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Republic of Latvia
Cabinet
Regulation No. 743
Adopted 7 July 2009

Pig Welfare Requirements

*Issued pursuant to
Section 10, Clause 1 of the
Animal Protection Law and
Section 54, Paragraph six of the
Veterinary Medicine Law*

I. General Provisions

1. Terms used in these Regulations:

- 1.1. pig - an animal of the porcine species, of any age, kept for breeding or fattening;
- 1.2. boar - a male pig after puberty, intended for breeding;
- 1.3. gilt - a female pig after puberty and before farrowing;
- 1.4. sow - a female pig after the first farrowing;
- 1.5. piglet - a pig from birth until weaning;
- 1.6. weaner - a pig from weaning to the age of 10 weeks;
- 1.7. rearing pig - a pig from 10 weeks to breeding;
- 1.8. fattening pig - a pig from 10 weeks to slaughter.

2. These Regulations prescribe the pig welfare requirements.

3. Implementation of these Regulations shall be supervised and controlled by the Food and Veterinary Service (hereinafter - Service).

4. The Service shall once every two years by the last working day of April inform the European Commission (hereinafter - Commission) regarding the results of State supervision and control and the number of inspections carried out in relation to the total number of pig holdings.

5. The Commission experts in co-operation with the Service have the right to conduct unscheduled inspections of the compliance with the pig welfare requirements in Latvia. In carrying out inspections, experts shall observe personal hygiene measures in order to prevent any threat of transmission of infectious diseases.

6. The Service, taking into account the results of inspections obtained by the experts of the Commission, shall take

the appropriate measures in order to eliminate the detected deficiencies.

7. Pigs imported from the third countries (states, which are not Member States of the European Union) shall have a certificate issued by the competent authority of the relevant state, certifying that the welfare requirements of the imported pigs have been in conformity with the requirements of these Regulations or stricter.

8. A person (employer) who employs persons to attend to pigs shall instruct the person attending to the pigs regarding the requirements of these Regulations prior to commencing work.

II. Requirements for Keeping Pigs

9. Pigs shall be fed at least once a day.

10. Where pigs are kept in groups and are fed without using suckling or by an automatic feeding method, they shall be ensured with simultaneous access to the feed.

11. All pigs over two weeks of age shall be provided with free access to fresh water.

12. The following procedures for pig identification and non-curative operations shall be permitted:

12.1. for piglets up to the seventh day of life - a reduction of corner teeth by grinding or clipping, leaving an intact smooth surface of teeth;

12.2. for boars - reduction of tusks in length, if necessary;

12.3. docking of a part of the tail;

12.4. castration of male pigs (tearing of tissues is not permitted during castration);

12.5. nose-ringing of animals which are kept in an outdoors husbandry system.

13. The procedures referred to in Sub-paragraphs 12.1 and 12.3 of these Regulations shall only be carried out in such case if injuries have occurred to sows' teats or ears or tails of animals. Before carrying out the referred to procedures, measures shall be taken to prevent tail-biting and other vices, taking into account environment and stocking densities. If the referred to procedures are carried out, environmental conditions or management systems of pigs shall be changed.

14. The non-curative operations referred to in Paragraph 12 of these Regulations shall be carried out under appropriate hygienic conditions by a practising veterinarian or a person who has been theoretically and practically trained by the veterinarian to perform the relevant operations.

15. If castration or docking of tails is practised after the seventh day of life of piglets, it shall only be performed under anaesthetic and prolonged analgesia by a practising veterinarian.

III. Requirements for Keeping of Various Types of Pigs

16. The following area shall be provided for each weaner, rearing pig and fattening pig, except gilts after service and sows that are kept in groups, according to the weight of the animal:

16.1. 0.15 m² for a pig weighing up to 10 kg;

16.2. 0.20 m² for a pig weighing 11 to 20 kg;

16.3. 0.30 m² for a pig weighing 21 to 30 kg;

16.4. 0.40 m² for a pig weighing 31 to 50 kg;

16.5. 0.55 m² for a pig weighing 51 to 85 kg;

16.6. 0.65 m² for a pig weighing 86 to 110 kg;

16.7. one square metre for a pig with a weight exceeding 110 kg.

17. A gilt after service, which is held in a group, shall be ensured a total floor space of at least 1.64 m².

18. A sow, which is held in a group, shall be ensured a total floor space of at least 2.25 m².

19. If gilts after service and sows are held in groups of less than six pigs, the total floor space referred to in Paragraphs 17 and 18 of these Regulations shall be increased by 10%.

20. If gilts after service and sows are held in groups of 40 or more pigs, the total floor space referred to in Paragraphs 17 and 18 of these Regulations may be decreased by 10%.

21. A part of the floor space referred to in Paragraphs 17, 18, 19 and 20 of these Regulations shall have the continuous solid floor:

21.1. a gilt after service shall be provided with a solid floor surface space of at least 0.95 m²;

21.2. a pregnant sow shall be provided with a solid floor surface space of at least 1.3 m²; and

21.3. drainage openings shall not take up more than 15% of the floor area.

22. If pigs are kept in groups in holdings with concrete slatted floor:

22.1. the maximum width of the openings shall be:

22.1.1. 11 mm for piglets;

22.1.2. 14 mm for weaners;

22.1.3. 18 mm for rearing and fattening pigs; and

22.1.4. 20 mm for gilts after service and sows;

22.2. the minimum slat width shall be:

22.2.1. 50 mm - for piglets and weaners; and

22.2.2. 80 mm - for rearing pigs, fattening pigs, gilts after service and sows.

23. When constructing or converting installations, it is prohibited to install equipment for tethering of gilts or sows.

24. It is prohibited to tether gilts and sows.

25. If a holding contains more than 10 sows, sows and gilts shall be kept in groups during a period starting from four weeks after the service to one week before the expected time of farrowing. If there are six or more animals in a pen, the sides of the pen shall be at least 2.8 m long. If there are less than six animals in a pen, the sides of the pen shall be at least 2.4 m long.

26. If there are less than 10 sows in a holding, sows and gilts may be kept in individual pens during a period starting from four week periods after the service to one week before the expected time of farrowing, providing sufficient space for them to turn around easily.

27. Sows and gilts shall be provided with permanent access to bedding, which complies with the requirements referred to in Sub-paragraph 43.1 of these Regulations.

28. All dry pregnant sows and gilts, in order to satisfy their hunger and the need to chew, shall be provided with a sufficient quantity of bulky or high-fibre food, as well as high-energy food.

29. A boar pen shall have an area of at least 6 m², so as to allow the boar to turn round easily and hear, see and smell other pigs.

30. If natural service of pigs is intended in a boar pen, the floor area shall be at least 10 m² and free of any obstacles.

31. Pregnant sows and gilts shall:

31.1. be treated against internal and, where necessary, external parasites; and

31.2. be cleaned before being placed in farrowing crates.

32. In the week before the expected farrowing time pregnant sows and gilts shall be given suitable nesting material in sufficient quantity, if the holding does not use a slurry removal system that is not technically feasible for it.

33. An unobstructed area shall be available in the farrowing pen for the ease of natural or assisted farrowing.

34. A farrowing pen shall be provided with appropriate rails for protecting the piglets.

35. Piglets shall be provided with a sufficiently large area where all piglets may lie at the same time. It may be with a solid, covered with a special mat, straw litter or another suitable material.

36. Piglets shall be provided with sufficient space in a farrowing crate so that they are able to suckle the sow without difficulty.

37. Piglets shall not be weaned from sows before they have reached 28 days of age.

38. Piglets may be weaned from sows after reaching 21 days of age, if it is necessary for the health and welfare of the dam or piglets. In such case the piglets shall be moved into specialised housing which is cleaned and disinfected before the introduction of a new animal group.

39. Weaners, rearing and fattening pigs shall be kept in groups, with as little regrouping as possible.

40. In regrouping pigs of any age:

40.1. it is preferable to do so within one week after weaning;

40.2. the pen shall be provided with opportunities for pigs to avoid other pigs;

40.3. tranquillisers shall only be used after the recommendations of a practising veterinarian;

40.4. supervision of adaptation shall be provided.

41. When signs of severe fighting appear, the causes shall be investigated and appropriate measures taken, for example, providing plentiful straw to the animals or other materials for investigation. Pigs at risk or particularly aggressive pigs shall be separated from the rest of the animal group and placed in a separate pen for a period of time.

IV. Requirements for Pig Holdings

42. In a holding where pigs are kept noise levels exceeding 85 dB, as well as sudden and constant noise shall be avoided.

43. Pig pens:

43.1. shall be provided with a sufficient quantity of material to enable proper investigation activities for pigs (for example, straw, hay, wood, sawdust, mushroom compost, peat or a mixture of these materials), which does not compromise health and is suitable for the relevant slurry system;

43.2. shall be provided with a warm, comfortable, sufficiently clean and dry lying area, which allows all the pigs to lie at the same time;

43.3. shall be installed so as to allow the pigs to see each other. The referred to condition does not apply to gilts and sows, which may be kept individually one week before the expected time of farrowing and during farrowing.

44. The floors of holdings shall:

44.1. have the requisite mechanical strength;

44.2. be smooth but not slippery so as to prevent the possibility of injury to the pigs; and

44.3. suitable to the size and weight of the pigs.

45. The holding shall be ensured with light with an intensity of at least 40 lux for a minimum period of eight hours per day.

46. Pigs shall be inspected at least once a day.

V. Closing Provisions

47. Cabinet Regulation No. 152 of 23 March 2004, Pig Welfare Requirements (*Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 2004, No. 47; 2007, No. 37) is repealed.

48. The requirements regarding the freedom of movement of pigs in a pen referred to in Paragraphs 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26 and 27 of these Regulations, if they are not contrary to the recommendations of a practising veterinarian, shall apply to holdings that were constructed or renovated after 26 March 2004. From 1 January 2013, these requirements shall apply to all pig holdings.

Informative Reference to European Union Directive

These Regulations contain legal norms arising from Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs.

Prime Minister V. Dombrovskis

Minister for Agriculture J. Dūklavs

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