

**[NMIS D.A. Administrative Circular No. 12, S.
2015, June 02, 2015]**

**UPDATED RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE
ALLOCATION, IMPORTATION, AND UTILIZATION OF FRESH
FROZEN BUFFALO MEAT FROM INDIA**

Adopted: 02 June 2015

Date Filed: 27 July 2015

WHEREAS, it shall be the utmost objective of the Government to protect its borders and territories from the entry, establishment and spread of animal diseases that may be introduced by the importation of disease-carrying, contaminated, and/or adulterated meat and/or meat products, which endanger the lives and safety/health of the consuming public and which could pose risk to human and animal health and life and potentially cause serious economic consequences;

WHEREAS, conditions are established by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) to allow importation of livestock from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) infected countries or zones in compliance with the guidelines set in Terrestrial Animal Health Code (TAHC) by the OIE to manage risk of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) from entering the country since India is not yet recognized as an FMD-free country or zone;

WHEREAS, Chapter 8.7, Article 8.7.29 of the TAHC, 2014 by the OIE recommends imported meat and meat products from FMD infected countries be subjected to heating to a minimum core temperature of seventy degrees Centigrade (70°C) for at least thirty (30) minutes;

WHEREAS, the temperature requirement for the utilization of IBM sets an important prerequisite for its processing, hence making it a critical control point (CCP) in the manufacture of meat products utilizing IBM;

WHEREAS, Section IV.A.11.a.3 of DA-Administrative Order No. 9, series of 2013 prescribes the mandatory HACCP certification of all products utilizing Indian Buffalo Meat so as to adhere to the food safety requirement;

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Government to issue a comprehensive and transparent set of rules, regulations and standards governing the importation of meat and meat products and to facilitate trade without compromising food safety and quality;

WHEREAS, the presence of Indian Buffalo Meat (IBM) in domestic markets manifest unauthorized distribution and trade in violation of existing Department of Agriculture (DA) rules and regulations;

WHEREAS, the DA Inter-Agency Team, through Special Order No. 317 Series of 2013, was created to improve risk management measures and rationalize the importation and utilization of Indian buffalo meat;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, PROCESO J. ALCALA, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, by the power vested in me, do hereby issue this Order providing the updated guidelines governing the allocation, importation and utilization of Indian buffalo meat.

SECTION 1 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms and phrases as used in this Order shall refer to:

- 1.1 **Accreditation** – the authority of DA to evaluate firms and establishments based on a set of criteria with the objective of providing eligibility to conduct/ undertake specified activities.
- 1.2 **Accredited Meat Importer** – any natural or juridical person accredited by DA as eligible importer of meat and/or meat products for its own use, processing, wholesale and/or retail distribution.
- 1.3 **Accredited Meat Importer Processor (MIP)** – an accredited meat importer which operates an NMIS-accredited meat processing plant to produce meat products, including the utilization of buffalo meat from India strictly for their own processing requirements and not for trading purposes.
- 1.4 **Application Form** – a document to be filled up by an MIP applying for IBM allocation to be submitted to the Interagency Technical Committee (IATC). At the back of the application form is a declaration of the applying MIP duly notarized by a public attorney.
- 1.5 **Cold Storage Warehouse Inventory Report Form** – a document to be filled up by the National Meat Inspection Service - Meat Import and Export Section (NMIS-MIES) to be reported on a monthly basis to the Division.
- 1.6 **Country of Origin** – the country source of meat being exported. Conversely, when such product undergoes physical change e.g. re-packing or re-branding in another country, the country of origin refers to the source of the original product.
- 1.7 **DA-Trade System** – the back-office application (electronic system) of the Department of Agriculture that facilitates and enables electronic processing of various applications relative to importation of agricultural and fishery products, such as but not limited to, Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Clearance.
- 1.8 **Date of Manufacture** – date when the product is made or when it is produced as it is described in the specifications or technical literature.
- 1.9 **Electronic Request for Inspection (eRFI)** – an electronic system developed by the DA that enables electronic transmission of the Quarantine Inspection Report at the Port to DA regulatory agencies.
- 1.10 **Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)** – a severe, highly contagious viral disease of livestock with significant economic impact. The disease affects cattle and swine as well as sheep, goats, and other cloven-hoofed ruminants. The disease is characterized by fever and blister-like sores on the tongue and lips, in the mouth, on the teats and between the hooves. The disease causes severe production losses and while the

majority of affected animals recover, the disease often leaves them weakened and debilitated. The organism which causes FMD is an aphthovirus of the family Picornaviridae. There are seven strains (A, O, C, SAT1, SAT2, SAT3, Asia1) each one requiring a specific vaccine strain to provide immunity to a vaccinated animal.

- 1.11 **Foreign Meat Establishment (FME)** – a DA-accredited facility engaged in slaughtering and dressing of food animals, and processing, cutting, packing, and storing of meat and meat products, and recognized by the Competent Authority to export meat and meat products to the Philippines.
- 1.12 **FME of “Good Standing”** – a DA-accredited FME which has established its credibility by satisfactorily and consistently passing DA inspection and laboratory analysis for five (5) consecutive years.
- 1.13 **Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)** – a science-based system which identifies, evaluates, and controls hazards which are significant for food safety at critical points during a given stage in the food supply chain.
- 1.14 **Inspection** – the examination of food, food production facilities or establishment, including the management and production systems of food businesses. Herein contemplated are the examination of documents, finished product testing and registration, determination of the origin and destination of production inputs and outputs in order to verify compliance with legal requirements by Competent Authority mandated to perform food safety regulatory and/or enforcement functions.
- 1.15 **IBM Withdrawal Receipt (IWR)** – an inspection receipt to be issued by National Meat Inspection Service-Plant Officer (NMIS-PO) at the accredited Cold Storage Warehouse (CSW) where the IBM is being stored upon the withdrawal of the personnel authorized by the MIP.
- 1.16 **Indian Buffalo Meat (IBM)** – fresh frozen, deboned and deglanded edible part of carcass, excluding offals derived from buffalo in India intended for export to the Philippines.
- 1.17 **Interagency Technical Committee (IATC)** – a group of DA officers tasked to provide guidance to the Inter-Agency Technical Working Group relative to improving risk measures and rationalizing the importation and utilization of Indian Buffalo Meat.
- 1.18 **Interagency Technical Working Group (IATWG)** – a group of DA personnel responsible for the review of rules and regulations pertaining to IBM importation and utilization under the guidance of the IATC.
- 1.19 **Label** – the display of written, printed or graphic matter upon the immediate container, tag, literature or other suitable material affixed thereto for the purpose of giving information such as name of product and quantity, name and address of manufacturer, packer, or distributor, country of origin, ingredients, attributes, directions for use, specifications, and such other information as may be required by law or regulations.
- 1.20 **Meat Processing Plant (MPP)** – a meat establishment facility in which meat are subjected to methods of manufacture and preservation.
- 1.21 **National Veterinary Authority (NVA)** – refers to the national organization recognized by the World Trade Organization (WTO) as the responsible body for establishing the animal health measures based on OIE Animal Health Code and/or meat and meat products quality and safety measures based on Codex Standards. (A.O. No. 26 s.2005)
- 1.22 **Office International des Epizooties (OIE)/World Organisation for Animal Health** – an intergovernmental organization responsible

for improving animal health worldwide. It is recognized as a reference organization by the World Trade Organization (WTO).

- 1.23 **Port of Entry** – a place where imported goods may be lawfully received into the Philippines subject to official inspection and supervision.
- 1.24 **OIE-Terrestrial Animal Health Code (OIE-TAHC)** – the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (the Terrestrial Code)* sets out standards for the improvement of animal health and welfare and veterinary public health worldwide, including standards for safe international trade in terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees) and their products. The health measures in the *Terrestrial Code* should be used by the veterinary authorities of importing and exporting countries to provide for early detection, reporting and control agents pathogenic to animals or humans, and to prevent their transfer via international trade in animals and animal products, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers to trade.
- 1.25 **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures** – defined as measures applied (a) to protect human or animal life from risks arising from additives, contaminants, toxins, or disease-causing organisms in their food (b) to protect human life from plant or animal carried diseases; (c) to protect animal or plant life from pests, diseases, or disease-causing organisms; and (d) to prevent or limit other damage to a country from the entry, establishment or spread of pests. This also includes SPS measures taken to protect the health of fish and wild fauna, as well as of forests and wild flora.
- 1.26 **SPS Import Clearance** – refers to the document being issued by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) prior to importation indicating that based on readily available information: (a) the source/s of meat and/or meat products are free from relevant diseases/contaminations; and (b) the accreditations of both the importer and the FME (exporter) are in good standing. It also prescribes the conditions and risk management measures necessary in the conduct of importation that are to be observed by the importer, exporter, and the NVA at the country of origin.
- 1.27 **Utilization Report Form** – a document to be accomplished by MIP to be submitted on the fifth (5th) day of the succeeding month to the IATWG. This record shall be a requirement in their renewal for the Eligibility Certificate to Import IBM for the next semester.
- 1.28 **Veterinary Quarantine and Meat Inspection and Laboratory Certificate (VQMILC)** – refers to the certificate issued by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) Veterinary Quarantine Officer (VQO) and the National Meat Inspection Service-Plant Officer (NMIS-PO) to the Bureau of Customs (BOC); copy furnish to BAI and the importer, which certifies that the shipment of meat and/ or meat products have been subjected to and has passed veterinary quarantine documentation and meat inspection, and/or laboratory analysis and clearance.

SECTION 2 ACRONYMS

The following are the acronyms used in this Circular: BAI - Bureau of Animal Industry

BOC - Bureau of Customs
 CTC - Certified True Copy
 CPR - Certificate of Product Registration
 CSW - Cold Storage Warehouse
 DA - Department of Agriculture
 DAAC - Department of Agriculture Administrative Circular DAAO -
 Department of Agriculture Administrative Order eRFI -
 Electronic Request for Inspection
 FMD - Foot and Mouth Disease
 FME - Foreign Meat Establishment
 HACCP- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
 IATC - Interagency Technical Committee
 IATWG- Interagency Technical Working Group
 IBM - Indian Buffalo Meat
 IVC - International Veterinary Certificate
 IWR - Inventory Withdrawal Receipt
 MIP - Meat Importer Processor
 MPP - Meat Processing Plant
 NMIS - National Meat Inspection Service
 NMIS- - National Meat Inspection Service - Meat Import and
 MIES Export Section
 NMIS- - National Meat Inspection Service - Plant Officer
 PO
 NVA - National Veterinary Authority
 OIE - Office International des Epizooties/World Organisation for
 Animal Health
 OIE - OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code
 TAHC
 OSEC - Office of the Secretary
 PO - Plant Officer
 RA - Republic Act
 RTOC - Regional Technical Operations Center
 SPS - Sanitary and Phytosanitary
 UCC - Utilization Clearance Certificate
 VO - Veterinary Officer Certificate
 VQO - Veterinary Quarantine Officer

SECTION 3

SCOPE AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

This Administrative Circular shall cover updated rules and regulations on allocation, importation and utilization of IBM.

3.1 Veterinary Requirements

The following conditions set herein are requirements provided by the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code by the World Organisation for Animal Health:

3.1.1 Source and Health Status of Buffaloes