



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Directorate F - Food and Veterinary Office
Director

DG(SANTE)/2014-7059-CN

Note on
the close-out of follow-up action for the audit on
Belgium
from 24 Nov 2014 to 03 Dec 2014
in order to evaluate the animal welfare controls in place at slaughter and during related operations



1. Summary of FVO Assessment of the Action Plan

Overall summary of assessment made on the Action Plan submitted by the Competent Authorities of Belgium on 09 Sep 2015 in response to report DG(SANTE)/2014-7059 - MR Final.

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. Special attention should be paid to recommendation No 4 : Belgium authorities committed to enforce water bath parameters after October 2015, but without giving further details. Previously, authorities were reluctant to enforce before 2017, when a research project in stunning is schedule to finish.

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4	<p>To ensure that waterbath stunning is carried out in accordance with the minimum currents laid down in table 2 in point 6(3) of Chapter II of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009. Recommendation based on conclusion No 47. Associated findings No 35 and No 36. Legal basis for this recommendation: Point 6(3) of Chapter II of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009.</p>	<p>A lot of slaughterhouses report problems with the application of the standards for water bath stunning according to Annex I of Regulation 1099/2009, either for reasons of meat quality or for religious reasons because of the possible irreversibility of the stun. Therefore, at the moment, small derogations to the parameters are allowed as long as the slaughterhouse operators can guarantee that the animals are sufficiently stunned, pending the results of a research project that's currently being carried out at the university of Ghent on the stunning of poultry and the application of the standards required by the Regulation 1099/2009. These results are expected by the end of 2017. When they are available the whole situation will be re-evaluated.</p> <p>The Brussels-Capital Region is not concerned by this recommendation, because there are no poultry slaughterhouses.</p> <p>Response from CA received on 09.09.2015: The competent authority will enforce the waterbath stunning parameters as required by Regulation 1099/2009. A meeting on this subject with the poultry slaughterhouses is planned for October 2015.</p>	<p>Priority:</p> <p>Overall: Satisfactory</p> <p>On 09.09.2015 the CA proposed a satisfactory response, but after October 2015 the CA should provide an action plan that ensures the enforcement of the minimum electrical parameters.</p> <p>The first proposed action was unsatisfactory as the CCA did not plan to take any enforcement measure to ensure that the waterbath stunning of non-religious slaughtered poultry is carried out in accordance with the minimum currents laid down in table 2 in point 6(3) of Chapter II of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009. This is a issue since EFSA reports that when using waterbath stunning parameters below those indicated in the Regulation, it is not possible to discern between stunned (and unconscious birds) and electrically immobilised birds.</p> <p>It should furthermore be noted that the parameters for electrical currents laid down in Table 2 of Chapter II of Annex I to this Regulation are considered to be the minimum required to ensure the animals are sufficiently stunned.</p> <p>This recommendation does not concern poultry slaughtered under religious rites, for</p>
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			<p>which Article 4(4) allows derogating from the requirements of Annex I.</p> <p>Proposed Action: For action by Unit F1</p> <p>Proposed Action Detail: Unit F1 may wish to request evidence showing that waterbath parameters are enforced (e.g. note to non-compliant slaughterhouses, note to official inspectors, etc.</p>
5	OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]	OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]	OUT OF SCOPE [Redacted]