

**Guidelines for Butcher shops**

**Simplification project**

**Veterinary Regulation Department**

**&**

**Environmental Health Department**

**Approved by the Food Safety Commission - 2018**

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## I. Scope

- Scope of the manual

These guidelines will assist operators of butcher shops to better understand their responsibilities and further assist them in providing a safer product to their consumers. The information in these guidelines will provide a tool useful to improve the day to day operations and how best practise can be applied to their butcher shop

- Scope of the project

The scope of the project is to provide operators of butcher shops with clear guidance on matters related to the operation of their business with regards to food safety.

The Government of Malta continues to encourage the reduction of unnecessary bureaucracy in its administrative processes through the implementation of more simplification measures across its different Ministries.

In line with the measure 112 of the OPM Simplification of Bureaucracy, The Environmental Health Directorate is being supported by the Veterinary Regulation Directorate; together have prepared the manual and guidelines for the production and sale of meat preparations.

## II. Glossary of terms

1. The following definitions laid down on Regulation 852/04 will apply:

- (a) "**food hygiene**", hereinafter called "hygiene", means the measures and conditions necessary to control hazards and to ensure fitness for human consumption of a foodstuff taking into account its intended use;
- (b) "**primary products**" means products of primary production including products of the soil, of stock farming, of hunting and fishing;
- (c) "**establishment**" means any unit of a food business;
- (d) "**competent authority**" means the central authority of a Member State competent to ensure compliance with the requirements of this Regulation or any other authority to which that central authority has delegated that competence; it shall also include, where appropriate, the corresponding authority of a third country;
- (e) "**equivalent**" means, in respect of different systems, capable of meeting the same objectives;
- (f) "**contamination**" means the presence or introduction of a hazard;
- (g) "**potable water**" means water meeting the minimum requirements laid down in Council Directive 98/83/EC of 3 November 1998 on the quality of water intended for human consumption 1;
- (h) "**clean water**" means clean seawater and fresh water of a similar quality;
- (i) "**wrapping**" means the placing of a foodstuff in a wrapper or container in direct contact with the foodstuff concerned, and the wrapper or container itself;
- (j) "**packaging**" means the placing of one or more wrapped foodstuffs in a second container, and the latter container itself;
- (k) "**processing**" means any action that substantially alters the initial product, including heating, smoking, curing, maturing, drying, marinating, extraction, extrusion or a combination of those processes;
- (l) "**unprocessed products**" means foodstuffs that have not undergone processing, and includes products that have been divided, parted, severed, sliced, boned, minced, skinned, ground, cut, cleaned, trimmed, husked, milled, chilled, frozen, deep-frozen or thawed;
- (m) "**processed products**" means foodstuffs resulting from the processing of unprocessed products. These products may contain ingredients that are necessary for their manufacture or to give them specific characteristics.

2. The definitions laid down in Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 shall also apply.

2.1 "**food** (or '**foodstuff**)" means any substance or product, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed, intended to be, or reasonably expected to be ingested by humans. 'Food' includes drink,

chewing gum and any substance, including water, intentionally incorporated into the food during its manufacture, preparation or treatment.

2.2. **'food business operator'** means the natural or legal persons responsible for ensuring that the requirements of food law are met within the food business under their control;

2.3 **'retail'** means the handling and/or processing of food and its storage at the point of sale or delivery to the final consumer, and includes distribution terminals, catering operations, factory canteens, institutional catering, restaurants and other similar food service operations, shops, supermarket distribution centres and wholesale outlets;

2.4. **'placing on the market'** means the holding of food or feed for the purpose of sale, including offering for sale or any other form of transfer, whether free of charge or not, and the sale, distribution, and other forms of transfer themselves;

2.5. **'risk'** means a function of the probability of an adverse health effect and the severity of that effect, consequential to a hazard;

2.6. **'risk analysis'** means a process consisting of three interconnected components: risk assessment, risk management and risk communication;

2.7. **'risk assessment'** means a scientifically based process consisting of four steps: hazard identification, hazard characterisation, exposure assessment and risk characterisation;

2.8. **'risk management'** means the process, distinct from risk assessment, of weighing policy alternatives in consultation with interested parties, considering risk assessment and other legitimate factors, and, if need be, selecting appropriate prevention and control options.

3. The definitions laid down in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 shall apply as well:

3.1 **"Meat"** means edible parts of the animals referred to in points 3.2 to 3.8, including blood.

3.2. **"Domestic ungulates"** means domestic bovine (including Bubalus and Bison species), porcine, ovine and caprine animals, and domestic solipeds.

3.3. **"Poultry"** means farmed birds, including birds that are not considered as domestic but which are farmed as domestic animals, with the exception of ratites.

3.4. **"Lagomorphs"** means rabbits, hares and rodents.

3.5. **"Wild game"** means:

– wild ungulates and lagomorphs, as well as other land mammals that are hunted for human consumption and are considered to be wild game under the applicable law in the Member State concerned, including mammals living in enclosed territory under conditions of freedom similar to those of wild game; and

– wild birds that are hunted for human consumption.

3.6. **"Farmed game"** means farmed ratites and farmed land mammals other than those referred to in point 3.2.

3.7. **"Carcase"** means the body of an animal after slaughter and dressing.

3.8. **"Fresh meat"** means meat that has not undergone any preserving process other than chilling, freezing or quick-freezing, including meat that is vacuum-wrapped or wrapped in a controlled atmosphere.

3.9. **"Offal"** means fresh meat other than that of the carcase, including viscera and blood.

3.10. **"Viscera"** means the organs of the thoracic, abdominal and pelvic cavities, as well as the trachea and oesophagus and, in birds, the crop.

3.11. **"Minced meat"** means boned meat that has been minced into fragments and contains less than 1% salt.

3.12. **"Meat preparations"** means fresh meat, including meat that has been reduced to fragments, which has had foodstuffs, seasonings or additives added to it or which has undergone processes insufficient to modify the internal muscle fibre structure of the meat and thus to eliminate the characteristics of fresh meat.

3.13. **"Meat products"** means processed products resulting from the processing of meat or from the further processing of such processed products, so that the cut surface shows that the product no longer has the characteristics of fresh meat.

The definitions laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 shall also apply.

1. **‘Animal by-products’ (ABP)** means entire bodies or parts of animals, products of animal origin or other products obtained from animals, which are not intended for human consumption, including oocytes, embryos and semen.

### *III. General Legal Requirements:*

The most important food hygiene regulations that your business has to follow are:

- > Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs
- > Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002 on general principles of food law
- > Regulation (EC) No. 1169/11 on the provision of food information to consumers
- > Regulation (EC) No. 1935/04 on food contact material
- > Regulation (EC) No. 1069/09 on animal by products
- > Regulation (EC) No. 2073/05 on microbiological criteria
- > Subsidiary Legislation 449.57 on Water intended for human consumption Regulations 16th January, 2009,
- > Legal Notice 17 of 2009, as amended by Legal Notice 242 of 2009 and Act XXV of 2015.

These set out the basic hygiene requirements for all the aspects of your business, including your premises and facilities and the personal hygiene of your staff.

You must put in place ‘food safety management procedures’ based on the principles of *HACCP* (hazard analysis and critical control point). You must also keep up-to-date documents and records relating to your procedures and review your procedures if you change what you produce or how you work. In practice, this means that you must have procedures in place to manage food safety ‘hazards’ in your business. You must write these procedures down, update them as needed and keep records that can be checked by your local authorities.

The regulations are designed to be flexible, so these procedures can be in proportion to the size of your business and the type of work you do. This means that many small businesses will have very simple procedures and records.

#### What is HACCP?

HACCP is a way of managing food safety. It is based on putting in place procedures to control hazards. It involves:> Identifying the ‘critical control points’ (CCPs) – these are the places you need to focus on to prevent hazards or reduce them to an acceptable level.

- > Putting in place procedures to make sure hazards are controlled at your critical control points.
- > Deciding what action you need to take if something goes wrong.
- > Making sure that your procedures are working.
- > Keeping appropriate records to show your procedures are working.

Some people think that HACCP is very complicated, but it doesn’t have to be. The important thing is to have food safety management procedures that are appropriate for your business.

#### What is a hazard?

A hazard is something that could compromise the safety of your food and therefore put consumers at risk of food poisoning. Food safety hazards can be:

-biological for example harmful bacteria, like when certain food is kept out of the fridge for too long and bacteria grow in it

-chemical, involving chemicals getting into food, e.g. cleaning products or pest control chemicals

-physical, involving objects getting into food, e.g. broken glass or pieces of packaging

Hazards can happen at any stage in your business –from taking deliveries to serving customers.

You can develop your own procedures (HACCP plan) based on the principles of HACCP, or alternatively you can use this pack produced by your local authorities.

### Registering your business

You must register your business premises with Food Safety Commission If you are going to open a new business premises, you must register it. If you have a business in more than one place, you need to register all of them and each one has to be considered as separate unit. You must also make sure the regional EHD always has up-to-date information about your premises including any significant changes to your business.

### Placing on the Market:

**As a Butcher shop, you can sell red meat cuts, white meat, mince-meat and meat preparations to the final consumer, or client, that visits your shop. It is prohibited to manufacture ready-to-eat foods such as meat products from a Butcher shop. However, these rules shall not apply to those butcher shops which are also cooking and serving meat in-house as a dine-in experience for customers after getting the necessary clearance from the Environmental Health Directorate and other Departments or Authorities involved in issuing permits for such operations.**

**It is prohibited to sell these meat cuts or meat preparations to another retail establishment (other shops, grocers, supermarkets, hotels, restaurants, etc) unless you have been granted an Approval as a Meat Cutting or Meat Preparation establishment by the Veterinary Regulation Directorate.**

**However, a Butcher shop shall be permitted to sell a MARGINAL quantity of meat cuts, poultry cuts, mincemeat and meat preparations to another retail establishment or catering establishment within the National territory only if the COMBINED quantity of such meat is <100kg per week. This type of retail to retail sale shall be restricted to red meat and white meat cuts, mincemeat and meat preparations only.**

### Your premises

Your premises include all of the rooms or buildings you use in your business.

The general requirements include:

1) you must keep your premises clean and maintained in good repair and condition.

2) The layout, design, construction, site and size of your premises must:

- Allow adequate maintenance, cleaning and/or disinfection.

- Avoid or minimise air-borne contamination (i.e. contamination carried in the air).

- Provide enough working space for you to carry out all tasks hygienically.

- Protect against the build-up of dirt, contact with toxic materials, shedding of particles into food and forming of condensation or mould on surfaces.

- Allow good food hygiene practices, including protection against contamination and, in particular, pest control.

- Provide, where necessary, suitable conditions for handling and storing food while keeping it at appropriate temperatures. Those temperatures should be monitored and, where necessary, recorded. It

is recommended that very large Butcher shops employ temperature- recording devices rather than a manual system to provide appropriate evidence of cold chain maintenance in line with the size and complexity of their business.

In relation to hand washing facilities and toilets the minimum legal requirements are:

- 1) An adequate number of flush lavatories, connected to an effective drainage system.
- 2) Toilets not opening directly into rooms where you handle food.
- 3) An adequate number of washbasins, suitably located and used only for cleaning hands.
- 4) Washbasins for cleaning hands with hot and cold running water, soap and materials for hygienic drying
- 5) Where necessary, a separate sink for washing food.

Other important requirements are related to the ventilation:

- a) You must have enough ventilation, either natural (e.g. opening windows or vents) or mechanical (e.g. extractor fans).
- b) Ventilation systems must be constructed to allow access to clean or replace filters and other parts.
- c) Toilets must have enough ventilation, either natural or mechanical.

You must have also adequate lighting, either natural (daylight) and/or artificial (electric light). Drainage facilities must be adequate for the purpose intended: they must be designed and constructed to avoid the risk of contamination.

You must provide adequate facilities for staff to change their clothes, where necessary. It is recommended that very large butcher shop businesses that employ a certain number of employees should provide adequately equipped changing rooms.

You must not store cleaning chemicals and disinfectants in areas where food is handled.

### **There are ‘special requirements’ for rooms where you prepare, treat or process food.**

The design and layout of the room must allow good food hygiene practices, including protection against contamination between and during tasks; floor surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. This means that floor surfaces need to be made of materials that are impervious (i.e. do not allow fluid to pass through), non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic, unless you can satisfy your local authority that other materials are appropriate and where appropriate, floors must allow adequate surface drainage.

The wall surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. This means that wall surfaces need to be made of materials that are impervious (i.e. do not allow fluid to pass through), non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic, and must be smooth up to a height appropriate for the work you do, unless you can satisfy your local authority that other materials are appropriate.

The ceilings (or, where there are no ceilings, the interior surface of the roof) and overhead fixtures must be constructed and finished in a way that prevents dirt from building up and reduces condensation, the growth of undesirable mould and the shedding of particles.

The windows and other openings must be constructed to prevent dirt from building up; windows and other openings (e.g. doors) that can be opened onto the outside must be fitted, where necessary, with insect-proof screens that can be removed easily for cleaning. Where open windows would cause contamination, windows must remain closed and fixed while you are producing food.

Doors must be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect: this means that the surface of doors needs to be smooth and non-absorbent, unless you can satisfy your local authority that other materials are appropriate.



The surfaces (including surfaces of equipment) in areas where food is handled, particularly those that are touched by food, must be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. This means that surfaces need to be made of materials that are smooth, washable, corrosion-resistant and non-toxic, unless you can satisfy your local authority that other materials are appropriate.

You must have an adequate supply of hot and cold water and adequate facilities, where necessary, for cleaning, disinfecting and storing utensils and equipment. These facilities need to be made of corrosion-resistant materials, and be easy to clean. You must have adequate facilities, where necessary, for washing food and every sink (or other facilities) for washing food must have an adequate supply of hot and/or cold water. The water must be potable (drinking quality). These facilities must be kept clean and, where necessary, disinfected.

Vehicles and/or containers used to transport food must be kept clean and maintained in good repair and condition, to protect food from contamination. They must be designed and constructed to allow adequate cleaning and/or disinfection. Items used to hold food (e.g. boxes) in vehicles and/or containers must not be used for transporting anything other than food where this may cause contamination. Where vehicles and/or containers are used for transporting different types of food at the same time, you must separate products effectively, where necessary and you must clean effectively between loads to avoid the risk of contamination. Food in vehicles and/or containers must be placed and protected in a way that minimises the risk of contamination. Vehicles and/or containers used for transporting food must be capable of keeping food at appropriate temperatures and allow those temperatures to be monitored.

All items, fittings and equipment that food touches must be: cleaned effectively and disinfected, frequently enough to avoid any risk of contamination; made of appropriate materials and kept in good order, repair and condition, in a way that minimises any risk of contamination; made of appropriate materials and kept in good order, repair and condition in a way that enables them to be kept clean and, to be disinfected except for non-returnable containers and packaging

#### Waste (ABP) :

You must remove food waste and other rubbish from rooms where food is present as quickly as possible, to avoid them building up. You must put food waste and other rubbish in containers that can be closed, unless you can satisfy the competent authority that other types of containers or systems of disposing of waste are appropriate. These containers must be of appropriate construction, kept in sound condition, be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. You must have adequate facilities for storing and disposing of food waste and other rubbish. Stores for waste must be designed and managed in a way that enables them to be kept clean and, where necessary, free of animals and pests. You must get rid of all waste in a hygienic and environmentally friendly way, in accordance with legislation. The waste must not be a direct or indirect source of contamination (e.g. touching surfaces that food is prepared on, or attracting pests). Most organic waste generated by your butcher shop is considered as animal by product (ABP).

#### What are Animal By-Products?

Animal By-Products (ABP) are entire bodies or parts of animals or products of animal origin not intended for human consumption. A legal definition of ABP is given in Regulation (EC) No. 1069/2009. There are three categories of ABP: category 1 are considered high risk waste, category 2 are considered medium risk waste and the category 3 are the lower risk category and include what is usually generated by your butcher shop.

Under this legislation raw meat waste generated from premises such as butchers shops, manufacturing establishments, butchers sections within supermarkets falls under Category 3 Animal By-Products. This includes any trimmings, bone and blood waste and waste raw meat/ preparations as well as out of date raw meat/meat preparations or such products which are otherwise not intended for human consumption.

Category 3 is lower risk. It can be disposed of by various means including processing in a plant approved to handle category 3 ABP, used in the manufacture of pet food, in the oleochemical industry or in the manufacture of technical products such as fertilizer. Some category 3 materials can be composted or used in biogas production. However in Malta currently the only option is to incinerate at the Thermal Facility in Marsa. If the total amount of the category 3 ABP products generated does not exceed 20kg/week these can be disposed of with the domestic waste system.

#### What are the requirements for handling, storage and disposal of ABP?

The Regulation sets down certain restrictions for the handling, storage and disposal of these products, which can be summarised as follows:

1) Category 3 Animal By-Products must be identifiable and kept separate and stored and transported in sealed, covered, leak proof containers.

2) They may only be transported by a registered haulier or you can have your own registered vehicle to transport ABP by the ABP section of VRD.

3) During transportation, a label should be attached to the vehicle, container, carton or other packaging material, displaying the words “Category 3 - Not for human consumption”.

4) During transportation, a commercial document must accompany animal by-products which must be retained on file for a period of 2 years. Documentation must be kept by the persons consigning, transporting and receiving animal by-products.

5) Meat or meat trimmings, produced during on-site cutting and storage may be supplied directly to customers who want to use it for their pets. However, it must be clear, if labelled, that such meat or meat trimmings are fit for human consumption and not be labelled as ‘pet food’. They may be labelled as ‘trimmings’ or similar.

Potable water: you must have an adequate supply of potable (drinking quality) water, which is to be used whenever necessary to ensure that food is not contaminated. Where non-potable water (i.e. not of drinking quality) is used in your business, for example for fire control, steam production, refrigeration and other similar purposes, it must circulate in a separate, identified system. It must not connect with, or be able to get into, the systems for potable (drinking quality) water

Personal hygiene: every person working in a food-handling area must maintain a high level of personal cleanliness. He or she must wear suitable, clean clothing and, where necessary, protective clothing. Staff should keep hair tied back and wear a suitable head covering, e.g. hat or hairnet, when in contact with exposed food. Staff should not wear watches or jewellery when preparing food (except a wedding band). Staff should not touch their face and hair, smoke, spit, sneeze, eat or chew gum when they are handling food. You must not allow anyone to handle food or enter a food handling area if they: are suffering from, or carrying, a disease likely to be transmitted through food; have infected wounds, skin infections, sores; have diarrhoea. Anyone working in a food business, who is affected by any of these and is likely to come into contact with food through their work, must tell the business owner or manager immediately about the illness or symptoms and, if possible, what has caused them. Staff with diarrhoea or vomiting should not return to work until they have had no symptoms for 48 hours.

Good practices, such as effective hand washing is extremely important to help prevent harmful bacteria from spreading from people’s hands to food, work surfaces, equipment etc. Make sure that all staff that work with food wash their hands properly:

1) when entering the food handling area, e.g. after a break or going to the toilet;

- 2) before preparing food;
- 3) after touching raw food, such as meat/poultry, eggs and vegetables;
- 4) after handling food waste or emptying a bin.

You must not accept meat or ingredients, or any other material used in processing products, if they are known to be, or might reasonably be expected to be, contaminated in a way that means the final product would be unfit for human consumption

You must have adequate procedures to control pests and to prevent domestic animals (pets) from getting into places where food is prepared, handled or stored. Hazardous substances such as pesticides must be labelled adequately and stored in separate and secure containers.

### Microbiological Criteria

You also need to make sure that the food you make or sell complies with specific 'microbiological criteria'. These criteria put limits on the levels of certain bacteria in food. In practice, you as small food shop operator, shall test a reduced number of products, but you must be able to show that you have suitable food safety management procedures in place that control the levels of bacteria in food.

### Temperature

You must not keep food at temperatures that might cause a risk to health. The 'cold chain' must not be interrupted for foods that rely on temperature control for their safety. If you manufacture, handle and wrap processed food, you must have suitable rooms, large enough to store raw materials and processed materials separately, and enough separate refrigerated storage

### Freezing of Foodstuffs

As a general rule, foodstuffs should not be frozen more than once. Where products have been taken into your butcher shop chilled they should be assigned with a date of minimum durability or „use by“ date on either the product label or on the associated delivery documentation.

Some butchers may decide to freeze products so that they can be defrosted and sold at a later date. This practice is not recommended because it can cause confusion in establishing “use by“ dates. If you decide to engage in this activity, consumers should be advised that such products will not be suitable for home freezing, for example, by additional information on the product label in the display counter.

To avoid confusion, meats and poultry should ideally be bought in fresh and sold as such. Similarly, products brought into the premises in a frozen state should be sold as frozen.

Defrosting: if you defrost any food you must do this in a way that minimises the risk of harmful bacteria growing, or toxins forming, in the food. While they are being defrosted, you must keep food at a temperature that would not result in a risk to health. Where liquid coming from the defrosting food may present a risk to health (e.g. when defrosting raw meat) you must drain it off adequately. Following defrosting, food must be handled in a way that minimises the risk of harmful bacteria growing or toxins forming (e.g. keeping it in the fridge).

### Wrapping and packaging

If you wrap food as part of your business) then you must follow these requirements:

- 1) material used for wrapping must not be a source of contamination. It must be food grade in accordance with the relevant regulation. You must store wrapping materials so they are not exposed to a risk of contamination;
- 2) you must carry out wrapping in a way that avoids contamination of products. You must make sure, where appropriate, that the container is clean and not damaged, for example plastic crates.

### Training

Food businesses must make sure that any staff who handle food are supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene in a way that is appropriate for the work they do. They must all be in possession of a Food Handlers Certificate.

#### *IV. Good Manufacturing Practices*

Good food hygiene is essential for you to make or sell food that is safe to eat. So even though there might not be a specific legal requirement behind each tip in this section, it is still very important for you and your staff to understand what good food hygiene is and to follow this advice. Good food hygiene helps you to obey the law, to reduce the risk of food poisoning among your customers and to protect your business's reputation.

Good food hygiene is all about controlling harmful bacteria, which can cause serious illness. The four main things to remember for good hygiene are:

- > Cross-contamination
- > Cleaning
- > Chilling
- > Cooking

These are known as the 4 Cs. They will help you prevent the most common food safety problems.

##### 1) Cross-contamination

Cross-contamination is when bacteria are spread between food, surfaces or equipment. It is most likely to happen when raw food touches (or drips onto) ready-to-eat food, equipment or surfaces.

Cross-contamination is one of the most common causes of food poisoning. Do the following things to avoid it: clean and disinfect work surfaces, chopping boards and equipment thoroughly before you start preparing food and after you have used them to prepare raw food;; wash your hands before preparing food; wash your hands thoroughly after touching raw food; keep products belonging different risk categories separate (i.e. carcasses and finished meat preparations like bragioli) at all times, including packaging material.

##### 2) Cleaning

Effective cleaning gets rid of bacteria on hands, equipment and surfaces. So it helps to stop harmful bacteria from spreading onto food. You should do the following things:

- a) make sure that all your staff wash and dry their hands thoroughly before handling food;
- b) clean and disinfect food areas and equipment between different tasks, especially after handling raw food;
- c) clear and clean as you go. Clear away used equipment, spilt food etc. as you work and clean work surfaces thoroughly;
- d) use cleaning and disinfection products that are suitable for use in a food establishment, and follow the manufacturer's instructions;
- e) do not let food waste build up.

### 3) Chilling

Chilling food properly helps to stop harmful bacteria from growing. It is very important not to leave meat standing around at room temperature. So, make sure you do the following things: check chilled food on delivery to make sure it is cold enough: it means that the core temperature for the red meat must be below 7°C, for offal below 3°C and for poultry meat below 4°C; put food that needs to be kept chilled in the fridge straight away; cool cooked food ( see point 4 below) as quickly as possible and then put it in the fridge; keep chilled food out of the fridge for the shortest time possible during preparation; check regularly that your fridge and display units are at the right temperatures.

### 4) Cooking

Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria in food. However, no cooking of meat is allowed in a Butcher shop due to the high risk of cross-contamination. The only exception is the boiling of eggs for the preparation of the stuffed meat recipe commonly requested by consumers. It's very important that eggs, as all the other ingredients, are sourced from an approved supplier and that you cook them in an adequate and proper place. The eggs should be boiled only when necessary and they must be used as ingredients only after adequate cooling.

#### V. HACCP : Description of the processes

The products you are allowed to prepare and sell in your butcher shop are: meat cuts, minced meat, meat products and preparations coming from different species and intended to be used cooked by the final consumer. The production of marinated ready-to-eat meat such as carpaccio is forbidden.

Only a marginal amount of the total production can be sold by the butcher shop to restaurants, catering establishments and hotels. For Malta and Gozo this marginal amount is defined 100kg /week of combined meat preparation and meat cuts. The sale of a marginal amount of product from retail to retail can be authorized if it is just one step; that is, only if it sells the product to another retail shop that would, in turn, sell directly to the final consumer (i.e. retail-retail-consumer), including cases of butcher shops working in a 'franchise' chain of Butcher shops. For this specific case, every shop is considered as a separate retail unit.

All the incoming goods and the ingredients must arrive from approved establishments and the relevant documents must be kept in order to maintain the traceability 'from farm to fork'. As soon as the goods arrive into the shop, they must be checked (temperature, packaging, expire date, health mark/ identification mark, etc...) and as soon as possible stored according to the specific temperature requirements.

The meat that may be sold from your butcher shop is: beef, pork, ovine/caprine, horse, rabbit, chicken, turkey, wild/farmed games as well as all the edible offal of these species. The meat can be cut or minced, at the time you are serving a customer according to his/her request or previously. Products and preparations can be made previously and displayed in the counter fresh or frozen, such as stuffed meat, 'bagioli', marinated meat, maltese sausages (or different types of sausages) burgers, etc...

Note that rabbit meat must come from approved slaughterhouses otherwise, if not, it must be sold from 'local retail establishments' directly to the final consumer and the establishment shall be clearly marked as such (LN 165 of 2011).

When you are producing minced meat and meat preparations it is recommended that the raw materials used satisfy the following requirements:

The raw material used to prepare **minced meat** must meet the following requirements:

1. it must comply with the requirements for the fresh meat;
2. it must derive from skeletal muscle, including adherent fatty tissues;
3. it must not derive from scrap cutting, scrap, trimmings (other than whole muscle cutting), MSM, meat containing bone fragments or skin or meat of the head except for the masseters, the non-muscular part of the linea alba, the region of carpus and tarsus, bone scrapings and the muscles of the diaphragm (unless the serosa has been removed).

The raw material may be used to prepare **meat preparations** is coming from fresh meat and meat meet the requirements for the minced meat.

Unless you are authorized by the CA to bone immediately before mincing, frozen or deep-frozen meat used for the preparation of minced meat or meat preparations must be boned before freezing and it may be stored only for limited period.

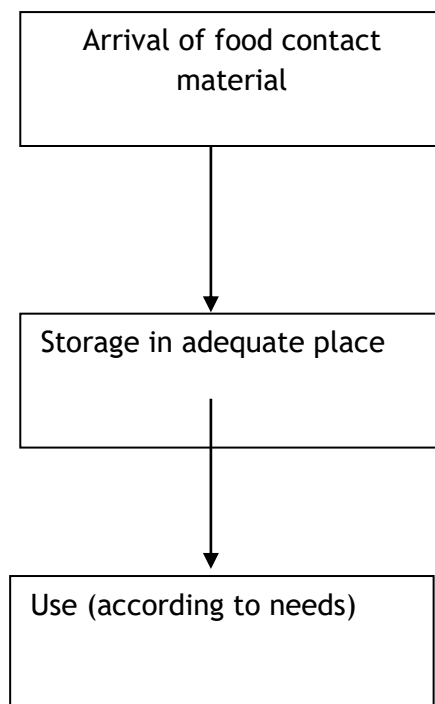
If **minced meat** is prepared from chilled meat it can be produced within **3 days** from the slaughter date for poultry meat; if minced meat is produced from different species than poultry, minced meat has to be produced within **six days** from the slaughter date, except for bone and vacuum-packed beef and veal (within 15 days).

Immediately after production, minced meat and meat preparations must be wrapped or packaged and chilled to an internal temperature of no more than 2°C for minced meat and 4°C for meat preparations or must be frozen at an internal temperature of no more than -18°C. It is strongly recommended that you keep this temperature during storage and transport.

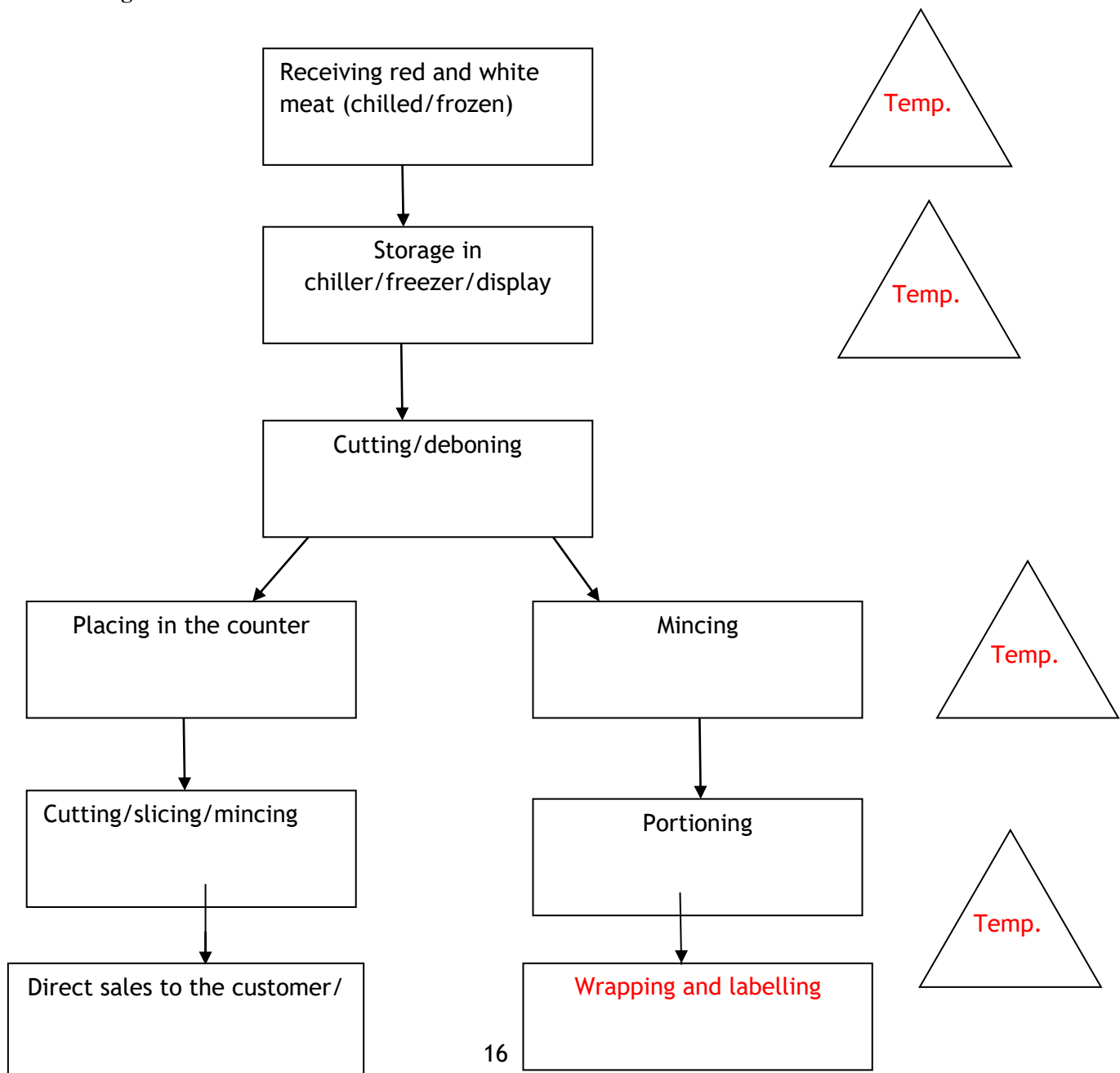
The wrapping material and all the material entering in to contact with food has to be certified as 'food grade' and a copy of this document must be always available in the shop.

The following flow diagrams will explain shortly the different processes (get together for category) step by step:

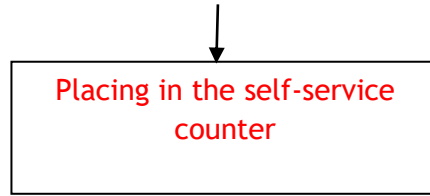
## 1. Food contact material



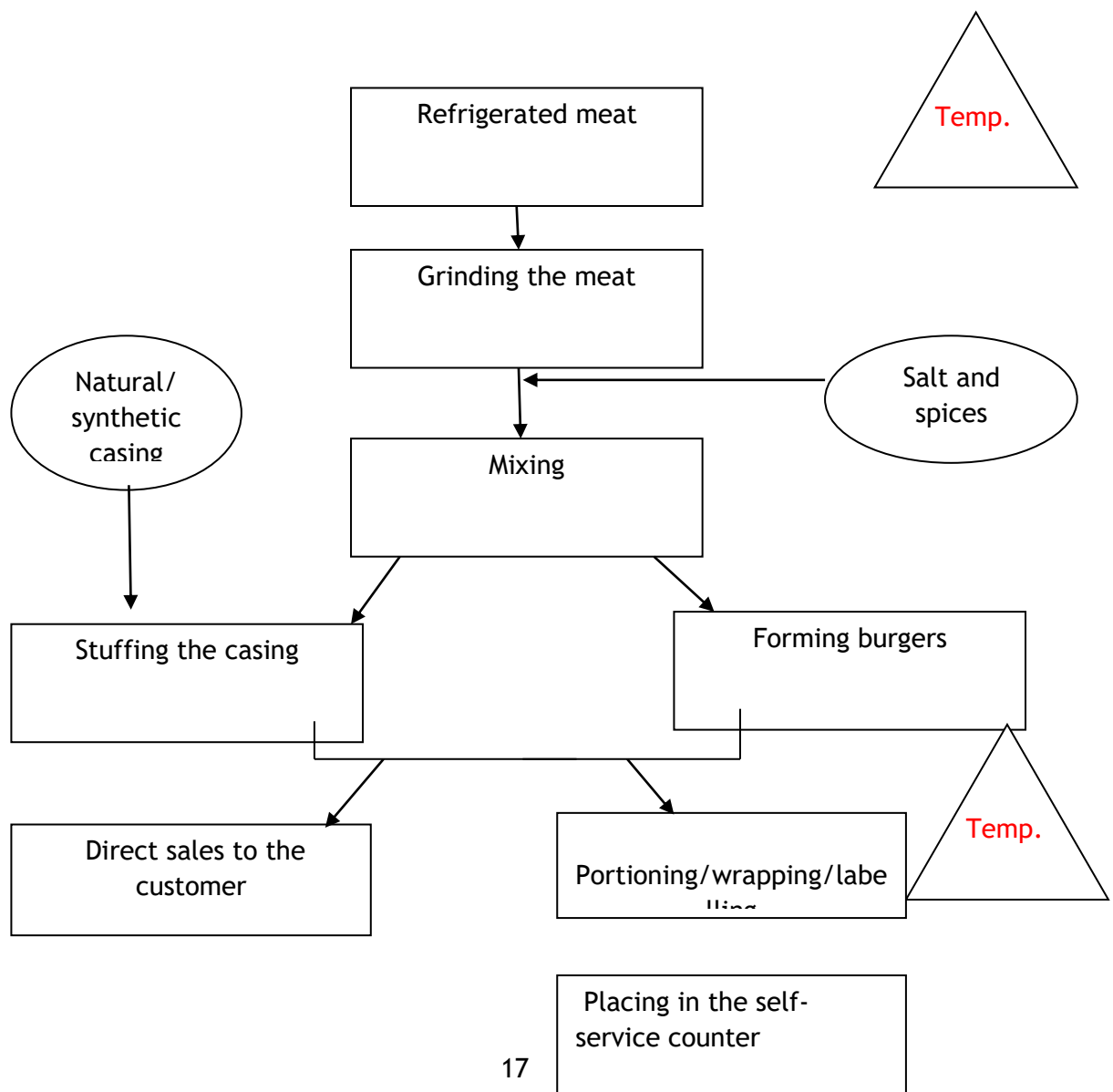
## 2. Flow Diagram Cuts/ Minced Meat



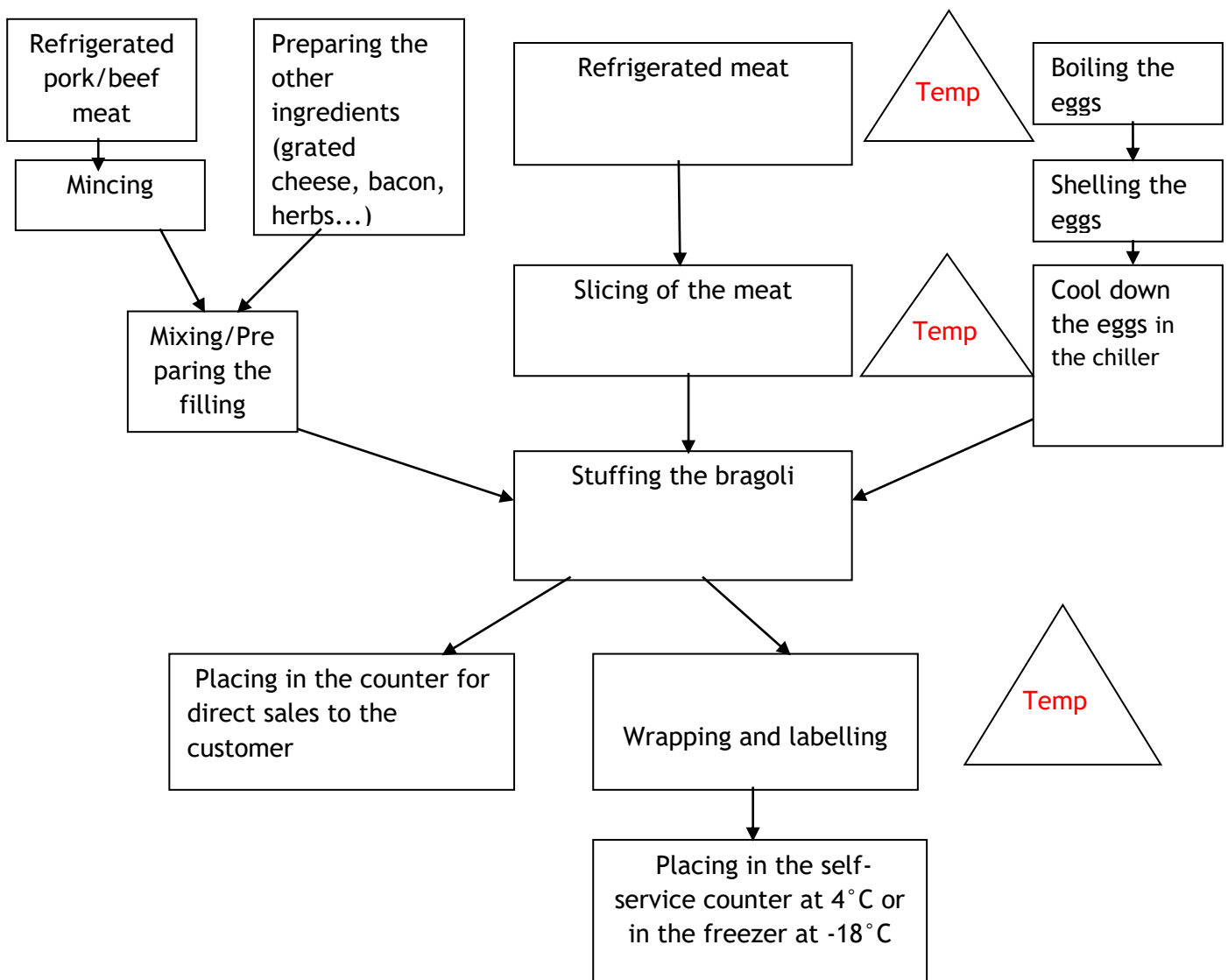




**3. Flow diagram for sausages/burgers.**



#### 4. Flow diagram for bragoli and other stuffed meat.







Generic hazard analysis for: Fresh/Frozen minced meat/burger (red meat).

| Process steps  | Hazard  | Target level/<br>Critical limit   | Monitoring Procedure  | Corrective action if standards are not met   | Records   |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| Reception of raw meat<br><br>CCP                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical, i.e. foreign bodies in the meat</li> <li>biological, i.e. growth of bacteria due to higher temp during transport</li> <li>chemical, residues of detergent</li> </ul> | Internal meat temperature $\leq +7^{\circ}\text{C}$ , red meat colour, fresh odour, no visible contamination, no foreign bodies no discoloration, not slimy, no other defects | Check purchase specification and supplier assurance.<br>Inspection of meat surfaces.<br>Check internal meat temperature | Reject delivery, if target levels not met  | Physical characteristics of meat received, certificate/documents including origin of the meat.<br>Meat temperature recordings |
| Storage in the chiller<br><br>(                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biological, growth of microorganisms due to increase of the temperature during storage</li> <li>Physical, such as foreign bodies</li> </ul>                                    | Red meat internal temperature $\leq +7^{\circ}\text{C}$ ; white meat $\leq +4^{\circ}\text{C}$<br><br>No foreign bodies   | Temperature control of chilling room and meat (core)<br><br>Maintaining the cold room                                   | Minor temperature deviation: Adjust chiller temperature<br>Major temperature deviation: Reject meat <sup>1</sup> | Temperature/time recordings of chiller.<br>Temperature recordings of meat<br><br>Maintenance records                          |
| Weighing and mixing of 'ingredients'<br><br>(burger) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical, foreign bodies in the spices</li> <li>Chemical i.e. residues of detergents on the scale</li> </ul>   | No foreign bodies in spices and additives; supplier assurance ingredients (salt, spices..)<br><br>Absence of detergents residues  | Check salt, spices and extenders for impurities (<1% salt for minced meat)<br><br>Cleaning records                      | Reject suspected batches of non-meat ingredients<br><br>Review of the cleaning procedures                        | Record of status and expiration dates for non-meat ingredients<br><br>Cleaning records  |

|   |  |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| Grinding<br><i>(burger/minced meat)</i>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biological, growth of bacteria if the cold chain is not respected</li> <li>Physical i.e. introduction of foreign bodies</li> </ul>  | Reduced time from the exit from the chiller of the meat and the mincing. Meat free of grossly abnormal tissues and post-dressing contamination/physical contamination  | Check period of product flow. Check for abnormal tissues and post-dressing contamination/physical contamination | Improvement in product flow. Discard meat parts with abnormal tissues, post-dressing contamination                                     | Product flow/temperature recording  |
| Mixing of meat with ingredients<br><i>(burger)</i>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biological i.e. growth of bacteria if the cold chain is not respected</li> </ul>  | No further increase of contamination. Period from grinding to completion of mixing/blending maximum 30 minutes. Temperature of meat/meat ingredients mix $\leq 2^{\circ}\text{C}$ (minced meat), or $\leq 4^{\circ}\text{C}$ | Check period of product flow. Check mix temperature   | Minor deviations: Adjust time/temperature regime. Major deviations: Reject batch   | Product flow/temperature recording  |
| Moulding<br><i>(burger)</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biological i.e. growth of bacteria if the cold chain is not respected</li> </ul>  | Carry out immediately after mixing. No significant product temperature increase  | Temperature/time control  | Increase process speed. Return mix to chiller if no immediate moulding   | Product flow/temperature recording  |
| Packaging<br><i>(burger/minced meat)</i>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biological, i.e. introduction of bacteria through the packing material</li> <li>Physical, i.e. introduction of foreign bodies</li> <li>Chemical, i.e. chemical contamination due to no food grade material</li> </ul> | Clean packaging materials and food grade guarantee   | Check packaging failures<br><br>No foreign bodies i.e. pieces of packing material                               | Adjust packaging machine in case of insufficient vacuum. Change of packaging material supplier   | Visual check of the packets<br><br>Records of packaging material certificates |
| Freezer/ Chiller storage<br><i>(burger/minced meat)</i><br><b>CCP</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biological, i.e. growth of bacteria if the cold chain is not respected and the storage temp increase</li> </ul>   | Storage temperatures: freezer $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$ at core of the products or $4^{\circ}\text{C}$ chiller for burgers, $2^{\circ}\text{C}$ for minced meat (core temperature)   | Continuous temperature check  | Rise of temperature: immediate identification and correction of temperature problems, transfer to alternative storage chiller/ freezer | Continuous chiller/freezer temperature records<br><br>Maintenance records     |

|  |  |  |  |                        |  |
|--|--|--|--|------------------------|--|
|  |  |  |  | if long-term problem   |  |
|  |  |  |  | Request of maintenance |  |

CCP = Critical Control Point

**Remarks:**

In the processing of this product there is no heat treatment included to reduce microbial contamination. The necessary heat treatment immediately prior to consumption, which is not part of the manufacturing process, is the only relevant measure to control potential contamination with pathogenic microorganisms. In order to minimize the risk of pathogenic microorganisms, special advice on the handling of the products before heat treatment and on the intensity of heat treatment must be available on the package.

- The core temperatures of red and white meat, as well as minced meat and meat preparations are set by the legislation, however if you intend to use ambient temperature for chillers and freezers you should decide ,as critical limits, the ‘temperature/time’ you intend to use in order to maintain the legal requirements of the core temperatures, according to your equipment and operations (i.e. you can choose -15°C for 30 min as critical limit for the freezer, assuring that the core temp of the meat will not increase)

## VI. Monitoring and Recording

### **a) INCOMING GOODS**

All the incoming goods must be checked before entering into your butcher shop and all the records related must be kept. All the goods must arrive from an authorized/approved establishment and the relevant documents must be maintained in order to assure the traceability. The visual checks to carry out include the check of the packaging, labelling, expire dates for example for the packed products and a check of the organoleptic characteristics for the loose goods (colour, odour, and so on); a check of the temperature of the incoming is to be carried out for all the products that has to be kept at a controlled temperature.

The records can be easily kept in a table like the table n. 1.

### **b) STORAGE TEMPERATURE**

All the products that must be kept at a controlled temperature must be stored accordingly and the temperature of the cold rooms must be registered daily (at least two times) for each cold room. Even if the use of data loggers for the continue recording of the temperature is not mandatory, it is highly recommended in order to demonstrate that the cold chain is properly maintained. This is especially important if you engage in the sale of meat preparations to other retail shops as in chapter V above (HACCP: Description of the process).

If you are going to record the temperature by hand you can use a table like table n.2.

### **c) NON COMPLAINCES**

To simplify the procedures for recording all the information related to Pest Controls, Maintenance, Cleaning only the non-compliances observed during the daily work can be recorded using a table like table n.3.



Table n.1: INCOMING GOODS

| Date | Product and Quantity<br>(pkts/kg) | Temperature | Visual check | Lot number | Expire date<br>(when applicable) | Signature |
|------|-----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
|      |                                   |             |              |            |                                  |           |
|      |                                   |             |              |            |                                  |           |
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Table n.2: TEMPERATURE

Chiller/Freezer n. ....

Week n.....

|           | Morning check | Evening check | Remarks | Signature |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------|-----------|
| Monday    |               |               |         |           |
| Tuesday   |               |               |         |           |
| Wednesday |               |               |         |           |
| Thursday  |               |               |         |           |
| Friday    |               |               |         |           |
| Saturday  |               |               |         |           |
| Sunday    |               |               |         |           |

Chiller/Freezer n. ....

Week n.....

|           | Morning check | Evening check | Remarks | Signature |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------|-----------|
| Monday    |               |               |         |           |
| Tuesday   |               |               |         |           |
| Wednesday |               |               |         |           |
| Thursday  |               |               |         |           |
| Friday    |               |               |         |           |
| Saturday  |               |               |         |           |
| Sunday    |               |               |         |           |

Chiller/Freezer n. ....

Week n.....

|           | Morning check | Evening check | Remarks | Signature |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------|-----------|
| Monday    |               |               |         |           |
| Tuesday   |               |               |         |           |
| Wednesday |               |               |         |           |
| Thursday  |               |               |         |           |
| Friday    |               |               |         |           |
| Saturday  |               |               |         |           |
| Sunday    |               |               |         |           |

Chiller/Freezer n. ....

Week n.....

|           | Morning check | Evening check | Remarks | Signature |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------|-----------|
| Monday    |               |               |         |           |
| Tuesday   |               |               |         |           |
| Wednesday |               |               |         |           |
| Thursday  |               |               |         |           |
| Friday    |               |               |         |           |
| Saturday  |               |               |         |           |
| Sunday    |               |               |         |           |

TABLE n.3: NON CONFORMITIES

| Date | Non-Conformity observed | Corrective Action | Completed Y/N | Remarks | Signature |
|------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------|-----------|
|      |                         |                   |               |         |           |
|      |                         |                   |               |         |           |
|      |                         |                   |               |         |           |
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|      |                         |                   |               |         |           |

## VII. MICROBIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

According to the size of the business, number of employees, number of rooms and/or kind of products you mainly produce, an adequate number of microbiological analysis should be carried out as verification of your HACCP plan.

If you are a very small family-run shop with just a room and a cold room, dispensing fresh and frozen meat cuts on request of your customers, only environmental swabbing of surfaces (spread throughout the year) are needed to verify your cleaning procedures. If your business is bigger, involving more employees or if you produce many different meat preparations, the risk linked with your activity is higher, especially if these items are sold to other retailers as per chapter V above (HACCP: description of the process). In this case your microbiological analysis plan should include testing your mince meat and meat preparations in line with Regulation (EC) No. 2073/05 on microbiological criteria.

If the combined total of Mince meat and meat preparation does not exceed 20 tonnes/week, there are no statutory frequencies for the above-mentioned testing.

The microbiological plan should then be submitted and endorsed by the Competent Authority time by time, according with the risk category of your business.

## VIII. LABELLING

The purpose of the labelling Regulation is to ensure that adequate information is provided to the consumer in relation to the origin of meat, and to be able to trace the source of the meat back to the farm in the event of a food safety incident. If you are selling Maltese or non-Maltese meat you must declare the country of origin at the point of sale, in addition to other required information.

The labels must be attached to individual pieces of meat or to their wrapping material. Where meat is not wrapped the information must be provided in written and visible form to the consumer at the point of sale. (This could be on a poster or a white board above/beside the meat counter).

### **Labelling loose foods or pre-packed food for direct sell to final consumer: information you must give**

You must show the following information on a label on the food or display it clearly where the food is put on sale:

- *the name of the food including his status (fresh/frozen)*
- any allergenic ingredients in the food
- *the ingredients declaration on meat preparations*
- *the preparation date and/or the 'use by date'*
- *storage temperature*
- *batch or lot number*
- *net weight*
- *name of the business*

You must provide information on allergens in food. This includes substances produced or derived from allergens or used in processing the food. According to the legislation, the allergens are the followings:

- cereals containing gluten, such as wheat (including spelt and khorasan wheat), rye, barley and oats
- crustaceans, for example prawns, crabs, lobster, crayfish
- eggs
- fish
- peanuts
- soybeans
- milk (including lactose)
- nuts (i.e. almonds, hazelnuts, pistachio nuts, pecan nuts, walnuts, Brazil nuts and macadamia or Queensland nuts)
- celery (including celeriac)
- mustard
- sesame seeds
- sulphur dioxide/sulphites, if they are more than 10 milligrams per kilogram or 10 milligrams per litre in the finished product
- lupin, including lupin seeds and flour
- molluscs, for example mussels, oysters, snails and squid

However some goods need to be labelled with additional information:

#### **1. Beef Labelling Requirements for Non Pre-packaged (loose beef)**

The information that must be displayed in your butcher shop for non-pre-packaged (i.e. loose) beef at the point of sale to the ultimate consumer must include the following:

(a) The Country of Origin.

This is used when the animal was born, reared and slaughtered in the same country e.g. „Origin Malta“ or when the country of birth, rearing and slaughter are not all the same, then they must be stated separately. *The country of rearing will be the country where the animal spent the longest period of time. Where an animal spent less than 30 days in a country, this country need not be stated.*

Example:

- Born in France
- Reared in Ireland
- Slaughtered in Ireland

followed by the name of the country in which the carcasses were cut up. Meat of animals born and/or raised and/or slaughtered in different countries must be clearly separated when displayed for sale. Information must be displayed in your butcher shop by such meats so as to allow the final consumer to distinguish easily between meats from different origins.

#### (b) The Batch Number or Traceability Code

This enables the beef to be traced back to an animal or group of animals from which it was derived. In addition, butchers who display loose cut meats for sale each day must record, along with the date, the following information and must provide it to consumers who request it:

- Approval No. of the Slaughterhouse
- The Approval No. of the Cutting Plant

## **2. Beef Labelling Requirements for Pre-Packed Beef**

Where you are selling pre-packed beef in your butcher shop directly to the ultimate consumer the following information must be provided on the product label:-

- (a) The Country of Origin.
- (b) The Batch Number or Traceability Code
- (c) The Approval No. of the Slaughterhouse
- (d) The Approval No. of the Cutting Plant

## **3. Meat of species different from bovine**

### **- Ovi-caprine, swine and poultry meat**

In order to inform the final consumer about the origin of the meat and in order to keep the traceability of the products you sell, it is important to maintain all the information regarding the origin of meat coming from swine, small ruminant and poultry. Any fresh, frozen or unprocessed meat from pigs, sheep, goats and poultry must show:

- the country in which the meat was reared, using the words ‘reared in ...’
- the country in which the meat was slaughtered, using the words ‘slaughtered in ...’

This meat must also have a batch code on the label to identify it.

For swine the mandatory information you should keep are linked with the age of the slaughtered pig: if it was >of 6 months.

### **-Horse meat**

No specific requirements are actually adopted for the origin of the horse meat, even if, as for all the other products/ ingredients you use, you should be able to trace back them.



#### 4. Beef Labelling Requirements for Loose Minced Beef/ Trimming

If you are selling loose minced beef in your butcher shop then you must display the following information for the mince at the point of sale:

- (a) The Country of Origin – where the State or States involved are not the State of Preparation
- (b) The Batch Number or Traceability Code
- (c) Where the minced beef/ trimming were prepared  
e.g. „Prepared in“ (Name of Member State or Third Country)
- (d) Member State/Third Country where the slaughter took place

Minced Beef labels may also contain one or more of the indications listed below:-

- The date on which the meat was prepared
- The approval number of the slaughterhouse at which the animal/animals were slaughtered and the Member States/Third Country in which the slaughterhouse is established
- The approval number of the cutting hall and the name of the Member States /third country in which the cutting hall is established
- Member State or Third Country of Birth

#### „Use by“ Dates

It is important that ready to eat foods are consumed within a safe period of time, and that appropriate „use by“ dates are adhered to.

For other products that may be packed in your butcher shop appropriate use by dates and cooking instructions should be provided on the label for consumers.

You can check the product specifications with your supplier for further information in this regard to establish the applicable „use by“ dates once packaging has been opened.

To give an adequate shelf life to your product you need to carry out a ‘shelf life study’; it is a scientific way to assure that the product is safe for a certain period of time. The durability can be determinate using literature studies or carrying out a series of microbiological tests starting from day1 to day x.

#### **Date of freezing**

You must show the date of freezing or first freezing (for products that have been frozen more than once) on frozen meat and frozen meat preparations, using the words ‘frozen on’ and give the date on which the food was first frozen. As per point ---- above, you must give consumers indications that certain meat may not be re-frozen.

**Note: It is highly recommended that Butcher shops selling a marginal quantity of minced meat and meat preparations to other retail outlets as per point V above, the labelling information should, at least, be placed on a label affixed to the bulk product.**