
Text consolidated by Valsts valodas centrs (State Language Centre) with amending regulations of:

Cabinet Regulation No. 1167 [shall come into force from 1 January 2011];

Cabinet Regulation No. 256 [shall come into force on 13 April 2012].

If a whole or part of a paragraph has been amended, the date of the amending regulation appears in square brackets at the end of the paragraph. If a whole paragraph or sub-paragraph has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted paragraph or sub-paragraph.

Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 715

Adopted 3 August 2010

Welfare Requirements for Keeping of Fur Animals

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

I. General Provisions

1. This Regulation prescribes welfare requirements for keeping of minks, polecats, foxes, nutrias and chinchillas (hereinafter - fur animals) intended for the acquisition of fur.

2. The owner or keeper of fur animals shall ensure that employees with the relevant abilities and professional skills take care of fur animals in rearing of fur animals.

II. Requirements for Holdings of Fur Animals

3. Accommodations and enclosures of fur animals shall be arranged so as to prevent a possibility of fur animals getting out of them and to reduce the possibility for wild animals and birds to access fur animals.

4. The parts of accommodations, equipment or accessories for taking care of fur animals, which come into contact with fur animals, shall be cleaned, washed and disinfected after removal of fur animals from an accommodation.

5. A place shall be arranged in accommodations and enclosures of fur animals where they may hide from humans or from animals that are located in other cages or pens.

6. Cages shall be placed at the appropriate height in order to ease removal of faeces from the bottom of cages.

7. Cages shall not be placed one on top of another, except for multilevel cages for chinchillas and two-level cages for minks.

8. Cages shall be constructed in such a way that fur animals do not get injured and cannot get out of a cage.

9. The doors of a cage shall be constructed in such a way that a fur animal does not get injured when taken out of the cage.

10. A nest box shall be created from a material harmless to the health of fur animals, ensuring it with suitable litter in compliance with the animal species and with such planning of the nest box opening in order to protect newborn fur animals from the influence of the environment and in order for their mother to have easy access to them.

11. Paragraph 10 of this Regulation shall not apply to chinchillas.

12. An owner or keeper of fur animals shall ensure equipment for movement of fur animals in order to examine, take care or inspect them.

13. The premises where treatment of carcasses of fur animals is intended after killing them shall be arranged separately from the place of keeping of the animals.

III. General Welfare Requirements for Keeping of Fur Animals

14. An owner or keeper of fur animals shall ensure fur animals with appropriate food in compliance with the species thereof at certain feeding times or continuously by using automatic feeding method, as well as with freely accessible water for drinking.

15. An owner or keeper of fur animals shall ensure inspection of fur animals at least once a day and, if necessary, also individual inspection of the animal.

16. If health or behavioural disorders of fur animals are detected, their keeping conditions shall be assessed at first. If the reason for health or behavioural disorders is deficiencies in keeping conditions that cannot be prevented immediately, it shall be done after removal of animals from the accommodation.

17. Sick or injured fur animals shall be immediately provided with aid. If necessary, they shall be separated in an accommodation suitable for such purpose and cured or killed according to instructions of a practising veterinarian.

18. Fur animal kits shall be weaned from a suckler at the age that is the most favourable for the welfare of the mother and kits, but not earlier than at the age of six weeks.

19. Fur animal kits may be weaned from the mother before the age of six weeks only in case when the life of the mother or the kit is endangered.

20. In order for animals to be able to resist stress, favourable attitude of humans shall be ensured from the first days of their life.

21. Groups of fur animals shall be formed from animals of one litter, ensuring supervision of adaptation. Isolation of certain fur animals following weaning from a suckler shall not be permissible.

22. It is prohibited to use medicinal products promoting growth and maturing fur.

IV. Requirements for Keeping of Minks and Polecats

23. At least 30 x 70 centimetres of floor area and at least 45 centimetres of height shall be ensured in the cages of minks and polecats.

24. The minimum area of a cage (including nest box) shall be as follows:

24.1. for one adult breeding animal with or without kits - 2550 square centimetres;

24.2. for young animals after weaning from suckler:

24.2.1. for one or two animals - 2550 square centimetres;

24.2.2. for more than two animals - additionally 850 square centimetres shall be ensured for each animal.

[21 December 2010]

V. Requirements for Keeping of Foxes

25. At least 75 x 100 centimetres of floor area and at least 70 centimetres of height shall be ensured in the cages of foxes.

[21 December 2010]

26. The minimum cage area shall be as follows:

26.1. for one adult animal - 0.75 square metres;

26.2. for one adult animal with kits - two square metres;

26.3. for young animals after weaning from suckler:

26.3.1. for one or two animals - 1.2 square metres;

26.3.2. for more than two animals - additionally 0.5 square metres shall be ensured for each animal.

27. A possibility to rest and observe the surroundings shall be ensured for foxes so that each breeding animal would have a separate area or elevation, or nest box with a roof at the place of keeping.

28. A pregnant fox or a vixen with kits shall be ensured with a nest box with anteroom that has been placed so as to hide the entrance into the nest box.

29. Neck pliers for fixing of the animal shall be used only in such case, if fixing of the animal in any other way is not possible.

30. Nails of foxes shall be kept in good condition.

VI. Requirements for Keeping of Nutrias

31. Nutrias shall be kept in groups.

32. When keeping nutrias in a cage it shall be ensured that 70 per cent of the area to be used is a solid one-piece surface.

33. The minimum area of a pen or cage shall be as follows:

33.1. for one adult animal with or without kits - two square metres;

33.2. for young animals after weaning from suckler - 0.5 square metres for one animal.

34. Nutrias shall be ensured with appropriate nibbling material for wearing of the teeth, water for swimming and materials for activities (for example, tree branches, parts of logs).

35. Pens or cages of nutrias shall be made so that animals could see and smell each other.

36. A nest box of nutrias shall be made so that all animals of one enclosure could lie down concurrently therein. The nest box shall have two compartments and two exits.

VII. Requirements for Keeping of Chinchillas

37. At least 40 x 50 centimetres of floor area and at least 40 centimetres of height shall be ensured in the cages of chinchillas.

38. The minimum cage area shall be as follows:

38.1. for one or two adult animals - 0.2 square metres;

38.2. for one adult animal with kits - 0.2 square metres;

38.3. for young animal after weaning from suckler - 0.13 square metres, additionally 0.03 square metres shall be ensured for each next animal.

39. The following shall be ensured in the accommodations of chinchillas:

39.1. temperature (12-25°C);

39.2. humidity (within limits of 65-70 per cent);

39.3. if necessary - ventilation which supplies fresh air, prevents accumulation of water condensate and gases harmful to the health of animals.

40. Chinchillas shall be ensured with appropriate nibbling material for wearing of the teeth and at least once a day - with sand for cleaning of coat hair.

41. Cages of chinchillas shall be formed so that animals could see and smell each other.

42. Chinchillas shall be moved carefully by holding the bottom of the tail with a thumb and index finger and putting the other hand around the chest and front limbs in order to support the body.

VIII. Closing Provision

43. This Regulation shall come into force on 1 January 2011.

44. Until 31 December 2016 cages of minks and polecats, the height of which is 35 centimetres and more and the minimum area of which complies with the requirements referred to in Paragraph 24 of this Regulation, shall be replaced with cages, the height and area of floor of which comply with the requirements referred to in Paragraph 23 of this Regulation.

[10 April 2012]

45. The conditions referred to in Paragraph 44 of this Regulation shall not be applicable to cages of minks and polecats at newly built holdings or holdings where the reconstruction of cages is being carried out.

[10 April 2012]

Prime Minister V. Dombrovskis

Minister for Agriculture J. Dūkļavs

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