

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9296, May 12, 2004]

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE MEAT INSPECTION SYSTEM IN THE COUNTRY, ORDAINING FOR THIS PURPOSE A "MEAT INSPECTION CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as "The Meat Inspection Code of the Philippines."

**CHAPTER I
DECLARATION OF POLICY AND DEFINITIONS**

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is hereby the policy of the State:

- a. to promulgate specific policies and procedures governing the flow of food animals, meat and meat products through the various stages of marketing and the proper preservation and inspection of such products;
- b. to ensure food security and provide safety and quality standards for consumer products, related to agriculture to assure the protection of the public against unreasonable risks of injury and hazards to health;
- c. to support local government units in their endeavor to be self-reliant and to continue exercising the powers and discharging the duties and functions currently vested upon them;
- d. to strengthen and harmonize various issuances on meat establishment operations and meat inspection and at the same time create a favorable climate of investment to encourage the meat and poultry industry to put up world-class meat establishments;
- e. to promote the application of risk analysis based on accepted scientific methodology on applied food safety standards so as to assure a safe and wholesome meat supply;
- f. to support the development of the livestock and poultry industry and promote animal health by preventing the entry of disease-carrying animals, and surveillance of zoonotic and reportable diseases in meat establishments; and
- g. to strengthen existing rules and regulations governing meat importation to make them comprehensive, clear and transparent and ensure the safety and quality of imported meat and meat products through inspection and documentation.

SEC. 3. *Principles and Objectives.* — The State shall ensure the protection of human and animal health against direct and indirect hazards, and in particular the protection of:

- a. Consumers against zoonotic diseases, meat-borne infection, intoxication and hazards associated with residue from treatment or exposure of the slaughter

- animal;
- b. Meat handlers against occupational zoonoses;
- c. Livestock against the spread of infections, intoxication and other diseases or socioeconomic importance as detectable at meat inspection and as consistent with the relevant animal health regulations; and
- d. Consumers and the meat processing industry against economic losses from meat of inferior quality or abnormal properties.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* — As used in this Code, the following terms, words and phrases shall be construed to mean as follows:

1. *Abattoir or Slaughterhouse* — premises that are approved and registered by the controlling authority in which food animals are slaughtered and dressed for human consumption.
2. *Accredit* — the power of the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS) to give authority to (a) any meat establishment engaged in the slaughtering operation, preparation, processing, manufacturing, storing, or canning of meat and meat products for commerce; (b) any importer, exporter, broker, trader or meat handler; (c) any meat vehicle or conveyance; and (d) any person, firm, corporation as provided of government services such as independent or third party service providers, or independent inspection or audit agencies.
3. *Adulterated* — carcasses, or any part thereof, whether meat or meat product under one or more of the following categories:
 - a. if it bears or contains any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render it injurious to health of the public; but in case the substance is not an added substance, such meat and meat product shall not be considered adulterated under this clause if the quantity of such substance does not ordinarily render it injurious to health of the public;
 - b. if it bears or contains any added poisonous or deleterious substance other than one which is (i) a pesticide chemical in or on a raw agricultural commodity, (ii) a food additive, (iii) a color additive, for which tolerances have been established and it conforms to such tolerances;
 - c. if it consists in whole or in part of a filthy, putrid or decomposed substance, or if it is otherwise unfit for human consumption;
 - d. if it has been prepared, packed or held under unsanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated with filth or whereby, it may have been rendered injurious to the health of the public;
 - e. if it is, in whole or in part, the product of a diseased animal or of an animal which has died other than by slaughter;
 - f. if its container is composed, in whole or in part, of any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render the contents injurious to public health;
 - g. if it has been intentionally subjected to radiation, unless the use of the radiation was in conformity with an existing regulation or exemption;
 - h. if any valuable constituent has been in whole or in part omitted or abstracted therefrom; or if any substance has been substituted, wholly or in part or if damage or inferiority has been concealed in any manner, or if any substance has been added thereto or mixed or packed therewith so

- as to increase its bulk or weight, or reduce its quality or strength, or make it appear better or of greater value than it is;
 - i. if it has not been prepared in accordance with current acceptable manufacturing practice as promulgated by the Secretary by way of regulations; or
 - j. if it has passed its expiry date.
4. *Board* — the Meat Inspection Board of the NMIS as created under Section 6 hereof.
 5. *Canning* — the preservation of meat in hermetically sealed containers.
 6. *Capable of Use as Human Food* — shall apply to any carcass, or part or product of a carcass, of any animal unless it is denatured or otherwise identified as required by regulations prescribed by the Secretary to deter its use as human food, or it is naturally inedible by humans.
 7. *Carcass* — the body of any slaughtered animal after bleeding and dressing.
 8. *Commerce* — meat trade between a province within the Philippines and any place outside thereof.
 9. *Controlling Authority* — the official authority charged by the government with the control of meat hygiene and meat inspection.
 10. *Deputation* — the authority of the NMIS to allow inspectors and meat control officers employed by the local government units to perform the duties of an inspector or meat control officer of the NMIS.
 11. *Disease or Defect* — a pathological change or other abnormality.
 12. *Firm* — any partnership, association, or other unincorporated business organization.
 13. *Fit for Human Consumption* — meat that has passed and appropriately branded by an inspector as safe and wholesome and in which no changes due to disease, decomposition or contamination have subsequently been found.
 14. *Fresh Meat* — meat that has not yet been treated in anyway other than by modified atmosphere packaging or vacuum packaging to ensure its preservation except that if it has been subjected only to refrigeration, it continues to be considered as fresh.
 15. *Food Animal* — all domestic animals slaughtered for human consumption such as but not limited to cattle, carabaos, buffaloes; horses, sheep, goats, hogs, deer; rabbits, ostrich and poultry.
 16. *Inspected and Passed* — a condition wherein the carcasses or parts of carcasses so marked have been inspected and found to be safe, wholesome, and fit for human consumption.

17. *Inspected and Condemned* — a condition wherein the carcasses or parts of carcasses so marked have been inspected and found to be unsafe, unwholesome and unfit for human consumption.
18. *Inspection* — an act by an official inspector to ensure compliance with rules and regulations including but not limited to humane handling of slaughter animals, ante- and post-mortem inspection, quality assurance program, hygiene and sanitation program, good manufacturing program, sanitation standard operating procedures, hazard analysis critical point program, residue control program on any meat and meat product, meat establishment facilities, transport vehicles and conveyance.
19. *Inspector* — a professionally qualified and properly trained officer, duly appointed by the NMIS or the local government unit for meat inspection and control of hygiene under the supervision of a veterinary inspector.
20. *Label* — a display of written, printed, or graphic matter upon the immediate container (not including package liners) of any article.
21. *Meat* — refers to the fresh, chilled or frozen edible carcass including offal derived from food animals.
22. *Meat Broker* — any person, firm or corporation engaged in the business of buying or selling carcasses, parts of carcasses, meat, or meat food products of food animals on commission, or otherwise negotiating purchases or sales of such articles other than for his own account or as an employee of another person, firm, or corporation.
23. *Meat Establishment* — premises such as slaughterhouse, poultry dressing plant, meat processing plant, cold storage, warehouse and other meat outlets that are approved and registered by the NMIS in which food animals or meat products are slaughtered, prepared, processed; handled, packed or stored.
24. *Meat Inspection System* — a system to ensure the safety and quality of meat and meat products for human food including but not limited to humane handling of slaughter animals, ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection, Quality Assurance Program, Hygiene and Sanitation Program, Good Manufacturing Practices, Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point Program, and Residue Control Program of a country. It covers regulatory activities such as registration, licensing, accreditation, and enforcement of regulations and supported by laboratory examination.
25. *Meat Product* — any product capable of use as human food which is made wholly or in part from any meat or portion of the carcass of any food animals, excepting products which contain meat or other portions of such carcasses only in a relatively small proportion or historically have not been considered by consumers as products of the meat industry, and which are exempted from definition as a meat product by the Secretary under such conditions as he may prescribe to assure that the meat or other portions of such carcasses contained in such product are not adulterated and that such products are not

represented as meat products.

26. *Misbranded* — this term shall apply to any carcass, part thereof, meat or meat product where one or more of the following circumstances as defined under Republic Act No. 7394 (Consumer Act of the Philippines) is present:

- a. if its labeling is false or misleading in any particular;
- b. if it is offered for sale under the name of another meat or meat product;
- c. if it is an imitation of another meat or meat product, unless its label bears, in type of uniform size and prominence, the word "imitation" and immediately thereafter, the name of the meat or meat product imitated;
- d. if its container is so made, formed, or filled as to be misleading;
- e. if in a package or other container unless it bears as label showing (1) the name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor; and (2) an accurate statement of the quantity of the contents in terms of weight, measure, or numerical count: *Provided*, That under clause (2) of this subparagraph (e), reasonable variations may be permitted, and exemptions as to small packages shall be established, by regulations prescribed by the Secretary;
- f. if any word, statement, or other information required or under authority of this chapter to appear on the label or other labeling is not prominently placed thereon with such conspicuousness (as compared with other words, statements, designs, or devices, in the labeling) and in such terms as to render it likely to be read and understood by the ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase and use;
- g. if it purports to be or is represented as a meat or meat product for which a definition and standard of identity or composition has been prescribed by regulations of the Secretary under this title unless (1) it conforms with such definition and standard, and (2) its label bears the name of the meat or meat product specified in the definition and standard and, insofar as may be required by such regulations, a common names of optional ingredients (other than spices, flavoring, and coloring) present in such meat product;
- h. if it purports to be or is represented as a meat or meat product for which a standard or standards of fill of container have been prescribed by regulations of the Secretary under this title and it falls below the standard of fill of container applicable thereto, unless its label bears, in such manner and form as such regulations specify, a statement that it falls below such standard;
- i. if it is not subject to the provisions of subparagraph (g), unless its label bears (a) the common or usual name of the meat product, if any there be, and (b) in case it is fabricated from two or more ingredients, the common or usual name of each such ingredient; except that spices, flavorings, and colorings may, when authorized by the Secretary, be designated spices, flavorings, and colorings without naming each: *Provided*, That to the extent that compliance with the requirements of clause (b) of this subparagraph (i) is impracticable, or results in deception or unfair competition, exemptions shall be established by regulations promulgated by the Secretary;
- j. if it purports to be or is represented for special dietary use, unless its label bears such information concerning its vitamin, mineral, and other dietary properties as determined by the Secretary, and by regulations