

OF&G INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION CONTROL MANUAL
Section 12
Standards for the Slaughter of Farmed Livestock
(including poultry)

12.0 Contents Page

This section explains the requirements for organic certification of slaughterhouses, for both red meat animals and poultry. A slaughterhouse registered with OF&G must comply with the organic regulations in addition to all other relevant legislation and industry good practice, with the welfare of the animals being paramount.

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Revision Details

Rev No.	Revision date	Pages revised	Issued by	Approved by
1	135/2000	1 to 11	JL Dalby	C Peers (Board Chairman)
2	9/5/2005	All pages deleted	JL Dalby	Dr AG Harris (Certification Committee Chairman)
3	31/10/2006	All pages re-allocated	G Lanceley	Dr AG Harris (Certification Committee Chairman)

12.1 Introduction

12.1.01	<p>Requirements for the slaughter of organic livestock are not detailed in the Defra Compendium because there are comprehensive and detailed regulations in the UK for the slaughter of all farmed animals, whether organic or not.</p> <p>These regulations stress the importance of providing good welfare for animals, up to and including the time of slaughter. They also set out general hygiene rules (based on HACCP), training, cleaning, structural and maintenance requirements.</p> <p>For organic certification, there must also be compliance with organic requirements at all stages in the slaughter process. (See 12.2.01 below)</p>
12.1.02	<p>A slaughterhouse registered with OF&G for slaughter of organic livestock must be aware of and comply with all relevant legislation and industry good practice, with the welfare of the animals being paramount.</p> <p>At every premises there must be a member of staff who has been trained in animal welfare and who is responsible for safeguarding animal welfare</p> <p>Anyone handling live animals or carrying out stunning or sticking, must have the knowledge, skill and equipment to perform the task humanely and efficiently to ensure that the animals are not subjected to avoidable excitement, pain or suffering at any time</p>
12.1.03	<p>In 2003, the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) issued their Report on the Welfare of Farmed Red Meat Animals at Slaughter and Killing, following the introduction of the 1995 WASK Regulations. OF&G has used the recommendations of the FAWC report as a base for its welfare requirements, where these are additional to those required by legislation, for the handling, stunning and slaughter of organically-reared animals.</p>

12.2 Summary of Additional Requirements for Organic Certification

12.2.01	<p>In addition to the legislation and recommendations detailed in 1.1 and 1.2 above, an organic slaughterhouse must comply with the requirements of Section 11 of this Manual, "Operational Requirements for Organic Processors". These, as they apply to abattoirs, are summarised below.</p> <p>Each slaughterhouse must:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Have a written procedure for the slaughter of organic livestock. ii) Ensure that staff are trained to understand the organic requirements. This training should be documented and staff monitored to ensure they comply. iii) Check proof of organic status and maintain traceability of animals from intake through to despatch of carcasses or butchered meat. (An "organic" stamp for carcasses is available from OF&G.) iv) Ensure that organic animals are kept separate from non-organic livestock at delivery, intake and during lairage and slaughter. v) Ensure that organic carcasses and the meat subsequently butchered from them are kept separate at all times from non-organic carcasses and meat. Normally the best way to do this is to schedule organic slaughter as the first operation of the day. Alternatively, it may be done immediately after a thorough clean-down before a different species is slaughtered. Details of time of slaughter and pre-cleaning must be recorded. vi) Rinse all cleaning chemicals from product contact surfaces (including knives) before organic processing commences. vii) Ensure that only approved pest control chemicals are used and that these do not contaminate meat or packaging materials.
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12.3 Specific Exclusions

12.3.01	<u>Religious Slaughter</u> : OF&G requires that animals are pre-stunned to render them insensible before being killed, so does not endorse those methods of religious slaughter where the animal is fully sensible when being killed.
12.3.02	<u>Pre-slaughter Injection with Tenderising Substances</u> : This practice is not allowed.
12.3.03	<u>Electric Goads</u> : These may only be used in exceptional circumstances, where they are required for human safety and with prior permission from OF&G. Their routine use is not allowed.

12.4 Responsibility for Welfare; Enforcement of the Regulations

12.4.01	<p><i>The welfare of animals in transit is the responsibility of the producer, or the haulier as a sub-contractor of the producer.</i></p> <p><i>Once they enter the curtilage of the slaughterhouse, welfare becomes the joint responsibility of the producer and slaughterhouse.</i></p> <p><i>After unloading, their welfare is the responsibility solely of the slaughterhouse.</i></p>
12.4.02	<p><i>The enforcement of welfare during transit is the duty of the Local Authority or the State Veterinary Service (SVS).</i></p> <p><i>Once unloaded, enforcement of their welfare is the duty of the Official Veterinary Surgeon (OVS).</i></p>

12.5 Transport

12.5.01	No person shall transport any animal in a way that causes, or is likely to cause, injury or unnecessary suffering to that animal.
12.5.02	<p>To achieve the above:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Animals should have food, water and 24 hours rest before starting a journey. ii) Animals must be fit for the journey. iii) Competent and trained people should load, transport and unload the animals. This should be done calmly and without rushing. iv) The vehicle should meet statutory construction requirements and be appropriate for the species transported and for the journey. It should be driven carefully with consideration for the animals. If necessary, the driver should stop to check the animals during the journey. v) The vehicle should give the animals enough floor space and headroom. It should protect them from the weather and have effective air circulation. vi) Partitions should be used where necessary, to divide the vehicle (to prevent animals falling or being injured) or to divide separate groups of animals (where different social groups are being transported). vii) Correct documents must be completed and carried in the vehicle. viii) Relevant cleaning and disinfection rules must be complied with.
12.5.03	<p><i>Ideally transport times should be short and animals should be unloaded as soon as they arrive at the abattoir. OF&G does not recommend long journey times but it is recognised that this may be difficult to achieve because of the shortage of organically certified abattoirs.</i></p> <p><i>OF&G should be informed if the journey time is likely to be more than 8 hours (including loading and unloading and time at market).</i></p>
12.5.04	<i>Where animals are sent to market and then directly on to an abattoir, the total time should be taken into account and water and feed given if appropriate.</i>

12.6 Clean Livestock Policy

12.6.01	<p><i>The Clean Livestock Policy was introduced in 1997 to reduce bacterial contamination of meat following the E.Coli VTEC outbreak in 1996.</i></p> <p><i>This states that only clean animals should be sent for slaughter and it is the responsibility of the OVS to monitor the condition of animals on arrival.</i></p>
12.6.02	<p><i>If it is impossible to despatch clean animals for some reason, the producer should liaise with the Abattoir to ensure they can be cleaned on arrival. The slaughterhouse should have a clear policy on this and if it agrees to clean the animals on site, should have appropriate facilities and procedures.</i></p> <p><i>If a producer persistently presents dirty livestock for slaughter, the OVS should instigate an investigation through the State Veterinary Service (SVS).</i></p>

12.7 Unloading

12.7.01	The slaughterhouse should have suitable equipment and facilities for unloading animals and they should be unloaded with the minimum of delay and without causing stress or suffering.
12.7.02	<p>If delay is unavoidable, livestock should be protected from adverse weather conditions and provided with adequate ventilation.</p> <p>Arrival and waiting times should be monitored by the Official Veterinary Surgeon (OVS) to make sure they are acceptable. Action should be taken if these times regularly exceed 30 minutes.</p>
12.7.03	<i>Animals should ideally be able to walk off wagons onto a secure level area leading directly into the lairage, avoiding any sharp turns. (Animals dislike going downhill and they risk injury from jumping, slipping or falling.) The unloading area should be covered and the maximum ramp angle should be 20°.</i>
12.7.04	<i>A designated and competent member of staff should assess the health and well-being of the animals on arrival</i>
12.7.05	<i>There may be a need for immediate slaughter, where an animal is injured, or for isolation where animals are suspected of disease. (Investigations should follow in both cases.)</i>
12.7.06	<i>There may exceptionally be occasions (eg due to traffic problems or breakdowns in the slaughter line) when animals have to stay in the delivery wagon, but alternative arrangements should be made wherever possible.</i>

12.8 Design and Maintenance of the Slaughterhouse

12.8.01	<p>The construction, facilities, equipment and operations should be such as to spare animals any avoidable excitement, pain, injury or suffering. Floors should be non-slip in all areas.</p> <p>The place of killing should be sited so as to minimise the handling of animals at any time up to the point of killing.</p>
12.8.02	<i>Ideally animals should be moved from the unloading bay to the holding pen and on to the stunning/slaughter area as directly as possible. There should be as few turns and corners as possible and the route the animals take should encourage forward movement.</i>

12.9 Lairage

12.9.01	<i>Optimum lairage times vary according to type of animal, but as a general rule, they should be as short as possible and lairage capacity should be matched to the throughput of the slaughterhouse.</i>
12.9.02	Every animal should be protected from adverse weather conditions and provided with adequate ventilation. (Note: Ventilation should ensure that temperature, humidity and ammonia levels are kept within limits that are not harmful to animals.)
12.9.03	Water must be available to all animals at all times in the lairage.
12.9.04	<i>The amount of water required depends on number of animals, their diet at source, journey time, weather and other factors.</i>
12.9.05	A sufficient quantity of wholesome feed should be given on arrival and twice daily thereafter, but not within 12 hours of slaughter.
12.9.06	The feed should be organic and records should be kept to prove organic status and quantity of feed given.
12.9.07	Animals should have sufficient space to stand up, lie down and turn around without difficulty when penned. Any animal that is tethered should be able to stand up and lie down without difficulty.
12.9.08	<i>Overcrowding may not be an issue when animals are slaughtered quickly after arrival but they need more space if held overnight or after long periods at market or in transit.</i>
12.9.09	An adequate supply of suitable bedding should be provided for all animals kept in lairage overnight, unless the lairage has a slatted or mesh floor.
12.9.10	Where a field is used as lairage, the animals should be checked regularly and provided with water, feed and protection from adverse weather.
12.9.11	Any animals that might injure each other on account of their sex, age, origin or any other reason should be kept and lairaged apart from each other.
12.9.12	Organic animals should be kept separately from other animals, in pens clearly labelled "organic".
12.9.13	<i>Handling for identification. All cattle should be checked to ensure the passport corresponds with the animal's ear tag. Mouths of cattle and sheep may also need to be checked to confirm age. The additional handling required for this identification causes additional stress, so care should be taken.</i>

12.10 Sick or injured animals

12.10.01	The condition and health of all animals should be inspected on arrival at the slaughterhouse and subsequently at least every morning and evening by a competent person. Any animal judged to be sick or injured should be kept apart from other animals and stunned and slaughtered without delay.
12.10.02	Any animals too young to take solid feed should be slaughtered immediately after arrival at the slaughterhouse.

12.11 Handling Aids and Goads

12.11.01	OF&G does not sanction the use of electric goads. They should only be used where there is a risk to human safety and with prior permission of OF&G.
12.11.02	<i>Other, more benign methods of encouraging livestock to move (eg flags, flappers, pig boards) should not be used inappropriately.</i>

12.12 Horned Cattle

12.12.01	Horned cattle should only be accepted at slaughterhouses that have the facilities to handle them.
12.12.02	<i>The de-horning of cattle is a welfare challenge in itself. It is preferable that calves are disbudded than that adult cattle are dehorned. (Recently dehorned cattle with unhealed wounds should not be presented for slaughter.)</i>

12.13 Stunning and Killing Equipment

12.13.01	No person shall stun, slaughter or kill, or cause or permit to be stunned, slaughtered or killed, any animal without restraining it in an appropriate manner in such a way as to spare it any avoidable pain, suffering, agitation, injury or contusions.
12.13.02	<i>Animal welfare legislation prescribes permitted methods of stunning and killing and lays down specific requirements for their operation. The equipment must be suitable and well maintained. It must be operated by trained competent personnel who must ensure that an effective stun is achieved and that the animal is then bled before recovering consciousness.</i>
12.13.03	<i>Suitable spare equipment must be kept for emergency use at the site where stunning / killing takes place. This equipment should be kept well-maintained and easily accessible for the areas where it may be required (unloading, lairage and slaughter line).</i>
12.13.04	<i>The OVS has to make an assessment, once the equipment is installed, that it is capable of producing the required stun or kill. The maintenance schedule should be relevant to the operation of the equipment and maintenance records should be kept.</i>
12.13.05	Monitoring of stunning: The slaughterhouse operator should ensure that the stunning / killing process is monitored and this monitoring should be audited by the OVS.

12.14 Stunning and Killing Cattle

12.14.01	<i>Cattle should not be allowed to enter the stunning box unless staff are ready to stun and slaughter immediately.</i>
12.14.02	<i>Floors within the stunning box should be level with no obstructions or steps which tend to contribute to levels of distress. Distractions such as plastic curtains, light, noise or air currents, both at the point of entry and within the box itself may hinder animals entering the box (and thus require excessive use of goads) or interfere with restraint of the head or stunning itself. Tail or rump pushers within the stunning box can be useful if sympathetically used, especially for positioning smaller cattle.</i>
12.14.03	<i>Electrical stunning of cattle is not frequently used and there can be welfare issues in ensuring that sufficient current has been applied to prevent the animal recovering consciousness before being bled. OF&G will not approve this method for slaughtering organic cattle unless there is clear proof that the system is consistently effective.</i>
12.14.04	Animals must be bled without delay after being stunned. The bleeding must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) rapid, profuse and complete; ii) must be completed before the animal regains consciousness; iii) must be carried out by severing at least one of the carotid arteries or the vessels from which they arise.
12.14.05	<i>No further dressing procedure may be carried out on the animal before bleeding has ended and in any event, in not less than 20 seconds after sticking for sheep, goats and pigs and 30 seconds for cattle.</i>

12.15 Stunning and Killing Sheep and Pigs

12.15.01	<i>Group stunning pens: These are used for sheep, pigs, calves and goats where animals are to be stunned with either a captive bolt or head-only electrical methods. The pen should not be so full that it is difficult for the operators to move freely or position the stunning equipment accurately which may cause accidental pre-stun shocks. The operators should move quietly and gently so as not to agitate the animals.</i>
12.15.02	<i>Automated restrainers and conveyors: These are used in large through-put abattoirs and should be carefully designed and operated to minimise stress to the animals. Animals should not be left waiting in the pre-stun race or in the restrainer. (If it is difficult to get the animals to enter the restrainer, this may be an indication of design or operational problems.)</i>
12.15.03	<i>Head-only electrical stunning is mainly used for sheep and pigs. A successful stun is heavily dependent on the skill of the operator in positioning the electrodes accurately and delivering sufficient current to render the animal unconscious. The performance of the operator, design of the electrodes (tongs), maintenance of equipment, layout of the stunning pens and number of animals being handled will all affect the efficiency of the operation. This should be closely monitored and immediate action taken where necessary.</i>
12.15.04	GAS-KILLING SYSTEMS FOR PIGS The killing of pigs by exposure to carbon dioxide (CO ₂) is permitted under current EU and UK legislation. However high concentrations of CO ₂ can cause distress to the animals, so OF&G will need to see evidence that the procedure has been designed to minimise stress before approving this method of slaughter.
12.15.05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The pigs should be rendered rapidly unconscious by the gas; ii) An irreversible state of unconsciousness (death) must be reached in all pigs prior to sticking. iii) There should be adequate monitoring of the system and efficient evacuation in the event of any system failure.

12.16 Specific requirements for Poultry Slaughter

12.16.01	<p><i>General Welfare:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) <i>There should never be undue delay in lairage – there should be careful management of incoming birds and planning of arrival times to facilitate humane treatment;</i> ii) <i>Containers should be checked and any injured or trapped birds removed as soon as possible. (Injured birds should be slaughtered immediately);</i> iii) <i>Birds should be protected from adverse weather conditions and adequate ventilation provided. If slaughter is delayed, they should be provided with feed and water.</i>
12.16.02	Where birds are delivered in containers, these containers should be handled with care and not thrown, dropped or turned over. Where appropriate, the birds should be unloaded from the containers individually.
12.16.03	<i>It is recommended that birds are unloaded in subdued lighting and that there are no sudden loud noises.</i>
12.16.04	The shackle line, machine or other equipment should be designed for the type, size and weight of birds to be slaughtered.
12.16.05	Shackle lines should be designed to keep birds clear of any obstruction, reduce disturbance to a minimum and the whole length should be immediately accessible so that any bird can receive attention if necessary.

12.16 Specific requirements for Poultry Slaughter continued.

12.16.06	Lines should run at a pace that avoids injury to birds and allows the operator to be certain that effective stunning and cutting has taken place, or to take necessary remedial action
12.16.07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Broken or mis-shapen shackles may not be used; ii) Birds should be hung by both legs and precautions taken to stop birds escaping, once suspended; iii) Birds with broken legs must never be hung on shackles, they must be slaughtered immediately; iv) No birds may be hung for more than 2 minutes before slaughter, other than turkeys which may be hung for up to 3 minutes.
12.16.08	<p><u>Requirements for Waterbath Stunning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The level of water in the waterbath must be adjusted to ensure there is good contact with each bird's head; ii) The strength and duration of the current used should be such that the bird is immediately rendered unconscious and remains so until it is dead; iii) Where poultry are stunned in groups in a water bath, a voltage sufficient to produce a current strong enough to ensure that every bird is stunned should be maintained; iv) Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that the current passes efficiently, in particular that there are good electrical contacts and that the shackle-to-leg contact is kept wet; v) The waterbath must be adequate in size and depth for the type of bird being stunned; vi) The waterbath must not overflow at its entrance, or if this is unavoidable, measures must be taken to ensure that no bird receives pre-stun shocks; vii) The electrode which is immersed in the water should extend the length of the waterbath; viii) At all times, when birds are slaughtered, there must be someone in attendance to ensure that the stun has been effective, or if not, to kill the bird without delay.
12.16.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) After stunning, the birds should be bled without delay. ii) At least one of the carotid arteries, or vessels from which they arise, should be severed.
12.16.10	No further dressing procedure should be carried out before the bleeding has ended and in any event not less than 2 minutes for turkeys or geese, or not less than 90 seconds for other birds.

12.17 Stunning to Bleeding Intervals and Methods of Bleeding

12.17.01	<i>The slaughterhouse should have a code of practice for the maximum stun to bleed times for the methods of stunning used and should monitor procedures to ensure compliance.</i>
12.17.02	<p><i>Electrical head-only stunning is reversible, so any delay in bleeding the animal has serious welfare implications. The stun to bleed interval should not be more than 15 seconds.</i></p> <p><i>This was previously difficult to achieve because England and Wales had regulations that prevented animals from being bled in sight of other animals of the same species (conspecifics), so they had to be hoisted away from the stunning area which delayed bleeding.</i></p> <p><i>The WASK regulations were amended in 2003 to allow bleeding in sight of conspecifics, other than for equines, thus shortening stun to bleed time.</i></p> <p><i>(This requirement was never in place in Scotland, so did not have to be repealed.)</i></p> <p><i>OF&G supports this amendment (for pigs and sheep only) provided that for head-only electrical stunning, a maximum stun to bleed time of 15 seconds is achieved</i></p>
12.17.03	Pithing: <i>It was previously common practice to pith cattle, to ensure unconsciousness and reduce spasms. As a result of BSE, it is now illegal to pith animals whose meat is intended for human consumption. This means that the animal may recover after stunning so it is important that it is bled quickly.</i>
12.17.04	Bleeding: <i>To ensure rapid death, it is current practice in the UK to cut both carotid arteries and jugular veins or do a thoracic stick.</i>

12.18 Assessment of Unconsciousness

12.18.01	Relevant slaughterhouse staff must be trained to recognise the signs of unconsciousness and should do this routinely.
12.18.02	<i>A short checklist of the key signs of unconsciousness should be available for staff.</i>

12.19 Licensing, Training and Staffing

12.19.01	<p>Licensing: In the UK, anyone slaughtering animals needs a certificate of competence issued by an OVS*. This states the operations, species, equipment or instructions for which the applicant has been assessed and licences are only issued for these activities. Once a licence is issued, it is valid for life unless revoked or suspended.</p> <p>(*There are exemptions to this requirement, for emergency slaughter and other situations, as detailed in the WASK Regulations Schedule 1)</p>
12.19.02	Training: Slaughterhouses should have an appropriate training regime to ensure that all staff are fully competent at their jobs. Welfare of animals at slaughter must form an integral part of this training, for any staff working with live animals. Individual training records should be kept.
12.19.03	Staffing: <i>It is important to have sufficient staff to avoid fatigue on the slaughter line, because this can negatively affect animal welfare. Rotating jobs amongst a small group of full trained staff may be a useful way of reducing fatigue.</i>

12.20 Animal Welfare Officers

12.20.01	At all times when there are live animals on the premises, there should be a person available who is competent, and who has authority to take whatever action may be necessary to safeguard the welfare of the animals.
12.20.02	<i>Bristol University has developed a widely recognised Animal Welfare Officer (AWO) Course. Staff attendance on this course is now a requirement of many of the national and retailer assurance schemes.</i>

12.21 Level of Veterinary Supervision

12.21.01	The OVS must supervise the ante-mortem inspection and the slaughter process.
12.21.02	<i>Other staff in the slaughterhouse should be trained to carry out other elements of the day to day welfare monitoring.</i>

12.22 Good Hygiene Practice in the Slaughterhouse

12.22.01	Procedures put in place should be based on HACCP principles.
12.22.02	<i>To reduce contamination in the slaughterhouse, only clean animals should be presented for slaughter. (Dirty animals should be cleaned or returned to their owners.)</i>
12.22.03	<p>General good practice to reduce cross-contamination in the slaughterhouse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) <i>All equipment should be kept clean and well-maintained and checked before use to make sure it is functioning and in good condition so as to prevent damage to carcasses;</i> ii) <i>All cutting equipment should be rinsed and disinfected between carcasses;</i> iii) <i>Water used for disinfection should be at least 82°C;</i> iv) <i>All water used should be potable and should be tested monthly;</i> v) <i>Staff should rinse their hands, arms and aprons, as appropriate, between carcasses;</i> vi) <i>When carcasses are rinsed, care should be taken to avoid cross-contamination by water sprays;</i> vii) <i>Pigs should be fully bled before scalding to prevent inhalation. The water in the scalding tank should be potable and should be changed frequently to keep it clean;</i> viii) <i>Cattle/sheep: oesophagus should be tied off or clipped and guts should be bunged or sealed to prevent leakage;</i> ix) <i>Hide/fleece/pelt removal: the "two knife system" should be used, to prevent contamination of the flesh.</i>
12.22.04	<p>Specified Risk Material</p> <p>Staff should be fully trained in procedures to remove, stain and dispose of SRM in accordance with the SRM Regulations.</p>
12.22.05	<p>Temperature Controls (in force at time of writing).</p> <p>Red meat carcasses should be chilled to 7°C or below after slaughter and kept at this temperature or below during further processing and despatch. (Offal should be kept at 3°C or below.)</p> <p>Poultry carcasses should be chilled to 4°C or below after slaughter and kept at this temperature or below during further processing and despatch.</p>

12.23 Traceability

12.23.01	Carcases and cuts should carry a mark that identifies the slaughterhouse where the animals were killed.
12.23.02	All carcases and cuts must be traceable back to the consignment of animals delivered and hence to the producer.
12.23.03	In addition to the traceability requirements in 12.23.1 and 12.23.2 above, all organic carcases and cuts (other than poultry) should be stamped with an "organic" stamp, (obtainable from OF&G once certification has been awarded). For poultry, this information should be on the packaging or despatch documentation.
12.23.04	If offals are to be sold as organic, they must be kept separate from non-organic offals and be directly traceable back to the batch of organic animals they originated from.

Annex I

Legislation Applicable to Slaughter and Killing of Farmed Animals

This information is correct at time of writing; All regulations are "as amended". Other regulations may also apply. It is the Operator's responsibility to ensure compliance.

Welfare of Animals at Slaughter and Killing (WASK) Regulations 1995. The regulations may be downloaded from the Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/farmed/slaughter.htm)

These regulations have been amended in 1999, 2001, 2003 and 2006. All references to the WASK Regulations are "as amended".

The Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997 (WATO)

From 5 January 2007, a new Regulation on the protection of animals during transport will apply across the European Union (EU), with some elements coming into force later in 2008 or 2009. This is the **EU Welfare in Transport Regulation (EC) No 1/2005**,

"No animal shall be transported unless it is fit for the intended journey, and all animals shall be transported in conditions guaranteed not to cause them injury or unnecessary suffering"

EC 1/2005 will replace European Directive 91/628. The Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997 (WATO) and its equivalent in N. Ireland, which implemented the Directive, will accordingly be replaced with new Orders in England, Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland. These will put the arrangements for complying with the new EU Regulation in place. Consultation on this is currently taking place.

The Regulation will apply to all those involved with the transport of vertebrate animals in connection with an economic activity. For example, livestock and equine hauliers, farmers, animal breeders, performing animal transporters and those working at markets, assembly centres and slaughterhouses. It would not apply to individuals who ride for pleasure who transport their own horses, or to individuals taking their own pets on holiday.

The following regulations may be downloaded from the Foods Standards Agency website (www.food.gov.uk)

Regulation 852/2004 - Hygiene of Foodstuffs

This Regulation sets out general hygiene rules in the form of objectives for 'good hygienic practices' to be applied by all food businesses to protect consumers. These include structural, cleaning, maintenance and training requirements. The combined implementation of these 'pre-requisite' hygiene requirements and permanent procedures based on hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) principles should together form the operator's 'food safety management system'.

Regulation 853/2004 (Annex III) - Specific Hygiene Requirements for Food of Animal Origin

Regulation 853/2004 includes additional structural and operational requirements for meat production. The Guide to these Regs provides advice on complying with the meat-specific requirements for:

- Slaughter and cutting of meat of domestic ungulates (*Section I*)
- Slaughter and cutting of meat from poultry and lagomorphs (*Section II*)
- Meat of Farmed Game (*Section III*)
- Wild Game Meat (*Sections IV*)
- Minced Meat, Meat Preparations and MSM (*Section V*)
- Meat Products (*Section VI*)

Regulation 854/2004 - Official Controls on Products of Animal Origin

Regulation 854/2004 includes the specific requirements for inspection and auditing duties of official veterinarians (OVs) and official auxiliaries (meat inspectors in UK). The MHS and DARD Manuals for Official Controls contain operational instructions for staff, including the task of auditing of HACCP and good hygiene practices to verify that food business operators apply procedures 'continuously and properly'.

Regulation 2074/2005 - Implementing Measures

Regulation 2074/2005 clarifies requirements for the provision of food chain information relating to animals sent for slaughter; extends the exemption from skinning to bovine feet; prohibits the sale as fresh meat of poultry treated with water retention agents; and sets the calcium content for mechanically separated meat to which certain rules in Regulation 853/2004 apply.

Regulation 2076/2005 - Transitional Arrangements

Regulation 2076/2005 allows stocks of food of animal origin to continue to be placed on the national market until licensed establishments have been approved, stocks of pre-printed labels to be used until the end of 2007 and existing marking equipment to be used until 2009. It sets out a staged approach to implementing food chain information relating to animals sent for slaughter; and continues the requirements for veterinary certification for farmed game mammals and compositional and labelling requirements for minced meat. The Regulation also allows a transitional period for the training of slaughterhouse staff assisting with official controls in poultry slaughterhouses and the certification of those plants.

The MHS Clean Livestock Policy – see the guide 'Red Meat Safety & Clean Livestock' which can be downloaded from the Food Standards Agency website (www.food.gov.uk)

OTHER LEGISLATION**Regulation 178/2002 – General Food Law**

In common with other food businesses, all meat plant operators have an obligation to keep supplier and customer records.

Regulation 2073/2005 - Microbiological Criteria

Microbiological criteria are set for products of animal origin including carcasses of cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and horses, broiler chickens and turkeys, as well as for meat products, meat preparations and minced meat. See also www.ukmeat.org.

Animal health, animal welfare and other legislation

Certain meat plant operators also have to meet requirements for animal health, animal welfare and other legislation.