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Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 5

Adopted 2 January 2008

General Welfare Requirements for Farm Animals

*Issued pursuant to
Section 10, Clause 1 of the
Animal Protection Law*

1. These Regulations prescribe the general welfare requirements for keeping and use of farm animals (except invertebrates).
2. Implementation of these Regulations shall be controlled by the Food and Veterinary Service.
3. Animals shall be kept for farming purposes if keeping of such animals does not harm their health and welfare according to their genotype (the set of hereditary factors of an organism) or phenotype (the set of external and internal structures and functions or characteristic signs and properties of an organism).
4. In the cases referred to in the regulatory enactments governing the welfare of farm animals, an owner of farm animals shall ensure that there is a worker on the holding who has a certificate issued by a competent authority, confirming the knowledge of such person in the welfare requirements of the respective species of farm animals. The worker shall ensure that the persons employed on the animal holding are trained in the observation of welfare requirements.
5. Farm animals shall be fed at regular intervals with a wholesome feed appropriate to their age, species and physiological needs and watered with fresh water. The animal feed and water shall not contain substances and objects, which may cause suffering or injuries to the animal.
6. The automated and mechanical equipment of holdings for farm animals shall be inspected at least once a day and detected damage shall be rectified without delay. If it is not possible, the measures necessary for provision of health and welfare of farm animals shall be taken without delay. In order to eliminate the risk of fire and electrical traumas, the holding shall be managed in accordance with the regulatory enactments regarding fire safety and electrical safety.
7. Farm animals shall be provided with the physical activities necessary for their species, physiological and ethological needs. If an animal is continuously or regularly tied or its legs are tethered, or it resides in a cage, the animal shall be provided with sufficient freedom of movement.

8. Keeping of animals in permanent darkness shall not be allowed. If an animal is kept in permanent artificial lighting, it shall be provided with the necessary rest from such lighting. If natural lighting is insufficient for satisfaction of the physiological and ethological needs of farm animal, appropriate artificial lighting shall be ensured.

9. The farm animals, which are kept outdoors, shall be protected from unfavourable weather conditions and predators, as well as risks to their health and life shall be eliminated.

10. Holdings, paddocks, pens and equipment shall be made of materials, which:

10.1. do not cause harm to the health of the farm animal; and

10.2. are easy to clean and disinfect.

11. Equipment of farm animal holdings shall not have sharp edges or protuberances that could injure the animals.

12. Feeding and watering places for farm animals shall be arranged so as to prevent the contamination of feed and water and to provide easy access for all animals to the feeding and watering places, preventing the negative effects of mutual competition.

13. Veterinary medicinal products shall be administered to farm animals for prophylactic, therapeutic or zootechnical purposes. If animals have been administered medicinal products, which are subjected to restrictions of use, they shall be used in accordance with the requirements of the regulatory enactments regarding restrictions in the use of medicinal products for animals, as well as in the handling of animal food products and food products of animal origin.

14. The owner of a farm animal shall ensure appropriate lighting (permanent or portable) for performance of an examination of the animal at any time of the day.

15. The owner of a farm animal shall ensure that air circulation, ventilation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity, gas concentration and noise intensity does not harm the farm animal and conforms to the physiological and ethological needs of the animal.

16. Animal holdings equipped with an artificial ventilation system:

16.1. shall be equipped with an alarm system that signals ventilation disturbances during failure of the system. The alarm system shall be regularly inspected; and

16.2. shall be provided with a back-up ventilation system that guarantees sufficient air circulation and preserves the health and welfare of the animal if the main system is damaged.

17. An owner and a keeper of farm animals has the following rights:

17.1. to receive emergency veterinary medical aid, which is needed by a farm animal;

17.2. to obtain an opinion from a practising veterinarian regarding the health condition of the animal or of the cause of its death; and

17.3. to request a written confirmation from the practising veterinarian regarding the veterinary medical procedures performed with the farm animal and their results.

18. The owner of a farm animal shall ensure that:

18.1. the requirements of these Regulations are observed;

18.2. the health of the farm animals and the conformity of keeping conditions with the welfare requirements for farm animals is inspected at least once a day;

18.3. a sick or injured farm animal is isolated, but, if it is impossible, conditions appropriate to recuperation thereof are ensured;

18.4. manure is removed pursuant to the technology for removal of manure provided for in the holding;

18.5. the spoiled leftovers of the feed are removed at least once a day;

18.6. entries regarding a farm animal's illnesses, medical treatment thereof or the death of the animal are made. This information shall be kept for three years and presented upon the request of an inspector of the Food and Veterinary Service;

18.7. the farm animal is not subjected to pain, suffering and possible injuries; and

18.8. an adequate number of workers with appropriate knowledge and professional skills take care of the farm animal.

19. It is prohibited to mutilate the appearance of a farm animal, except cases when it is specified in the regulatory enactments governing the field of animal protection and welfare.

20. It is prohibited to use natural or artificial reproduction or reproduction methods of farm animals, which cause or may cause pain or injuries to the animal. In accordance with the regulatory enactments governing the field of animal protection and welfare it is allowed to use methods, which might cause insignificant or temporary suffering or injuries.

21. Cabinet Regulation No. 511 of 9 September 2003, General Welfare Requirements for Farm Animals (*Latvijas Vēstnesis* [official Gazette of the Government of Latvia], 2003, No. 125), is repealed.

Informative Reference to European Union Directive

These Regulations contain legal norms arising from Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes.

Prime Minister

I. Godmanis

Minister for Agriculture

M. Roze