

# **FOOD HYGIENE** *Regulations 2006*

*Responsibilities &  
Opportunities*



## Responsibilities and Opportunities

The introduction of the new food hygiene regulation presents the venison industry with both responsibilities and opportunities. A stable and viable long term venison industry is the goal for all concerned. Encouraging more people to eat venison and the development of new products is essential and many processors are already doing this.

No matter how good the labelling or advertising, the key is to achieve high quality standards. Achieving this is the responsibility of all who shoot, dress, transport and process venison. It is essential therefore that all involved with the harvesting of deer for human consumption should operate to the highest hygiene standards throughout.

Following the introduction of the new Food Hygiene Regulations on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006 this briefing summarises all the hygiene legislation now in force and defines what operators must do to comply. Consideration is also given to new opportunities for producers to increase the economic benefit from the sale of venison by raising standards.

### The Responsibility

Detailed advice on the new Regulation is available from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) (details provided below). Different parts of the legislation apply to different operations. No matter what the operation, however, there is a legal obligation to ensure that all food is safe to eat.

#### Stalkers selling in-skin carcasses to a Licensed Processing Plant

- ◆ Must note any abnormal behaviour before culling

- ◆ A carcase must be inspected by a 'trained' person after death for abnormal signs of disease, parasites or contamination
  - ◆ Holding an approved qualification such as DSC Level 1 or the Level 2 Certificate in Game Meat Hygiene, is the most robust way in which stalkers can show that they have the appropriate knowledge to be considered "trained"
- ◆ A declaration tag must be signed by a trained person
- ◆ Carcase core temperature should reach 7°C as soon as reasonably possible
- ◆ Access to a chill will be required in most cases
- ◆ A carcase should reach the processor as soon as possible
- ◆ Keep records that ensure traceability
- ◆ Keep the carcase free from contamination throughout the whole process
- ◆ Fulfil HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) requirements demanded by the Venison Dealer

#### Stalkers directly selling in-skin carcasses to others, i.e., not to a Licensed Processing Plant

- ◆ Legislation requires that anything put into the food chain must be safe to eat
- ◆ Can not process the carcasses beyond gralloching, removing the head & feet and removing the pluck
- ◆ Can only supply up to 300 carcasses per year in this way
- ◆ Can only supply to a final consumer or
- ◆ Can only supply to a retailer (that is itself supplying a final consumer) who is in the same or neighbouring local authority area or is within 50 km radius

of the producer's property, whichever is the greatest.

- ◆ If selling the carcase, then must have a Venison Dealers Licence obtained from the Local Authority

### **Stalkers supplying venison skinned or cut by themselves**

- ◆ Must have a HACCP plan in place which explains how hazards are assessed and the measures implemented to control them
- ◆ Must use registered premises that meet all legal requirements as judged by the Local Authority
- ◆ Must implement general hygiene principles laid out in the regulations
- ◆ Can only supply to a final consumer or
- ◆ Can only supply to a retailer (that is itself supplying a final consumer) who is in the same or neighbouring local authority area or is within 50 km radius of the producer's property whichever is the greatest
- ◆ Can only supply up to a maximum of 300 carcasses per year in this way
- ◆ If selling the venison, then must have a Venison Dealers Licence obtained from the Local Authority

### **What does it mean for your larder?**

This will depend on what the larder is used for.

#### ***Used by stalker to store carcase before being uplifted by someone from a licensed processing plant, then:***

- ◆ Larder must be registered with the local authority
- ◆ Follow general hygiene principles laid out in the regulations.
- ◆ Ensure carcase temperature cooled to 7°C as soon as reasonable

- ◆ In most cases this will require access to a chill
- ◆ Fulfil the HACCP requirements required by the Venison Dealer.

#### ***Used by stalker when selling in-skin carcasses to others not operating a Licensed Processing Plant, then:***

- ◆ General food legislation requires that food supplied is safe to eat

#### ***Used by stalker when processing small quantities of skinned or cut venison shot by themselves, then:***

- ◆ Larder must be registered with the local authority
- ◆ Follow general hygiene principles laid out in the regulations
- ◆ Follow larder construction standards laid out in the hygiene regulations (details available from FSA)
- ◆ Must have written HACCP plan in place

## **THE OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Scottish Quality Wild Venison Assurance Scheme (SQWV)**

Membership of SQWV provides customers with assurance that Scottish wild venison has been produced to an established industry standard. Quality assurance creates a positive message about stalking and wild venison and is evidenced by the SQWV quality mark.

Membership of this scheme indicates compliance with a comprehensive set of standards as to how carcasses should be handled. The scheme also provides guidance on larder design and fitting out. All larders are assessed as a part of the SQWV application process and improvements are stipulated if necessary to meet SQWV requirements.

## Larder Sharing

By sharing larders, upgrading costs associated with ensuring basic hygiene standards may be shared and better working conditions will have a positive impact on carcase handling and quality. Shared larders also allow rationalising collections, an area that could represent significant savings which the processors may be able to pass on to the suppliers concerned.

Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) has a well developed network of larders throughout Scotland. FCS is prepared to discuss opportunities to share these facilities with interested parties subject to agreement and the adoption of basic standards laid out under SQWV. For further details contact FCS.

## Best Practice Guidance

These guides, prepared by the deer industry organisations, through the Best Practice Working Group identify good practices in all practical deer management skills. In particular the Minister has required that Best Practice Guides identify procedures to safeguard public safety, food safety and animal welfare.

## Grants

In certain circumstances, deer managers may qualify for grants to assist in creating or improving facilities such as deer larders. The Local Enterprise Company should be the first point of contact.

Deer management projects may be eligible for public funding where they are aimed at delivering:

- ◆ Environmental improvement and benefit

- ◆ Community benefit
- ◆ Improved product quality
- ◆ Creating new, or extending existing, projects
- ◆ Improved processing and marketing
- ◆ Improved co-operation and collaboration between producers
- ◆ Training

SQWV membership is eligible for support under current Land Management Contracts.

Only projects that meet Rural Development Regulations, State Aid and Joint Funding requirements will be eligible for funding.

## Sources of information

**Food Standards Agency Scotland**, 6th Floor, St Magnus House, 25 Guild Street, Aberdeen, AB11 6NJ. Tel: 01224 285100  
Web: <http://www.food.gov.uk/scotland>

**'Draft Working Wild Game Guide'** issued by FSA, provides information in greater detail and is available to download from :  
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/draftwildgameguidance.pdf>

**The Venison Working Group** (comprising ADMG, DCS, FCS, SGDPA, SGA), c/o Unit 11, Alpha Centre, SU1P, Stirling, FK4 9NF  
Tel:01786 446 282

## Main legislation:

*Food Safety Act 1990*  
*Regulation (EC)No 852/2004*  
*Regulation (EC)No 853/2004*  
*Regulation (EC)No 178/2002*



Scottish Game Dealers & Processors Association

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