

REGULATION

pertaining to the eradication of scrapie and compensation for culling

SECTION I

Scope and definitions

Article 1

This Regulation concerns sheep scrapie, but its provisions are also applicable to scrapie in goats and other species of animal. The provisions of the Regulation also apply to the diseases broken mouth and caseous lymphadenitis/ulcerative lymphangitis in sheep and goats.

Article 2

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:

Risk zone means a geographic area within a quarantine zone where a risk of scrapie infection exists by reason of contact with and trade in sheep from an infected area.

Herd replacement means the culling and subsequent repopulation of the entire sheep flock of a farm or location.

Line-strays means sheep which cross or are transported across an isolation line without authorisation.

Non-infected area means a geographic area within a quarantine zone where scrapie has not been detected in the previous 20 years.

Infected farm means a farm, a holding with a status different from that of a farm, or any other location, where scrapie has been detected in the previous 20 years.

Quarantine zone (protection zone): means a geographic area demarcated by isolation lines, rivers, lakes, oceans or desert areas which in combination with mandatory monitoring and other precautionary measures hinder or completely block any contact between animals in adjacent zones.

Infected area means a geographic area within a quarantine zone where scrapie has been detected in the previous 20 years.

Keeper of sheep: The owner of sheep or any other party having responsibility for the feeding, living conditions and guarding of sheep in accordance with applicable rules in the relevant municipality, and pursuant to a contract between the relevant parties.

Isolation lines means the borders of quarantine zones, including fence lines, divided into main and auxiliary isolation lines.

SECTION II

General provisions

Article 3

The owners and keepers of sheep must report to the District Veterinary Officer or the Chief Veterinary Officer any cases of scrapie in their herd and any suspicion they may harbour that the sheep are infected with this disease. Reports sent directly to the District Veterinary Officer must be notified to the Chief Veterinary Officer as soon as possible. The instructions of the Chief Veterinary Officer regarding sampling and the handling of samples and live sheep to be sent for testing must be followed. Every notification should be accompanied by a detailed report on the herd's disease status and by information about the loss of animals from the herd. The District Veterinary Officer, having consulted with the Chief Veterinary Officer, shall decide whether (a) sheep suspected of being infected with scrapie should be culled for research purposes, a measure which should be compensated in accordance with Section IV.

Where the presence of scrapie is confirmed, the Chief Veterinary Officer shall submit a proposal to the Minister of Agriculture for the prompt culling of the herd in question.

Article 4

Sheep not intended for slaughter may not be transported between quarantine zones (protection zones). The Chief Veterinary Officer may authorise the transport of sheep across isolation lines for herd replacement purposes, for testing, or for use in artificial insemination facilities for breeding purposes. The Chief Veterinary Officer may also grant exemptions for the transport of juvenile rams from non-infected areas to individual farms or areas for breeding purposes, in cases where ovine

artificial insemination facilities cannot be used or for other urgent reasons, including hereditary diseases and the protection of herds.

Sheep not intended for slaughter may not be moved between herds from inside or within an infected area. The Food and Veterinary Authority may authorise particular herds within infected areas to be combined, provided that scrapie has not been detected at the relevant farms for at least 20 years, and no other reasons count against combining the herds. In that context, particular consideration must be given to the status of other diseases, and to whether scrapie has been detected at nearby farms where sheep are or have been in contact in home pastures and mountain pastures in the previous five years. Planned changes to mountain pasturing in the area must be submitted to the relevant Municipal Council and to the District Veterinary Officer for approval. Within infected areas, sheep not belonging to the farm's herd may neither be housed nor given feed or water together with the farm's sheep, whether during the movement of sheep in the spring or autumn or at other times. Where housing the sheep cannot be avoided, for reasons of animal protection, neither sheep houses, barns nor cow stables should be used. Houses and areas where sheep have been housed or kept must be disinfected after use where the District Veterinary Officer deems this necessary. Roaming sheep arriving in the herd of a farm which is, or is suspected of being, infected by scrapie must be put down unless its integration into the herd is authorised by the Chief Veterinary Officer. Moreover, it is prohibited, except with the permission of the District Veterinary Officer and provided that the following conditions are met:

- a. that all hay is stored in large plastic-wrapped rectangular or cylindrical bales;
- b. that cut turf is only used in areas inaccessible to sheep;

to move between farms in an infected area or risk zone anything capable of passing contaminating agents from one place to another, such as hay, hay pellets or straw, manure, cut turf or top soil. The use of abattoir waste and raw meat in the feed of fur-bearing animals is subject to the authorisation of the Chief Veterinary Officer. The Chief Veterinary Officer may order the halt of transports and the use of means of transport for the sensitive transport of animals and anything else capable of posing an infection risk, and may seek the assistance of the police for this purpose.

Wool may only be transported directly to the place of collection or processing. Transporting wool between farms is prohibited except with the permission of the Chief Veterinary Officer. Containers and packaging used to transport wool be not be reused.

Costs incurred in complying with the provisions of this Article shall be borne by each relevant party.

Article 5

Where a scrapie infection is suspected, the Minister of Agriculture may, on the proposal of the Chief Veterinary Officer, order sheep to be maintained in isolation for short or long periods of time. The Chief Veterinary Officer may issue a ban on the transport of sheep within a quarantine zone, between municipalities and/or between individual farms where this is considered to be an effective way to counter the spread of scrapie. The Chief Veterinary Officer may moreover order sheep to be identified with special colour markings in regions where an infection has been detected or is suspected. The cost of such markings shall be borne equally by the Treasury and the relevant municipality. Furthermore, the Chief Veterinary Officer may order specific control measures to be carried out, including disinfection, treatment with drugs, immunisation, etc., as needed and as considered appropriate in each case, at the cost of the relevant party.

Article 6

Measures must be taken to coordinate the mandatory rounding-up of sheep within and between regions. Public enclosures used for the mandatory and supplementary rounding-up and sorting of sheep must have facilities to isolate animals that are, or are suspected to be, infected. Line-strays, and any other sheep exhibiting suspicious behaviour when being rounded up in mountain pastures, driven in a flock or kept in a herd, must be isolated immediately and sent directly for slaughter, or put down on the spot where necessary. The District Veterinary Officer may decide, with the approval of the Chief Veterinary Officer and on the proposal of the relevant Municipal Council, to slaughter sheep discovered away from their normal summer pastures in autumn, and any other sheep capable of posing an infection risk. The heads of such sheep must be submitted for testing, as must any other samples as directed by the District Veterinary Officer. The relevant owner and the District Veterinary Officer must be notified of any such killing of sheep as the first opportunity. Carcasses must be buried deep or covered with a thick layer of stones, and the location must be identified or marked so that it

can easily be found later. When deciding on a place to bury the carcass, the opinion of the relevant local health inspection authority must be sought, in accordance with Article 13 of Act No 25/1993 on animal diseases and measures to control them, as amended.

Sheep from infected farms and specially marked sheep must be separated from other sheep in a special fold.

Responsibility for the implementation of the first and second paragraphs rests with the relevant Municipal Council, the leader of the sheep gathering, the manager of the sheepfold, and the local sheriff, and with farmers in general as far as the gathering of sheep within the borders of each individual farm.

Article 7

The Chief Veterinary Officer may order the inspection and sampling of sheep for the purpose of examining the spread of scrapie, and have sheep that have fallen sick or are suspected of being infected put down at any time of the year. Sheep owners must assist in such inspections and testing without being entitled to a fee. The putting down of sheep should take place after consulting with the District Veterinary Officer and be compensated in accordance with Section IV. Any instructions given by the District Veterinary Officer or the Chief Veterinary Officer in this respect must be complied with.

For the purposes of scrapie controls, sheep owners must every year send a normal number of adult sheep for slaughter; alternatively, they must send the heads of any adult sheep put down or destroyed to the District Veterinary Officer.

Article 8

Where there is reasonable suspicion of scrapie, or an outbreak of scrapie has been confirmed, on at least one farm the Chief Veterinary Officer may negotiate the culling of all sheep held at the relevant farm(s) or, where appropriate, in a wider region, where this is deemed necessary in order to ensure the success of such measures. When sheep are culled by reason of a scrapie infection, a written contract should be drawn up regarding every aspect of the culling, a sheep-free period at the farm in question, and the compensation to be paid. The owner of the sheep shall have the responsibility for transporting the animals to the place of slaughter, and for transport and slaughtering costs. This may become a factor in any negotiations, cf. Article 15, third paragraph.

Where no agreement pursuant to the first paragraph can be reached, the Minister of Agriculture may, on the proposal of the Chief Veterinary Officer, order all sheep held on an infected farm, or in a specified area, to be culled and stipulate a sheep-free period, for the purpose of countering the spread of the disease.

Article 9

On farms where scrapie has been detected in the previous 10 years, all persons who enter houses where sheep are kept must be made aware of the infection risk. The measures necessary to prevent humans from spreading the disease must be implemented. The Chief Veterinary Officer shall make warning signs available for this purpose. The installation of the signs shall be supervised by the District Veterinary Officer. Sheep shears, earmarkers, syringes and other technical equipment contaminated through contact with sheep, or potentially having been exposed to contaminating agents in other ways, in an infected area, may not be brought into a non-infected area for use in agriculture except accompanied by a certificate of adequate disinfection, issued by the District Veterinary Officer. Anyone moving equipment for agricultural use between quarantine zones, infected areas, risk zones or non-infected areas must obtain the District Veterinary Officer's permission and a certificate of adequate disinfection. Such equipment, and other equipment contaminated through contact with sheep in infected areas, must be disinfected as directed by the District Veterinary Officer after use in each individual location/farm.

Sheep culled by reason of a scrapie infection or a suspicion thereof must be destroyed by burning or burying the carcasses. The carcasses must be disposed of in a manner to avoid any risk of spreading transmissible agents or other harmful substances. When burying carcasses, the opinion of the relevant local health inspection authority must be sought. Similarly, the Chief Veterinary Officer may order the destruction after slaughtering of heads, viscera and other dangerous tissues from sheep and other species of animal on farms suspected of being infected.