8 and that products from such establishments do not bear the health mark provided for in Schedule I, Chapter VII and cannot be the subject of trade,

(b) wild game which does not meet the requirements of rule 4 cannot be the subject of trade or be imported from third countries,

(c) offal of wild game declared fit for human consumption cannot be the subject of trade unless it has undergone appropriate treatment in accordance with Council Directive 77/99/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in meat products.

Wild game processing houses

8. (1) To be traded in the territory of Malta, wild game meat must come from a wild game processing houses laid down on a list of approved wild game processing houses, each having a veterinary approval number. Veterinary Services may approve, for the processing of wild game in Malta, establishments approved in accordance with rules 64/433 and 71/118, provided that such establishments are equipped to process wild game meat and that they work in conditions ensuring compliance with the hygiene rules.
Veterinary Services shall send this list to the other Member States and to the European Commission.
A wild game processing house shall not be approved unless it is satisfied that it complies with these rules. Where hygiene is found to be inadequate and where the measures provided for in Schedule I, Chapter V (5), second subparagraph have proved insufficient to remedy the situation, the competent authority shall temporarily suspend approval. If the operator or manager of the wild game processing house does not make good the shortcomings noted within the period fixed by the competent

authority, the latter shall withdraw approval. It shall be taken due account of the conclusions of any check carried out in accordance with rule 14. The other Member States and the European Commission shall be informed of the suspension or withdrawal of approval.

(2) The operator or manager of the wild game processing house must, in accordance with sub-rule (4) hereof, conduct regular checks on the general hygiene of conditions of production in his establishment, inter alia, by means of microbiological controls. Checks must cover utensils, fittings and machinery at all stages of production and, if necessary, products. The operator or manager of the wild game processing house must inform the official veterinarian or the European Commission's veterinary experts of the nature, frequency and results of the checks conducted to this end, together with the name of the investigating laboratory if need be. The nature of the checks, their frequency, as well as the sampling methods and the methods for bacteriological examination shall be established in accordance with the requirements of the European Community.

(3) The operator or manager of the wild game processing house must establish a staff training program enabling workers to comply with conditions of hygienic production adapted to the production structure. The official veterinarian responsible for the wild game processing house must be involved in the planning and implementation of that program.

(4) Inspection and supervision of wild game processing houses shall be carried out under the responsibility of the official veterinarian, who may be assisted by auxiliaries in accordance with Article 9 of Directive 64/433/EEC. The official veterinarian must at all times have free access to all parts of processing houses in order to ensure that these rules are being complied with and, where there is doubt as to the origin of meat or killed wild game, to relevant documents which enable him to trace the hunting area of origin. The official veterinarian must regularly analyse the results of the checks provided for in sub-rule (2) hereof. He may, on the basis of this analysis, conduct further microbiological examinations at all stages of production or on the products. The result of these analyses shall be written up in a report, the conclusions and recommendations of which shall be notified to the operator or manager of the establishment, who shall rectify the shortcomings noted with a view to improving hygiene.

Processing houses.

9. In the territory of Malta, wild game processing houses which, on the 31st December, 2003 have not been judged to comply with the conditions for approval laid down by these rules shall stop their activity.

Post-mortem inspection.

10. Veterinary Services must be entrusted to collect and make use of the results of the post-mortem inspection carried out by the official veterinarian as regards the diagnosis of diseases communicable to man. Whereas such a disease is diagnosed, the results of the specific case shall be communicated as soon as possible to the competent veterinary authorities responsible for supervision of the hunting area where the wild game in question originated. Veterinary Services shall submit to the European Commission information on certain diseases and particularly cases where diseases communicable to man have been diagnosed. Veterinary Services shall implement provisions of European Community concerning detailed rules adopted for implementing this rule, and in particular:

(a) the frequency with which information must be submitted to the European Commission,

(b) the type of information,

(c) the disease to which the collection of information is to apply,

(d) procedures for collecting and using information.

Health survey.

11. (1) Without prejudice to any rules concerning hunting, a survey of the health of wild game shall be performed by the Veterinary Services on the territory of Malta at regular intervals.

(2) To this end Veterinary Services shall be entrusted with the task of collecting and using the results of the health inspections carried out in accordance with these rules, where diseases communicable to man or to animals or the presence of residues in excess of permitted levels are diagnosed.

(3) Where a disease or condition as referred to in sub-rule (2) is diagnosed, the survey results relating to the specific case shall be communicated as soon as possible to the Veterinary Services and to the other authorities responsible in Malta for supervision of hunting.

(4) Depending on the epizootic situation, the Veterinary Services shall carry out specific tests on wild game in order to detect the presence of the diseases referred to in Schedule II of the Veterinary Services Act. The presence of these diseases shall be communicated to the European Commission and to the other Member States in accordance with the provisions of article 6 of the Veterinary Services Act.

Measures for the monitoring of residues and substances.

12. (1) Plans for measures to detect residues referred to in Chapter II of Council Directive 96/23/EC of the 29th April, 1996 on measures to monitor certain substances and residues thereof in live animals and animal products and repealing Directives 85/358/EEC and 86/469/EEC and Decisions 89/187/EEC and 91/664/EEC, shall be supplemented in the territory of Malta by the Veterinary Services in order, where necessary, to subject wild game meat to the inspections provided for in that Council Directive in order to make spot checks on the presence of contaminants in the environment.

(2) Taking into account the results of the monitoring referred to in sub-rule (1) and in rule 11(4), Veterinary Services shall ensure that wild game and wild game meat from hunting areas implicated by the monitoring is excluded from trade.

(3) The Veterinary Services shall implement detailed rules adopted by the European Community for implementing the provisions of these rules.

Spot Checks.

13. Veterinary experts from the European Commission may, in so far as is necessary for the uniform application of the Council Directive 92/45/EEC on public health and animal health problems relating to the killing of wild game and the placing on the market of wild-game meat, and in co-operation with the Veterinary Services and other relevant national authorities, make on-site checks. In particular, they may verify by checking a representative percentage of wild game processing houses whether the veterinary Services are ensuring that approved processing houses are complying with these rules. In particular, access on the same basis as officials of the competent authority shall be given to all concerned persons, information and documentation as well as access to places, establishments, installations and means of transport in order for the checks to be carried out.

Veterinary Services shall give all the necessary assistance to the experts in carrying out their duties.

Veterinary Checks.

14. (1) Without prejudice to the specific provisions of these rules, the official veterinarian or the Veterinary Services shall, where it is suspected that veterinary legislation has not been complied with or there is doubt as to whether wild game meat is fit for consumption, carry out any veterinary checks he or it deems appropriate.

(2) The Director shall take administrative and, or penal measures to penalise any infringement of European Community veterinary legislation, in particular where it is found that the certificates or documents drawn up do not correspond to the actual state of the wild game meat, that identification marks do not comply with the rules, that the wild game meat was not presented for inspection or that such meat was not used for the purpose originally intended.

Checks to complete internal market.

15. The rules laid down in Council Directive 89/662/EEC concerning veterinary checks to be carried out in intra-Community trade with a view to the completion of the internal market shall apply in particular to the organisation of and the action to be taken following the checks carried out by the Veterinary Services at destination and to the safeguard measures to be applied in relation to health problems affecting the production and distribution of wild game meat in the territory of the European Community.

CHAPTER III
Provisions applicable to imports into the Community

Applicable conditions.

16. The conditions applicable to the placing on the market of wild game meat imported from third countries shall be at least equivalent to those laid down for the production and placing on the market of wild game meat obtained in accordance with Chapter II, excluding those in Articles 7 and 9.

Requirements for the importation of wild game.

17. (1) For the purpose of application of rule 16, and in order to be imported into the Community, wild game or wild game meat must:

(a) come from third countries or parts of third countries from which imports are not prohibited on animal health grounds;.

(b) come from a third country on the list to be drawn up in accordance with sub-rule (2)(a) hereof ;

(c) be accompanied by a health certificate the model of which corresponding to the specimen drawn up by the European Community, signed by the competent authority and certifying that the products meet the requirements of Chapter II of Council Directive 92/45/EEC or any additional conditions or offer the equivalent guarantees referred to in paragraph 3 (c) of Council Directive 92/45/EEC and come from establishments offering the guarantees provided for in Annex I of Council Directive 92/45/EEC.

(2) The following shall be implemented by the Veterinary Services where established by the European Community:

(a) a provisional list of third countries or parts of third countries able to provide Member States and the European Commission with the conditions and guarantees referred to in paragraph 2 (c) of Council Directive 92/45/EEC and a list of establishments for which they are able to give these guarantees. This provisional list shall be compiled from the lists of establishments approved and inspected by the competent authorities of the Member States, once the European Commission has checked that they abide by the principles and general rules laid down in the Council Directive 92/45/EEC;

(b) updates of that list in the light of the checks provided for in sub-rule (3) hereof;

(c) the specific conditions and the equivalent guarantees relating to the requirements of the Council Directive 92/45/EEC, other than those enabling meat to be excluded from human consumption in accordance with Article 3 (2) (d) and those of Article 5 of Council Directive 92/45/EEC and those laid down in Annex I, Chapters IV and V of Council Directive 92/45/EEC, and, as regards the trichinoscopic examination by the digestion method, in accordance with Directive 77/96/EEC, on the understanding that such conditions and guarantees may not be less stringent than those laid down in Chapter II, excluding those in

Articles 6 and 8 of Council Directive 92/45/EEC.

(3) Where experts from the European Commission and the Member States carry out on-the-spot inspections to verify whether:

(a) the guarantees given by the third country regarding the conditions of production and placing on the market can be considered equivalent to those applied in the Community;

(b) the conditions of rule 19 are fulfilled. Experts from Malta may be authorised by the Director and at the request of the European Commission to participate to these inspections . These inspections shall be made on behalf of the Community.

Importation of Wild Game into the Community

18. (1) Veterinary Services shall ensure that wild game or wild game meat covered by Council Directive 92/45/EEC is imported into the Community only if it:

(a) is accompanied by the certificate provided for in Article 16 (1) (c) of Council Directive 92/45/EEC, covering public and animal health requirements issued by the competent authority at the time of loading,

(b) has satisfied the checks required by Council Directive 97/78/EC.

Lists provided in Directive.

19. The lists provided for in Article 16 (2) of Council Directive 92/45/EEC may include only third countries or parts of third countries:

(a) from which imports are not prohibited as a result of the existence of one of the diseases referred to in Annex A to the OIE list, or of any other disease exotic to the Community, or pursuant to Articles 6, 7 and 14 of Directive 72/462/EEC, or Articles 9 to 12 of Directive 91/494/EEC;

(b) which, in view of their legislation and the organisation of their veterinary services and of their inspection services, the powers of such services and the supervision to which they are subject, have been recognised, in accordance with Article 3 (2) of Directive 72/462/EEC or Article 9 (2) of Directive 91/494/EEC, as capable of guaranteeing the implementation of their legislation in force;

or

(c) the veterinary services of which are able to guarantee that health requirements at least equivalent to those laid down in Chapter II are being complied with.

Principles to be adopted.

20. The principles and rules laid down in Council Directive 97/78/EC shall apply, with particular reference to the organisation of and follow-up to the inspections to be carried out by the Veterinary Services and the safeguard measures to be implemented.

Schedule I

CHAPTER I

General conditions for the approval of processing houses

Processing houses must have at least:

1. the following rooms:

- a sufficiently large refrigerated room for reception of wild game,
- a room for inspection and, if necessary, evisceration, skinning and plucking,
- a sufficiently large room for cutting and other preparation, in so far as this is done by the establishment;
this room must have an adequate chilling facility as well as a temperaturemeasuring instrument,
- a room for packaging and dispatching, where these operations are carried out in the processing house and where the conditions laid down in Chapter VIII, point 5 of this Schedule are met;
if these conditions are not met there must be a separate room for dispatching,
- sufficiently large chilling or refrigeration rooms for storing wild game meat;

2. in rooms where meat is produced, worked on or stored and in areas and corridors through which meat is transported:

(a) waterproof flooring which is easy to clean and disinfect, rot-proof and laid in such a way as to facilitate the draining of water;
the water must be channelled towards drains fitted with gratings and traps to prevent odours. However:
- in the case of chilling or refrigeration rooms a device with which water may easily be removed is sufficient,
- in the case of stores and in areas and corridors through which meat is transported, waterproof and rot-proof floorig is sufficient;

(b) smooth, durable, impermeable walls, with a light-coloured, washable coating up to a height of at least two metres;
in chilling or refrigeration rooms and in stores the walls must be coated at least to storage height. Walltofloor junctions must be rounded or similarly finished except in stores. However, the use of wooden walls in stores in wild game processing houses in operation on the date of notification of these rules does not constitute grounds for withholding approval;

(c) doors in hard-wearing, non-corrodible material and, if of wood, with a smooth and impermeable covering on all surfaces;

(d) insulation materials which are rot-proof and odourless;

(e) adequate ventilation and good extraction of steam;

(f) adequate natural or artificial lighting which does not distort colours;

(g) a clean and easily cleaned ceiling; failing that, a roof covering with an interior surface which fulfils these conditions;

3. (a) as near as possible to the work stations, a sufficient number of facilities for cleaning and disinfecting

hands and for cleaning tools with hot water. Taps must not be hand operable. For washing hands, these facilities must have hot and cold running water or water premixed to a suitable temperature, cleaning and disinfecting products and hygienic means of drying hands;
(b) facilities for disinfecting tools, with hot water supplied at not less than 82° C;

4. appropriate arrangements for protection against pests such as insects and rodents;

5. (a) instruments and working equipment such as cutting tables, tables with detachable cutting surfaces, containers, conveyor belts and saws, made of corrosion-resistant material not liable to taint meat and easy to clean and disinfect. Surfaces coming into, or capable of coming into, contact with meat, including welds and joins, must be maintained smooth. Use of wood is forbidden except in rooms where the only meat stored is hygienically packaged meat;
(b) corrosion-resistant fittings and equipment meeting hygiene requirements for:
- meat handling,
- storing meat containers, in such a way that neither the meat nor the containers come into direct contact with the floor or walls;
(c) facilities, including suitably laid out and equipped reception and marshalling areas, for the hygienic handling and protection of meat during loading and unloading;
(d) special watertight non-corrodible containers, with lids and fasteners to prevent unauthorised persons from removing things from them, for keeping meat not intended for human consumption, or a lockable room for such meat if the quantities are large enough to necessitate this or if the meat is not removed or destroyed at the end of each working day. Where such meat is removed through conduits, these must be so constructed and installed as to avoid any risk of contamination of the meat;
(e) facilities for the hygienic storage of materials for wrapping and packaging where such activities are carried out in the establishment;

6. refrigeration equipment to keep the internal temperature of the meat at the levels required by these rules. This equipment must include a system for draining off water of condensation without any possibility of contamination of the meat;

7. an adequate pressurised supply of potable water complying with European Community rules on potability of water in particular parameters concerning toxic substances and microbiological parameters. However, a nonpotable water supply is authorised in exceptional cases for steam production, fire fighting and the cooling of refrigeration equipment, provided that the pipes installed for this purpose preclude the use of this water for other purposes and present no risk of contamination of meat. Nonpotable water pipes must be clearly distinguished from those used for potable water;

8. an adequate supply of hot potable water within the meaning of Directive 80/778/EEC

9. liquid and solid disposal systems which meet hygiene requirements;

10. an adequately equipped lockable room for the exclusive use of the veterinary service;
or, in the case of stores, suitable facilities;

11. facilities enabling the veterinary inspections provided for in these rules to be carried out efficiently at any time;

12. an adequate number of changing rooms with smooth, waterproof, washable walls and floors, wash basins, showers and flush lavatories so equipped as to protect the clean parts of the building from contamination. Lavatories must not open directly onto the work rooms. Showers are unnecessary in cold stores receiving and storing hygienically packaged meat only. Wash basins must have hot and cold running water or water premixed to a suitable temperature, materials for cleaning and disinfecting the hands and hygienic means of drying hands. Wash basin taps must not be hand or armoperable. There must be a sufficient number of such wash basins near the lavatories;

13. a place and adequate facilities for cleaning and disinfecting means of transport except in the case of cold stores receiving and dispatching hygienically packaged meat only. However, these places and facilities are not compulsory if provisions exist requiring that means of transport be cleaned and disinfected at officially authorised facilities;

14. a room or a secure place for the storage of detergents, disinfectants and similar substances.

CHAPTER II

Hygiene of the staff, premises and equipment in the establishments

1. Absolute cleanliness shall be required of staff, premises and equipment. Specifically:
(a) staff handling meat or working in rooms and areas in which meat is handled, packaged or transported must in particular wear clean and easily cleanable headgear and footwear, light-coloured working clothes and, where necessary, neck shields or other protective clothing. Staff engaged in working on or handling meat must wear clean working clothes at the commencement of each working day and must renew such clothing during the day as necessary and must wash and disinfect their hands several times during the working day and each time work is resumed. Persons who have been in contact with infected game or infected meat must immediately afterwards carefully wash their hands and arms with hot water and then disinfect them. Smoking is forbidden in work rooms, storerooms, loadin, reception, marshalling and loadout areas, and in other areas and corridors through which wild game meat is transported;
(b) no animal may enter the establishments. Rodents, insects and other vermin must be systematically destroyed;
(c) equipment and instruments used for working on meat shall be kept clean and in a good state of repair. They shall be carefully cleaned and disinfected several times during the working day, at the end of the day's work

and before being reused when they have been soiled.

2. Premises, instruments and working equipment must not be used for purposes other than work on fresh meat, poultry meat or game meat. The cutting of wild game animals and wild game birds must be carried out at a different time and the cutting room must be completely cleaned and disinfected before being made use of again for the cutting of meat of another category. Meatcutting instruments must be used solely for cutting meat.

3. Implements must not be left in the meat;
cleansing of meat by wiping with a cloth or other materials, and inflation, are prohibited.

4. Meat and meat containers must not come into direct contact with the ground.

5. Potable water must be used for all purposes. However, nonpotable water may be used in exceptional cases for steam production provided that the pipes installed for this purpose preclude the use of this water for other purposes and present no danger of contamination of meat. In addition, nonpotable water may be used in exceptional cases for cooling refrigeration equipment. Nonpotable water pipes must be clearly distinguished from pipes used for potable water.

6. The spreading of sawdust or any other similar substance on the floor of the workrooms and meat storage rooms is prohibited.

7. Detergents, disinfectants and similar substances must be used in such a way that instruments, working equipment and meat are not affected. Such instruments and working equipment must be rinsed thoroughly with potable water after use.

8. Persons likely to contaminate meat are prohibited from working on it and handling it. When recruited, any person working on and handling meat shall be required to prove, by a medical certificate, that there is no medical impediment to such employment. The medical supervision of such a person shall be governed by the national legislation in force in Malta.

CHAPTER III

Hygiene in respect of the preparation of wild game and the cutting and handling of wild game meat

1. Wild game must undergo the following operations immediately after killing:
- large wild game must be drawn and eviscerated,
- the thoracic viscera, even if detached from the carcass, and the liver and the spleen, must accompany the game and be identified in such a way that the official veterinarian can carry out the post-mortem inspection of the viscera in conjunction with the rest of the carcass; the other abdominal viscera must be removed and inspected on the spot. The head may be removed as a trophy,

- small wild game may, without prejudice to the case provided for in the third indent of rule 4.1.a. be totally or partially eviscerated on the spot or in a processing house where the game is transported to the said house at an ambient temperature not exceeding 4°C within 12 hours of being killed.

2. Wild game must be chilled immediately after the operations provided for in paragraph 1 so that the internal temperature is + 7°C or lower in the case of large game or + 4°C or lower in the case of small game. If the external temperature is not sufficiently low, killed game must be moved as soon as possible, and in any event not more than 12 hours after being killed, to a wild game processing house or to a collection centre on the understanding that:
- large wild game must be transported under satisfactory hygiene conditions, in particular avoiding heaping and stacking, to a wild game processing house as soon as possible after the operations provided for in paragraph 1,
- during transportation to the processing house, wild game whose viscera have already undergone veterinary inspection must be accompanied by a certificate issued by the veterinarian attesting to the favourable outcome of the inspection and stating the estimated time of killing.

3. Evisceration must be carried out without undue delay upon arrival at the wild game processing house, except in the case provided for in rule 4.1.d., if it has not been carried out on the spot. The lungs, heart, liver, kidney, spleen and mediastinum may either be detached or left attached to the carcass by their natural connections.

4. Until the inspection has been completed, it must not be possible for carcasses and offal not inspected to come into contact with carcasses and offal already inspected, and the removal, cutting or further treatment of the carcass shall be forbidden.

5. It must not be possible for meat detained or declared unfit for human consumption, stomachs, intestines and inedible by-products to come into contact with meat declared fit for human consumption, and the former must be placed as soon as possible in special rooms or containers located and laid out in such a way as to avoid any contamination of other meat.

6. The dressing, handling, further treatment and transport of meat, including offal, must be performed in compliance with all hygiene requirements. Where such meat is packaged, the conditions of Chapter VIII must be complied with. Packaged meat must be stored in a separate room from exposed meat.

7. The Veterinary Services shall lay down specific rules applicable to inspection of trophies to be kept by the hunter.

CHAPTER IV

Requirements for wild game meat intended for cutting

1. Cutting pieces smaller than carcasses, or halfcarcasses in the case of large wild game, and boning are authorised only in processing houses approved in accordance with rule 8 of these rules or in accordance with

Directives 64/433/EEC and 71/118/EEC and equipped with skinning and cutting rooms.

2. The operator or manager of the establishment must facilitate operations for supervising the plant, in particular any handling which is considered necessary, and must place the necessary facilities at the disposal of the supervisory service. In particular, he must be able on request to inform the official veterinarian responsible for supervision of the source of meat brought into his establishment or the origin of killed wild game.

3. (a) Wild game meat must be brought into the work rooms as and when it is needed. As soon as it is cut, and where appropriate packaged, the meat must be transferred to an appropriate chilling or refrigeration room.
(b) Wild game meat entering a cutting room must be checked and, if necessary, trimmed. The work station for these operations must be equipped with suitable facilities and adequate lighting.
(c) During cutting, boning, wrapping and packaging the internal temperature of the wild game meat must be kept at a constant + 7 °C or lower in the case of large wild game or + 4 °C or lower in the case of small wild game. During cutting, the temperature of the cutting room must not exceed + 12 °C.
(d) Cutting must be carried out in such a way as to avoid any soiling of the wild game meat. Splinters of bone and clots of blood must be removed. Meat obtained from cutting and not intended for human consumption must be collected in the facilities, containers or rooms provided for in Chapter I, point 5 (d) as it is cut.

CHAPTER V

Post-mortem health inspection

1. All parts of wild game must be inspected, within 18 hours of admission to the processing house, to determine whether the wild game meat is fit for human consumption; in particular, the body cavity must be opened to permit visual inspection.

2. If the official veterinarian so requires, the spinal column and the head must be split lengthwise.

3. In his post-mortem inspection, the official veterinarian must carry out:
(a) a visual inspection of the wild game and the organs belonging to it. If the results of the visual inspection do not enable an assessment to be made, a more extensive inspection must be carried out in a laboratory. These more extensive inspections may be restricted to a number of samples sufficient to assess all the game killed during a hunt;
(b) investigation of anomalies of consistency, colour or odour;
(c) palpation of organs, if he considers it necessary;
(d) an analysis of residues by sampling, particularly where there are serious grounds for believing it to be justified. Where a more extensive inspection is carried out on the basis of such serious grounds, the veterinarian must wait until that inspection has been concluded before going on to assess all the game killed during a specific hunt, or parts of it which may be supposed, owing to the circumstances, to present the same anomalies;

(e) detection of characteristics indicating that the meat presents a health risk. This applies particularly in the following cases:
(i) abnormal behaviour or disturbance of the general condition of the live animal reported by the hunter;
(ii) presence of tumours or abscesses where they are numerous or affect different internal organs or muscles;
(iii) arthritis, orchitis, changes in the liver or the spleen, inflammation of the intestines or the umbilical region;
(iv) presence of foreign bodies in the body cavities, especially in the stomach and intestines or in the urine, where the pleura or the peritoneum are discoloured;
(v) formation of a significant amount of gas in the gastrointestinal tract with discolouring of the internal organs;
(vi) considerable anomalies in the colour, consistency or odour of muscle tissues or organs;
(vii) open fractures in so far as they are not directly linked to the hunt;
(viii) emaciation and/or general or localised oedema;
(ix) signs that organs have recently adhered to the pleura and the peritoneum;
(x) other obvious extensive changes, such as discolouring and putrefaction.

4. The official veterinarian must order the confiscation of any wild game meat:
- presenting lesions, apart from recent lesions stemming from the killing, and localised malformations or anomalies, in so far as these lesions, malformations or anomalies render the wild game meat unfit for human consumption or dangerous to human health,
- from animals which have not been killed in accordance with national rules on hunting,
- in respect of which the findings listed in paragraph 3 (e) were made during post mortem inspection,
- from small wild game which has been seized in accordance with the fourth indent of rule 4.1.d.,
- which has been found to be infested with trichinae.

5. In the event of doubt, the official veterinarian may perform the further cuts and inspections of the relevant parts of the animals necessary in order to reach a final decision. Where the official veterinarian finds that the hygiene rules laid down in this Chapter are clearly being breached or that adequate health inspection is being hampered, he shall be empowered to take action with regard to the use of equipment or premises and to take any measure required, up to and including an interruption of the production process.

6. The results of the post-mortem health inspections shall be recorded by the official veterinarian and, where diseases communicable to man as referred to in the third indent of rule 4.1.d. or rule 10 are diagnosed, communicated to the competent veterinary authorities responsible for supervision of the hunting area from which the wild game originated, as well as to the person responsible for the said area.

CHAPTER VI

Health control of cut wild game meat and stored wild game meat

Supervision by the official veterinarian must include the following tasks:

- supervision of the entry and exit of meat,
- health inspection of meat held in processing houses,
- health inspection of meat prior to cutting and when it leaves the processing houses referred to in the second indent,
- supervision of the cleanliness of the premises, facilities and instruments provided for in Chapter I, and of staff hygiene, including their clothing,
- any other supervision which the official veterinarian considers necessary for ensuring compliance with this These rules.

CHAPTER VII

Health marking

1. Health marking must be carried out under the responsibility of the official veterinarian, who shall keep for that purpose:
(a) instruments for meat health marking, to be handed over to the assistant staff only at the actual time of marking and for the length of time necessary for this purpose;
(b) labels and wrappers where these already bear one of the marks or of the seals referred to in paragraph
2. These labels, wrappers and seals shall be handed over in the required number by the official veterinarian to the assistant staff at the time when they are to be used.

2. (a) The health mark must be:
(i) a pentagonal mark bearing, in perfectly legible characters, the following information:
- on the upper part the full name or the initial letter or letters of the country of dispatch in capitals:
for Malta, the following letters: MT.
In the centre, the veterinary approval number of the wild game processing house or, where appropriate, the cutting premises,
- on the lower part, the following initials for Malta: **KEE**
or initials identifying the third country of origin.

The height of the letters and the figures must comply with the requirements of Annex I, Chapter XI, of Directive 64/433/EEC in the case of large wild game, and of Annex I, Chapter III, of Directive 91/495/EEC in the case of small wild game;
(ii) a pentagonal stamp sufficiently large to contain the information listed in point (a) ;
(b) The material used for marking must meet all hygiene requirements and the information referred to in point (a) must appear on it in perfectly legible form.
(c) (i) The health marking referred to in point (a) must be applied:
- to exposed carcasses by means of a seal containing the information listed in point (a),
- on or visibly beneath wrappers or other packaging of packed carcasses,
- on or visibly beneath wrappers or other packaging of parts of carcasses or offal wrapped in small quantities.

(ii) The health marking referred to in point (a) (ii) must be applied to large packaging.

CHAPTER VIII

Wrapping and packaging of wild game meat

1. (a) Packaging (for example packing cases, paperboard boxes) must fulfil all rules of hygiene, and in particular:
- must not alter the organoleptic characteristics of the meat,
- must not be capable of transmitting to the meat substances harmful to human health,
- must be strong enough to ensure effective protection of the meat during transportation and handling.
(b) Packaging must not be reused for wild game meat unless it is made of corrosion-resistant materials which are easy to clean and has been previously cleaned and disinfected.

2. Where cut wild game meat is wrapped, this operation must be carried out immediately after cutting and in accordance with hygiene requirements. Such wrapping must be transparent and colourless and must also fulfil the conditions of the first and second indents of paragraph 1 (a) ;
it may not be used again for wrapping wild game meat.

3. Wrapped wild game meat must be packaged.

4. However, when wrapping fulfils all the protective conditions of packaging it need not be transparent and colourless and placing in a second container is not necessary provided that the other conditions of paragraph 1 are fulfilled.

5. Cutting, boning, wrapping and packaging operations may take place in the same room subject to the following conditions:
(a) the room must be sufficiently large and so arranged that the hygiene of the operations is assured;
(b) the packaging and wrapping must be enclosed in a sealed protective cover immediately after manufacture; this cover must be protected from damage during transport to the establishment and stored under hygienic conditions in a separate room in the establishment;
(c) the rooms for storing packaging material must be dust and verminfree and have no air connection with rooms containing substances which might contaminate meat. Packaging must not be stored on the floor;
(d) packaging must be assembled under hygienic conditions before being brought into the room;
(e) packaging must be hygienically brought into the room and used without delay. It must not be handled by staff handling meat;
(f) immediately after packaging the meat must be placed in the storage room provided.

6. The packaging referred to in this chapter may contain only cut wild game meat from the same animal species.

CHAPTER IX

Health certificate

The original copy of the health certificate which must accompany wild game meat during transportation to the place of destination must be issued by an official veterinarian at the time of loading. The certificate must correspond in form and content to the specimen in Schedule II and be drawn up in the official language or languages of the place of destination at least. It must consist of a single sheet of paper.

CHAPTER X

Storage

After post mortem inspection, wild game meat must be chilled or frozen and kept at a temperature which must not at any time exceed + 4°C in the case of small wild game and + 7°C in the case of large wild game if chilled or + 12°C if frozen.

CHAPTER XI

Transport

1. Wild game meat must be dispatched in such a way that during transport it is protected from anything liable to contaminate it or to impair it, having regard to the duration and conditions of transport and to the means of transport employed. In particular, vehicles used for this transport must be equipped in such a way as to ensure that the temperatures laid down in Chapter X are not exceeded.

2. Wild game meat may not be transported in a vehicle or container which is not clean and has not been disinfected.

3. Carcasses, or half carcasses, excluding frozen meat packaged in accordance with hygiene requirements, must be suspended throughout transport except in the case of air transport.
Other cuts must be suspended or placed on supports if not packaged or contained in corrosion-resistant containers. Such supports, packaging or containers must meet hygiene requirements and, in particular as regards packaging, the provisions of this These rules. They may only be reused after cleaning and disinfection.

4. The official veterinarian must ensure before dispatch that transport vehicles and loading conditions meet the hygiene requirements of this Chapter.

Schedule II

SPECIMEN PUBLIC/ANIMAL HEALTH CERTIFICATE

For wild game meat ([1]) intended for consignment to a Member State after transit through a third country Exporting country: ...…….
Ministry:.....…….
Competent service:.……..
Reference ([2]) :.....……..

I. Identification of meat

Wild game meat
of:.....…… (animal species)

Nature of cuts:...
……
Nature of packaging:.....……
Number of packages:.....
Net weight:...……

II. Origin of meat Address (es) and veterinary approval number (s) of the establishments:

.....……

Address (es) and veterinary approval number (s) of the approved cutting premises:([4])
:.....……

III. Destination of wild game meat

The meat will be sent from. .....……..... (place of loading)

to.....…… (country and place of destination)

by the following means of transport ([3]) :.....……..
Name and address of consignor:.....……
Name and address of consignee:.....……

IV. Health attestation

I, the undersigned, official veterinarian, certify that:

a) the wild game meat of the species described above was obtained in a processing house situated in a region or area subject to animal health restrictions and has been passed as fit for human consumption following a veterinary inspection carried out in accordance with Directive 92/45/EEC ([5]).

b) the transport vehicles or containers and the loading conditions of this consignment meet the hygiene requirements laid down in that Directive.

c) the wild game or wild game meat ([6]) is intended for consignment to a Member State after transit through a third country.

Done at.,..... on. .....

……..
(Signature of official veterinarian)

_____

([1]) Wild game meat which has not been treated, other than by chilling or freezing to ensure its preservation.
([2]) Optional.
([3]) Indicate the number or registration number (railway wagons and lorries), the flight number (aircraft) or the name (ship).
([4]) Delete as appropriate.
([5]) Including the trichinoscopic examination provided for in Rule 4(3).
([6]) Delete whichever is not applicable.

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