

To Pig Slaughterhouse Operators in England and Wales

11 December 2007

Reference:

Dear Pig Slaughterhouse Operator

DRAFT GUIDANCE ON FOOD CHAIN INFORMATION (FCI)

I wrote to you recently to inform you of the requirements for food chain information (FCI) which will apply from 1 January 2008, and about the MHS Collection and Communication of Inspection Results (CCIR) project. This letter is to tell you about changes that have been made to the draft guidance on FCI in response to comments received from the industry.

Previous inspection reports

One of the items of information that is required as FCI is 'relevant reports about previous ante- and post-mortem inspections of animals from the same holding of provenance'. We currently do not have sufficient information to make a judgement on the interpretation of 'relevant information', and will not have this until the new MHS CCIR system has been in place for the time needed to gather sufficient data.

In the case of pigs sent routinely from a production site to one slaughterhouse, the slaughterhouse operator will have, or will have access to (on the MHS 'Extranet'), reports of previous consignments. Checking these reports should therefore present little difficulty to operators.

In the case of producers who send pigs to more than one slaughterhouse, it is now apparent that, for data protection reasons, provision of these historical reports may present practical difficulties. **We have therefore decided to remove from the draft FCI**

guidance, for the time being, the requirement for producers to provide reports for the previous 3 consignments of pigs. Our intention is to analyse ante- and post-mortem inspection reports, as they become available, and their correlation with FCI, and to issue further guidance at a later date.

In the meantime, we encourage slaughterhouse operators to make use of historical inspection reports for each production site, where they are available, as part of their HACCP-based procedures for the acceptance of animals for slaughter.

Pigs showing signs of abnormality

The draft guidance has been amended to bring the section about pigs showing signs of abnormality (which required 'Schedule 18' declarations under the previous legislation) into line with the current guidance in the Meat Industry Guide.

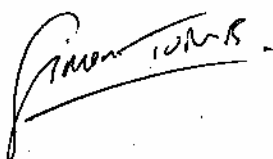
A copy of the amended draft guidance is enclosed. An electronic version in Word format which you can download and customise for your own use can be found at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/meatregsguid/fcipigslaughter>

The BPEX system for electronic information exchange will be changed accordingly. Please note that, in most circumstances, only the information on page 2 of the draft guidance will be required for each consignment of pigs. The information about the production site on page 1 is required as a 'one off' – with up-dating as necessary. The additional information on page 3 will be required only as an exception when applicable. Please contact me if you have any queries about the implementation of the requirements for food chain information.

As before, I am copying this to a number of industry representative bodies.

Yours sincerely



SIMON TUDOR

Meat Hygiene & Veterinary Division