

FRESH MEAT (BEEF CARCASE CLASSIFICATION) REGULATIONS 1979

I, JAMES GIBBONS, Minister for Agriculture, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by sections 26A of the Agricultural Produce (Fresh Meat) Act, 1930 (No. 10 of 1930), as amended by the Agricultural Produce (Meat) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1978 (No. 13 of 1978), and the Agriculture (Change of Name of Department and Title of Minister) Order, 1977 (S.I. No. 31 of 1977), hereby make the following Regulations:

REG 1

1. (1) These Regulations may be cited as the Fresh Meat (Beef Carcase Classification) Regulations, 1979.

(2) (a) Subject to subparagraphs (b) and (c) of this paragraph, these Regulations shall come into operation on the 13th day of August, 1979.

(b) Subject to subparagraph (c) of this paragraph, Regulations 8, 11 and 14 of these Regulations shall come into operation on the 3rd day of December, 1979.

(c) These Regulations shall come into operation in relation to carcasses of cattle other than steers on the 3rd day of March, 1980.

REG 2

2. In these Regulations:

"the Act" means the Agricultural Produce (Fresh Meat) Act, 1930 (No. 10 of 1930), as amended by the Agricultural Produce (Meat) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1978 (No. 13 of 1978);

"carcase" means the body of a bovine animal from which the parts specified in paragraph A of Schedule III to these Regulations have been removed and includes a half carcase or quarter carcase and a carcase of which a part has been condemned and a carcase which has been trimmed as provided for in Regulation 12 of these Regulations;

"carcase weight" means the weight of a carcase, weighed within one hour of slaughter, to the nearest 0.5 kilogram, having first been dressed in accordance with the specification described in Schedule III to these Regulations;

"classification" means the description of a carcase in terms of any or all of the following criteria, that is to say, conformation, fatness, sex, carcase weight, age;

"classification officer" means an officer of the Minister appointed by him in accordance with the Act to be responsible for classifying (or verifying the classification of) carcasses and for applying (or verifying the application of) marks thereto and includes any supervisory officer so appointed;

"condemned", in relation to a carcase, means certified by a veterinary examiner in accordance with the Act to be unfit for human consumption;

"conformation", in relation to a carcase, means the thickness of flesh (muscle and fat) relative to the dimensions of the skeleton;

"export premises" means a premises registered in the register of cattle slaughtering premises kept by the Minister pursuant to section 5 of the Act, save that where the context so requires, it

means the person carrying on the business of slaughtering at the premises;

"fatness", in relation to a carcase, means the relative development of external fat cover of the carcase;

"the Minister" means the Minister for Agriculture;

"vendor" means a person who sells a live bovine animal to an export premises in consideration of a price calculated by reference to the deadweight of the animal;

"veterinary examiner" means a veterinary examiner appointed under section 31 of the Act and includes a deputy veterinary examiner appointed under section 32 of the Act.

REG 3

3. (1) Carcasses shall be classified according to the standard systems of description prescribed by these Regulations and the marks prescribed by these Regulations shall be applied to carcasses in accordance with these Regulations for the purpose of indicating their classification.

(2) These Regulations apply to the carcasses of all bovine animals slaughtered at export premises, but excluding the following:

(a) carcasses condemned by a veterinary examiner in accordance with the Act,

and

(b) carcasses weighing less than 150 kilograms.

(3) An officer of the Minister may, if he considers it to be justified, authorise (subject to compliance with any other provisions made by or under statute) the dispatch of any carcase from an export premises notwithstanding that it has not been classified in accordance with these Regulations.

REG 4

4. (1) The conformation of a carcase shall be determined by a classification officer in terms of one of the seven classes represented by the letters I, R, E, L, A, N, D, and described in Schedule I to these Regulations.

(2) The conformation of a carcase shall be recorded by, or by a servant or agent of, the export premises concerned.

REG 5

5. (1) The fatness of a carcase shall be determined by a classification officer in terms of one of the classes represented by the numbers 1 to 7 inclusive and described in Schedule II to these Regulations.

(2) The fatness of a carcase shall be recorded by, or by a servant or agent of, the export premises concerned.

REG 6

6. (1) The sex of a carcase shall be determined by a classification officer in accordance with one of the following descriptions:

CodeClassDescriptionSSSteerA castrated male bovine animalBBullAn entire male bovine animalHHeiferAn adult female bovine animal which does not display the cow-type characteristics normally consequent upon calving or pregnancyCCowAny adult female bovine animal other than a heifer.

(2) The sex of a carcass shall be recorded by, or by a servant or agent of, the export premises concerned.

REG 7

7. (1) Carcass weight shall be determined for the purposes of these Regulations by a classification officer.

(2) Carcass weight shall be recorded by, or by a servant or agent of, the export premises concerned subject to verification by a classification officer.

(3) A classification officer may require the reweighing in his presence of any carcass at any time prior to its dispatch from the export premises concerned.

(4) A determination of carcass weight for the purposes of these Regulations shall be made solely for the information of the Minister and neither the Minister nor the classification officer shall have any legal responsibility for the accuracy of any weighing insofar as it may be relevant to any contract between any export premises and any third party.

REG 8

8. (1) The age of a carcass shall, for the purposes of these Regulations, be determined by a classification officer in accordance with one of the following descriptions:

CodeClassDescriptionYYYoung Animal No permanent incisors erupted at time of slaughter2Two year old First pair of permanent incisors erupted at time of slaughter3Three year old Second or third pair of permanent incisors erupted at time of slaughterMMature Animal Fourth pair of permanent incisors erupted at time of slaughter.

(2) The age of a carcass shall be determined only in those cases where the vendor, or the export premises, gives adequate notice to a classification officer that he requires this to be done.

(3) The age of a carcass shall be recorded by, or by a servant or agent of, the export premises concerned subject to verification by a classification officer.

REG 9

9. A classification officer may, of his own initiative, or at the request of an export premises or of the vendor concerned, and whether or not the carcass has been halved, quartered or trimmed, review and, if necessary, amend the classification of any carcass under Regulations 4 to 8 of these Regulations at any time prior to its dispatch from the export premises concerned, whether or not the original classification of that carcass was carried out by him. A classification officer shall not, however, be bound to act on such request by a vendor or an export premises.

REG 10

10. (1) Such officers of the Minister as he shall appoint in writing shall be classification officers for the purposes of these Regulations.
- (2) The determination of classification by a classification officer shall, subject to Regulations 9 and 12 of these Regulations, be final.
- (3) An export premises shall take all reasonable steps and comply with all reasonable requests by a classification officer for the purpose of enabling him to discharge his responsibility under these Regulations and, in particular—
- (a) a classification officer shall be permitted, at all reasonable times, to enter any export premises,
 - (b) a classification officer shall not be obstructed by an export premises or a servant or agent of an export premises.

REG 11

11. (1) Every carcase classified in accordance with Regulations 4 to 9 of these Regulations shall, at the time of such classification, be clearly marked on each quarter with an indelible stamp or label provided by the Minister which shall indicate the conformation, the fatness and the sex of the carcase as established in accordance with Regulations 4, 5 and 6 of these Regulations.
- (2) Stamps and labels provided by the Minister will remain the property of the Minister.
- (3) The marking of carcasses shall be carried out by, or by a servant or agent of, the export premises concerned in accordance with the directions of a classification officer.
- (4) A stamp or label shall not be defaced or altered by any person at any time prior to the export of the carcase from the State unless—
- (a) the carcase is cut up otherwise than into half carcasses or quarter carcasses, or
 - (b) in pursuance of anything done under Regulation 9 or 12 of these Regulations.
- (5) Any label removed from a carcase by, or by a servant or agent of, an export premises shall be surrendered to a classification officer at the time of such removal.

REG 12

12. (1) An export premises may, having given reasonable notice to the classification officer for the premises and having ensured that the carcase can subsequently be identified, remove classification stamps or labels from a carcase in the course of bona fide trimming of fat from the carcase with a view to meeting market requirements.
- (2) Following the completion of the trimming referred to in

paragraph (1) of this Regulation, the carcass shall be reclassified and restamped or relabelled, as the case may be, at which stage the classification officer may revise his determination of conformation and fatness if he considers this to be justified, whether on the grounds of such trimming or otherwise; whereafter no further trimming of the parts of the carcass bearing the stamp or label may be carried out.

(3) A carcass need not (for the purposes of these Regulations) be reweighed following the completion of the trimming referred to in paragraph (1) of this Regulation, nor need any revision of the fatness and conformation classification, arising solely out of such trimming, be communicated to the vendor concerned in accordance with Regulation 14 of these Regulations.

REG 13

13. (1) Each export premises shall keep a clear and accurate record of the classification of the carcass of each bovine animal slaughtered at that premises. The record shall be completed for each carcass at the time of the classification of that carcass under Regulations 4 to 9 of these Regulations. This record, which shall be known as and is in these Regulations referred to as the "Daily Classification Sheet", shall specify in respect of each carcass:

- (a) an individual identification code unique to that carcass;
- (b) the carcass weight;
- (c) the sex category;
- (d) the conformation class;
- (e) the fatness class;
- (f) the age class (where recorded).

(2) Each export premises shall furnish to the classification officer for the premises, on each day on which bovine animals are slaughtered at the premises, a clear and accurate copy of the Daily Classification Sheets pertaining to the carcasses of bovine animals slaughtered at that premises on that day.

(3) Each export premises shall, for the purposes of paragraph (1) (a) of this Regulation, operate a carcass identification system that is adequate to enable the classification data to be related to the live animal supplied by the vendor from which it derives and to facilitate the subsequent identification of each carcass.

REG 14

14. (1) Each export premises shall at the time of payment for live bovine animals purchased on a deadweight basis furnish the vendor with a statement (in the form set out in Schedule IV to these Regulations) of the classification under Regulations 4 to 9 of these Regulations of the carcasses of the animals to which the payment relates.

(2) The statement referred to in paragraph (1) of this Regulation shall include the following information in respect of each carcass:

- (a) the cattle identity tag number of, and the number assigned by the premises to, the animal from which it derives;
- (b) the carcass weight;
- (c) the sex category;
- (d) the conformation class;

- (e) the fatness class;
- (f) the age class (where recorded).
- (3) A classification officer shall be entitled to inspect and examine all or any such statements prior to their issue to the vendor concerned.

SCHEDULE I.

Conformation

ClassDescriptionIAll parts of the carcass are exceptionally well developed. The round is short and thick with pronounced convex profile. The rump loin and forerib are rounded and thick, rising in a bulge above the level of spinous processes. The shoulder is massive and thickly fleshed.RAll parts of the carcass are very well developed. The round is short and compact with a convex profile. The rump loin and forerib are rounded and thick with a convex sectional profile. The shoulder is very thickly fleshed.EAll parts of the carcass are well developed. The round may be slightly elongated but thick, with a linear or convex profile. The rump loin and shoulder are well fleshed but with a linear sectional profile. The shoulder is well fleshed.LThe carcass is generally well fleshed but with deficiencies in some parts. The round is elongated and of moderate thickness with a subconcave profile. The rump loin and forerib are lacking in thickness and width. The shoulder is fairly well fleshed.AThe carcass is moderately well fleshed but with many deficiencies. The round is elongated and narrow with a distinctly concave profile. The rump loin and forerib are lacking in thickness and width. The shoulder is not well fleshed with the spine of the scapula in evidence.NThe carcass is very poorly developed with the outlines of many bones apparent through the thin flesh covering. All the profiles are concave.DAll the bones of the skeleton are very apparent with little or no flesh covering.

SCHEDULE II.

Fatness

ClassDescription1The carcass is practically devoid of external fat cover except for a very thin film on the plate and flank. 'Cod' or 'Udder' fat is practically absent.2All the muscles of the carcass are visible but a thin film of fat covers the rump and loin, with minimal deposits on the plate and flank. 'Cod' or 'Udder' fat is minimal.3The muscles of the rump loin and forerib are covered by a very thin layer of fat with a slightly thicker layer on the plate and flank. A small deposit of 'Cod' or 'Udder' fat is present.4The muscles of the rump loin and forerib are covered by a thin layer of fat with heavier deposits on the plate and flank. The muscles of the neck, shoulder and round may be thinly covered but remain visible. 'Cod' or 'Udder' fat is present in a moderate deposit.5Almost all muscles are covered by a slightly thick layer of fat but the muscles of the neck may still

be visible. More substantial deposits occur in the plate and flank. 'Cod ' or ' Udder ' fat is present in substantial but not wasteful quantities.6All muscles are covered by a thick layer of fat with heavy deposits on the plate and flank. Heavy deposits of ' Cod ' or ' Udder ' fat are present.7The entire carcass is covered by a very thick layer of fat with very heavy accumulations on the plate and flank. Very wasteful quantities of ' Cod ' or ' Udder ' fat are present.

SCHEDULE III.

CARCASS WEIGHT.

A. The following parts shall be removed from the body before weighing

1. Head including tongue at the occipito—atlantal joint that is at right angles to the line of the back at the articulation of the skull and the spinal column.
2. Hind feet at hock joint between tarsal and meta tarsal bones.
3. Fore feet at knee joint between carpal and meta carpal bones.
4. Hide and ears.
5. Tail at junction between first and second coccygeal vertebrae.
6. Alimentary canal from the oesophagus to the anus and fats adhering to same.
7. Genito-urinary organs. In cows the mammary tissue will be removed.
8. Kidneys, kidney knob and channel fat and large blood vessels attached to the vertebrae.
9. Lungs, heart, trachea, (pluck), liver, thymus glands, (sweet bread), spleen, pancreas, pillars of the diaphragm (thick skirt).
10. The thoracic fat on the brisket bone.
11. Blood vessels (severed in removing head, oesophagus and trachea) and clotted blood in the neck without undue trimming of muscle.
12. Spinal cord.
13. Diaphragm (thin skirt).
14. Tut fat—fat lying in the right and left ischiorectal fossae.
15. Parts or tissues removed under the direct supervision of the veterinary examiner.

B. There shall be no trimming of external fat.

SCHEDULE IV.

Information to be furnished to Vendor

(Name of export premises)

CLASSIFICATION OF BEEF CARCASSES

FORM OF RETURN TO VENDOR

Cattle Identity Hot Weight (Kgs) Sex Conformation Score Fat Score Age

(optional) Tag No. Export Premises No.

.....Agent of Export

Premises.....Date Note: You may wish to consult your local local Agricultural Adviser about the significance of these results.

GIVEN under my Official Seal, this 3rd day of August, 1979.

JAMES GIBBONS,

Minister for Agriculture.

EXPLANATORY NOTE.

A system of classifying and marking beef carcasses according to conformation, fatness, sex, weight and age is being introduced at meat export premises on a phased basis from 13 August, 1979. The second phase will take effect on 3 December, 1979 and the full system of classification will be applicable from 3 March, 1980.