

REGULATION

of 2012,

on veterinary requirements for slaughtering crocodiles and further processing of meat and animal products originating from crocodiles

The Ministry of Agriculture establishes the following in accordance with Section 78 of Act No 166/1999 Coll. on veterinary care and amending certain related laws (the Veterinary Act), as amended by Act No 131/2003 Coll., Act No 316/2004 Coll., Act No 48/2006 Coll., Act No 182/2008 Coll., Act No 227/2009 and Act No 308/2011 Coll. implementing Section 21 Paragraph 15, Section 23 Paragraph 4 and Section 24 Paragraph 2 Letter a) of the Veterinary Act:

Section 1

Subject of the Regulation

(1) This Regulation regulates the following in connection with the directly applicable legislation of the European Union¹⁾

- a) the method of preparing the crocodiles, their bodies, meat, organs and other parts for veterinary examination,
- b) the veterinary and hygienic requirements for establishments, plants and other facilities in which animal products originating from crocodiles are handled and the technical conditions for their design, organisation and furnishing,
- c) the examination of crocodiles and animal products originating from crocodiles, the assessment and labelling of said products on the basis of their veterinary examination as well as the veterinary conditions for releasing said products into circulation.

(2) This Regulation was notified in accordance with European Parliament and Council Directive 98/34/EC of 22 June 1998 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations and of rules on Information Society services, as amended by Directive 98/48/EC.

Section 2

Definition of terms

¹⁾ European Parliament and Council (EC) Regulation No 178/2002 of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, as amended.

European Parliament and Council (EC) Regulation No 852/2004 of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs, as amended.

European Parliament and Council (EC) Regulation No 853/2004 of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin, as amended.

For the purposes of this Regulation,

- a) a crocodile is defined as an animal born and raised in captivity²⁾ and belonging to offspring of the second generation³⁾ and further of breeding stock⁴⁾ of the crocodile or alligator family which meets the requirements of the directly applicable legislation of the European Union on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein⁵⁾ and the Act on Trade in Endangered Species⁶⁾ and is intended for slaughter and meat processing and whose meat is intended for human consumption,
- b) crocodile meat intended for human consumption is defined as skeletal striated muscle originating from crocodiles.

Section 3

Requirements for slaughterhouse furnishing

In order to prevent meat contamination, operators of slaughterhouses in which crocodiles are slaughtered (hereinafter referred to as 'slaughterhouses'), shall ensure that said slaughterhouses:

a) have areas suitable for:

1. immobilisation minimising pre-slaughter stress and for the stunning and exsanguination of the crocodiles,
2. washing the bodies of the slaughtered crocodiles,
3. skinning the crocodiles,
4. evisceration and further processing of the crocodile bodies,
5. refrigerating crocodile meat,
6. storing the crocodile skins and, if these activities are conducted at the slaughterhouse, a separate room for processing the crocodile skins,
7. storing animal by-products,

b) enable spatial or temporal separation of the:

²⁾ Article 54 of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 of 4 May 2006 laying down detailed rules concerning the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein, as amended.

³⁾ Article 1 Paragraph 2 of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 865/2006.

⁴⁾ Article 1 Paragraph 3 of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 865/2006.

⁵⁾ Article 8 of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 of 9 December 1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein.

Articles 59 and 61 of European Parliament and Council (EC) Regulation No 865/2006.

⁶⁾ Section 15a of Act No 100/2004 Coll. on trade in endangered species, as amended by Act No 346/2009 Coll.

1. stunning and exsanguination of the crocodiles,
 2. washing of the bodies of the slaughtered crocodiles,
 3. skinning of the crocodiles,
 4. evisceration and further processing of the crocodile bodies,
 5. refrigeration of the crocodile meat,
 6. shipping of the crocodile meat,
 7. handling of animal by-products,
- c) are configured in such a manner that the crocodile meat cannot come into contact with the floor and walls,
- d) are equipped with:
1. equipment for disinfecting tools with hot water at a temperature of at least 82°C or an alternative system with a similar effect,
 2. equipment for cleaning the hands of employees who handle unpackaged crocodile meat; said equipment must be furnished in such a manner that contamination cannot spread,
 3. a lockable facility for the refrigerated storage of detained crocodile meat; slaughterhouses need not be equipped with this facility and may store said detained crocodile meat together with other crocodile meat in a single refrigerated room as long as it is not crocodile meat from crocodiles which are suspected of contagion; such crocodile meat must be stored in such a manner that it cannot adversely affect other crocodile meat,
 4. a separate lockable facility for storing crocodile meat which was declared to be unsuitable for human consumption in accordance with Annex I Section II Chapter V of European Parliament and Council (EC) Regulation No 854/2004.

Section 4 **Slaughter hygiene**

- (1) The slaughterhouse operator shall ensure that:
- a) only live crocodiles intended for slaughter or the bodies of crocodiles slaughtered outside of slaughterhouses are transported to the slaughterhouses,
 - b) the crocodiles are cleaned with a stream of drinking water,
 - c) the crocodiles are slaughtered under the conditions and use of the methods established by the act on the protection of animals against cruelty⁷⁾.
- (2) The slaughterhouse operator shall furthermore ensure that the immobilisation minimising pre-slaughter stress, stunning and exsanguination are conducted without unreasonable delay and using a method which prevents the meat from being contaminated; in the process, he shall ensure in particular that:
- a) the bodies of the crocodiles are washed with drinking water as quickly as possible after slaughter,

⁷⁾ Act No 246/1992 Coll. on the protection of animals against cruelty, as amended.

- b) the crocodile bodies are skinned,
- c) the head and limbs of the crocodiles are handled in such a manner that the rest of the meat is not contaminated,
- d) the heads and limbs of crocodiles intended for further processing are skinned,
- e) the outer surface of the crocodile skin does not make contact with the surface of the muscle during the process of skinning the crocodile,
- f) employees and equipment coming into contact with the outer surface of the crocodile skin does not touch the crocodile meat,
- g) crocodile carcasses are not visibly contaminated by faeces; otherwise, the visible contamination must immediately be eliminated by excision or other method with equivalent effect,
- h) crocodile carcasses do not come into contact with the floor or walls,
- i) measures are taken during the evisceration process to ensure that the contents of the digestive tract are not discharged,
- j) the spinal cord is separated,
- k) the refrigeration of the meat is initiated as quickly as possible after evisceration, and the bodies of the crocodiles are separated until the post-slaughter inspection has been completed, while retaining identification of the original body from the individual parts of the crocodile bodies.

(3) Until the post-slaughter inspection has been completed, the slaughterhouse operator shall ensure that the parts of the slaughtered crocodile which are subject to the inspection:

- a) remain identifiable so that they can be allocated to the carcass in question,
- b) do not come into contact with other carcasses, tripe or entrails, including those for which a post-slaughter inspection has already been conducted.

(4) After the post-slaughter inspection, the slaughterhouse operator shall ensure that:

- a) detained meat or meat declared to be unsuitable for human consumption and by-products of animal origin do not come into contact with meat declared to be suitable for human consumption,
- b) the meat is stored in accordance with the provisions of Section 9.

(5) If the slaughterhouse does not have lockable facilities reserved for slaughtered diseased crocodiles or crocodiles suspected of bearing contagion or disease, the facility used for slaughtering such crocodiles must be cleaned, washed and disinfected under supervision of an official veterinary physician after the slaughter or before initiating the slaughter of other crocodiles.

Section 5 Requirements for cutting rooms

Operators of cutting rooms in which crocodile meat is handled must ensure that the cutting room⁸⁾

- a) is designed to prevent meat contamination from taking place, in particular

⁸⁾ Annex I Point 1.17 of European Parliament and Council (EC) Regulation No 853/2004.

1. by enabling a smooth workflow,
 2. ensuring that various production batches are separated,
- b) has
1. refrigerated rooms for the separate storage of packaged and unpackaged crocodile meat, unless it is stored at different times or stored using such means that the packaging material and method of storage cannot be a source of contamination for the crocodile meat,
 2. operating areas for cutting which are furnished so as to meet the requirements of cutting and deboning hygiene,
 3. facilities in which employees handling unpackaged crocodile meat wash their hands using taps which are designed so as to prevent the spreading of contamination,
 4. equipment for disinfecting tools with hot water at a temperature of at least 82°C or an alternative system with a similar effect.

Section 6 **Cutting and deboning hygiene**

(1) The cutting room operator shall ensure that work with meat during the cutting and deboning of the crocodile meat is organised in a manner which precludes or minimises contamination of the meat; in the process, it is particularly necessary to ensure that:

- a) the meat intended for cutting is brought to the workplace gradually as needed,
- b) during cutting, deboning, trimming, cutting into slices or cubes, initial packaging and further packaging, which must be completed within no more than 24 hours as of the slaughter, a meat temperature not exceeding 4°C was maintained, with the help of an ambient temperature of 12°C or other system with equivalent effect.

(2) The meat may be cut and deboned before the temperature specified in Paragraph 1 Letter b) is reached if the cutting room is located in the immediate vicinity of the slaughterhouse.

In this case, the meat must be transported to the cutting room from the slaughterhouse areas or after unhooking in refrigerated rooms. Upon cutting and potential packaging, the meat must be cooled to the temperature specified in Paragraph 1 Letter b).

Section 7 **Emergency slaughter of crocodiles**

(1) Meat from crocodiles which were slaughtered in emergencies outside of slaughterhouses may be used for human consumption if it meets the following requirements:

- a) the healthy crocodile died of injuries which prevented it from being transported to the slaughterhouse for reasons of respecting animal welfare conditions,
- b) a veterinary physician conducted an inspection of the crocodile before the slaughter,
- c) the slaughtered and exsanguinated crocodile was transported to the slaughterhouse in a hygienic manner and without unreasonable delay,

- d) the stomach and intestines were removed at the location of the emergency slaughter under supervision of a veterinary physician and further processing was not conducted; all entrails removed were transported to the slaughterhouse along with the slaughtered animal and it was checked to ensure that they belong to the animal in question,
- e) the crocodile was refrigerated, if more than 2 hours elapsed between the slaughter and transport to the slaughterhouse; this does not apply if climatic conditions did not require this,
- f) a declaration from the keeper was attached to the slaughtered crocodile upon delivery to the slaughterhouse; said declaration must identify the animal, specify all veterinary pharmaceutical preparations administered and examinations of the crocodile which were conducted, the dates of administering the pharmaceutical preparations and protection periods,
- g) a declaration issued by a veterinary physician was attached to the slaughtered crocodile upon delivery to the slaughterhouse; said declaration must contain a statement that the result of the inspection prior to slaughter was favourable, the date, time and reason for the emergency slaughter and the nature of all examinations conducted by the veterinary physician,
- h) the slaughtered crocodile is suitable for human consumption on the basis of the post-slaughter inspection conducted in accordance with Section 10 of this Regulation at the slaughterhouse, including all further supplementary tests required in the event of an emergency slaughter,
- i) the slaughterhouse operator followed all instructions concerning the use of crocodile meat which were issued by the official veterinary physician upon the post-slaughter inspection,
- j) the slaughterhouse operator marked the crocodile meat from the emergency slaughter as edible with a circular health suitability mark 4 cm in diameter, containing the following:
 1. the abbreviation 'CZ',
 2. the approval number of the slaughterhouse,
 3. the European Union abbreviation 'EU'.

(2) Crocodile meat which meets the requirements specified in Paragraph 1 may only be placed on the market in the Czech Republic.

Section 8 Crocodile meat labelling

- (1) Crocodile meat which has been evaluated as
- a) edible shall be labelled with an oval health suitability mark which is at least 6.5 cm in width and 4.5 cm in height and contains the following:
 1. the abbreviation 'CZ',
 2. the approval number of the slaughterhouse,
 3. the European Union abbreviation 'EU',
 - b) edible upon processing
 1. crocodile meat which is intended for processing into thermally treated products due to contagion, in particular with respect to the type and nature of the contagion, risks of spreading and hazard to human health shall be labelled with an oval-shaped stamp

crossed through by two straight lines which cross at a right angle, intersecting in the centre of the oval mark, and information on the mark which is easily legible, or

2. crocodile meat which, for other reasons, is intended for processing into thermally treated products by means and under conditions corresponding to the results of the veterinary examination and evaluation, shall be labelled with an oval-shaped stamp crossed through by two parallel lines which are at least 1 cm apart from one another, intersect the oval mark horizontally and are positioned in such a manner that the information on the mark remains easily legible, or

c) inedible

1. for contagion reasons or due to the crocodile being diseased,
2. due to the presence of residue or contaminating substances exceeding the stipulated limits,
3. due to non-compliance with the parasitological and microbiological criteria pursuant to the Annex to this Regulation, or
4. due to other reasons for which the meat would be declared to be unsuitable for human consumption,

shall be labelled with a triangular stamp with a side length of 5 cm.

(2) The labelling of the meat specified in Paragraph 1 Letters a) and b) may only be conducted on crocodiles which underwent a pre-slaughter inspection and post-slaughter inspection in accordance with this Regulation and for which there are no reasons to declare the meat to be inedible. The meat may only be labelled with a health suitability mark before the results of the examination for trichinosis have been obtained if it is guaranteed that the meat from the animal in question will only be placed on the market if the results are satisfactory. The labelling is placed on the outer surface of the carcass by stamping it with an ink stamp or by burning a brand into it, by such means that every part of the carcass will bear a health suitability mark if the carcass is divided. The letters must be at least 0.8 cm tall and the numbers must be at least 1 cm tall. The dye used must be in accordance with other legislation⁹⁾.

(3) The labelling of the meat specified in Paragraph 1 Letter b) shall be positioned on the outer surface of the carcass by such means that every part is fitted with a corresponding mark. The surfaces which appear when altered parts of the meat are removed shall also be marked.

(4) The labelling of the meat specified in Paragraph 1 Letter c) shall be conducted by such means that the meat cannot be misused. The labelling of entire bodies or halves shall furthermore be supplemented by deep cuts into the tissue; the labelling of smaller parts of meat or tripe may be substituted by colouring them.

⁹⁾ Section 4 of Regulation No 4/2008 Coll., establishing the types and conditions of use of additives and extraction solvents in the production of foodstuffs, as amended by Regulation No 130/2010 Coll.

Section 9
Storage and transport

(1) The operator of an establishment, plant or other facility in which crocodiles are slaughtered and animal products originating from crocodiles are obtained, produced, processed, treated, packaged, stored, transported and placed onto the market shall ensure the following when storing crocodile meat:

- a) the refrigeration of the crocodile meat at a temperature not exceeding 4°C. The crocodile meat must be cut and deboned in accordance with Section 6 Paragraph 2 during the course of refrigeration,
- b) sufficient ventilation, so that vapour does not condense on the surface of the crocodile meat,
- c) separate refrigeration and storage of unpackaged crocodile meat from packaged crocodile meat,
- d) storage and transport at the temperature specified in Letter a).

(2) Crocodile meat intended for freezing must be frozen without unreasonable delay, in which the time of curing prior to refrigeration must be taken into account as needed. Freezing temperature must be retained during the course of the storage and transport of frozen crocodile meat.

(3) Frozen meat may only be thawed if doing so is essential for its further processing into crocodile meat products for technological reasons.

Performance of supervision and inspections

Section 10

(1) The performance of state veterinary supervision and inspections encompasses:

- a) audits for proper hygienic practice, which focus in particular on:
 1. checking information on the food chain,
 2. organisation and maintenance of the rooms and equipment,
 3. hygiene before commencing the activity, during the activity and after it,
 4. personal hygiene,
 5. training on hygiene and work processes,
 6. pest control,
 7. water quality,
 8. temperature control,
 9. inspection of the food products entering into the facility and leaving the facility and inspection of the documents enclosed,
- b) audits of the processes established for hazard analysis and analysis of the critical control points (HACCP), which in particular verifies whether the products of animal origin from crocodiles:
 1. meet the microbiological criteria established in the Annex to this Regulation,

2. meet the requirements on residue, contaminants and prohibited substances,
 3. do not contain physical hazard sources, such as foreign bodies,
- c) official inspections of crocodile meat at slaughterhouses and in cutting rooms which place said meat onto the market which focus in particular on:
1. information on the food chain,
 2. pre-slaughter inspections,
 3. good living conditions of the animals,
 4. post-slaughter inspections,
 5. by-products of animal origin,
 6. laboratory tests,
- d) special tasks for audits defined in the annexes to European Parliament and Council (EC) Regulation No 854/2004.

(2) When performing state supervision and inspections, the official veterinary physician must proceed in accordance with Annex I Section I to European Parliament and Council (EC) Regulation No 854/2004; during the process, he or she shall in particular:

- a) verify whether the operator of an establishment, plant or other facility in which crocodiles are slaughtered and animal products originating from crocodiles are obtained, produced, processed, treated, packaged, stored, transported and placed onto the market systematically adheres to its own processes regarding collection, transportation, storage, handling and processing for by-products of animal origin, as well as the use or liquidation thereof, including the specified hazardous material for which the operator is responsible,
- b) check whether the operator's processes guarantee to the greatest extent possible that the meat:
 1. does not exhibit pathological deviations and changes, or
 2. is not contaminated with faeces or other impurities,
- c) check and analyse the corresponding information from the records of the farm from which the animal intended to be slaughtered originates, both before and after the slaughter.

Section 11

(1) The official veterinary physician must conduct the following immediately once the crocodile has been slaughtered:

- a) an inspection of the entire outer surface of the carcass,
- b) inspection and palpation or potentially incision of those parts of the body which are altered or suspect for other reasons (if necessary),
- c) a visual inspection of the head,
- d) a visual inspection or potentially palpation of the lungs, throat and oesophagus,
- e) a visual inspection and palpation of the pericardium and heart,

- f) a visual inspection and palpation or potentially incision of the organs of the thoracic and abdominal cavities,
- g) an evaluation of the nutritional state, colour, odour, symmetry and sufficient exsanguination, contamination, parasitic infections, pathological signs, signs after the application of medications, abrasions and injuries and other abnormalities in the muscle, bone, joints and other tissues.

(2) If necessary, the official veterinary physician will conduct further examinations and palpations of the carcass and tripe and incisions thereof, as well as laboratory examinations for the purpose of evaluating whether the crocodile meat is edible, edible upon processing or inedible in accordance with Section 8.

Section 12
Legal effect

This Regulation shall enter into legal effect on

Minister:

Parasitological and microbiological criteria for crocodile meat

I. Parasitological criteria:

1. Examination for the presence of trichina (trichinella) and non-encapsulated forms thereof conducted in a laboratory which was issued a certification of accreditation to conduct this gastrointestinal examination using a method in accordance with Annex III of the directly applicable European Union legislation laying down specific rules on official controls for trichinella in meat (Regulation [EC] No. 2075/2005).
2. Examination for the presence of Spirometra.
3. Examination for the presence of Pentastomida.
4. Examination for the presence of Anisakis.

II. Microbiological criteria:

1. Salmonella 0/25g.
2. Aeromonosa hydrophila 0/25 g.