



VETERINARY IRELAND

POLICY DOCUMENT

ON

WELFARE OF ANIMALS

AT TIME OF SLAUGHTER

2014

RATIFIED BY

VETERINARY IRELAND NATIONAL COUNCIL

4TH SEPTEMBER 2014



Veterinary Ireland Policy Document on Welfare of Animals at Time of Slaughter

SUMMARY

Veterinary Ireland welcomes the introduction by the European Union of the COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing, which came into force on 1st January 2013. Veterinary Ireland commends the EU on the innovations introduced in the new legislation to increase the safeguards on the welfare of animals at the time of slaughter, in particular:

- the introduction of the requirement for all staff involved in the handling and slaughter of animals in approved slaughterhouses to obtain certificates of competence for the activities in which they are involved, and
- the requirement for all medium-sized and larger slaughterhouses to appoint an animal welfare officer, who will be responsible for monitoring and improving animal welfare in the slaughterhouse.

Veterinary Ireland calls on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and local authorities with responsibility for slaughterhouses, to implement these new provisions as quickly as possible.



EU Council Regulation (EC) No. 1099/2009

Veterinary Ireland welcomes the introduction by the European Union of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing. This Regulation came into force on 1st January 2013. Veterinary Ireland notes the animal welfare principle enshrined in Article 3 of the Regulation: “Animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations.” Implementation of this legislation will ensure that animals are treated with care and respect from the time they are admitted to the slaughterhouse until they are killed.

Veterinary Ireland notes in particular Article 7, Paragraph 1 of the Regulation: “Killing and related operations shall only be carried out by persons with the appropriate level of competence to do so without causing the animals any avoidable pain, distress or suffering.”; and the requirement in Article 7, Paragraph 2 that all staff working with live animals in the slaughterhouse must obtain a certificate of competence, to demonstrate their ability to carry out the activities in which they are involved. These activities specifically include methods of slaughter prescribed by religious rites i.e. without prior stunning.

Veterinary Ireland also welcomes the requirement for all medium-sized or larger slaughterhouses to appoint an animal welfare officer to assist the slaughterhouse operator in ensuring that the structure and activities within the slaughterhouse are compliant with the Regulation. The animal welfare officer will have responsibility to ensure that standards of animal welfare are continuously monitored and improved in the slaughterhouse, and will report directly to the operator of the slaughterhouse on all matters concerning the welfare of animals. The animal welfare officer will have the power to require slaughterhouse staff to carry out any remedial actions necessary to ensure compliance with the Regulation.

Veterinary Ireland calls on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and local authorities with responsibility for slaughterhouses, to implement these and all other provisions of the new Regulation as quickly as possible, and to facilitate slaughterhouse operators in complying with the Regulation by approving an adequate number of training courses and examination bodies for the issuance of certificates of competence at a fee which is viable for all operators, including those that operate very small throughput slaughterhouses.



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