



**GAMBIAN STANDARD ON THE CODE OF HYGIENIC PRACTICES
FOR MEAT**

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Table of Content

1. INTRODUCTION.....	7
2. SCOPE AND USE OF THIS CODE.....	8
3. DEFINITIONS.....	9
4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF MEAT HYGIENE.....	14
5. PRIMARY PRODUCTION.....	15
5.1 Principles of meat hygiene applying to primary production.....	15
5.2 Hygiene of slaughter animals.....	16
5.3 Hygiene of killed wild game.....	18
5.4 Hygiene of feed and feed ingredients.....	19
5.5 Hygiene of the primary production environment.....	20
5.6 Transport.....	20
5.6.1 Transport of slaughter animals.....	20
5.6.2 Transport of killed wild game.....	21
6. PRESENTATION OF ANIMALS FOR SLAUGHTER.....	21
6.1 Principles of meat hygiene applying to animals presented for slaughter.....	21
6.2 Conditions of lairage.....	22
6.3 Ante-mortem inspection.....	23
6.3.1 Design of ante-mortem inspection systems.....	23
6.3.2 Implementation of ante-mortem inspection.....	24
6.3.3 Ante-mortem judgement categories.....	26
6.4 Information on animals presented for slaughter.....	26
7. PRESENTATION OF KILLED WILD GAME FOR DRESSING.....	27
7.1 Principles of meat hygiene applying to inspection of killed wild game presented for dressing.....	27
7.2 Inspection of killed wild game presented for dressing.....	27
8. ESTABLISHMENTS: DESIGN, FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.....	28
8.1 Principles of meat hygiene applying to establishments, facilities and equipment.....	28
8.2 Design and construction of lairages.....	29
8.3 Design and construction of slaughter areas.....	30

8.4 Design and construction of areas where bodies of animals are dressed or meat may otherwise be present	30
8.5 Design and construction of equipment where bodies of animals are dressed or meat may be present.....	32
8.6 Water supply.....	33
8.7 Temperature control.....	33
8.8 Facilities and equipment for personal hygiene.....	34
8.9 Transport vehicles.....	34
9. PROCESS CONTROL.....	34
9.1 Principles of meat hygiene applying to process control.....	35
9.2 Process control systems.....	36
9.2.1 Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (Sops).....	37
9.2.2 HACCP.....	38
9.2.3 Outcome-based parameters for process control.....	39
9.2.4 Regulatory systems.....	40
9.2.5 Quality Assurance (QA) systems.....	42
9.3 General hygiene requirements for process control.....	42
9.4 Hygiene requirements for slaughter and dressing.....	43
9.5 Post-mortem inspection.....	46
9.5.1 Design of post-mortem inspection systems.....	46
9.5.2 Implementation of post-mortem inspection.....	47
9.6 Post-mortem judgement.....	50
9.7 Hygiene requirements for process control after post-mortem inspection.....	51
9.8 Hygiene requirements for parts of animals deemed unsafe or unsuitable for human consumption.....	57
9.9 Systems for removing products that are in circulation.....	57
10. ESTABLISHMENTS:MAINTENANCE AND SANITATION.....	58
10.1 Principles of meat hygiene applying to maintenance and sanitation of establishments, facilities and equipment.....	58
10.2 Maintenance and sanitation.....	58
11. PERSONAL HYGIENE.....	59
11.1 Personal cleanliness.....	60
11.2 Personal health status.....	60
12. TRANSPORTATION.....	61
13. PRODUCT INFORMATION AND CONSUMER AWARENESS.....	61
14. TRAINING.....	61

14.1 Principles of training in meat hygiene.....62
14.2 Training programmes.....62

ANNEXES

ANNEX I - RISK-BASED EVALUATION OF ORGANOLEPTIC POST-MORTEM
INSPECTION PROCEDURES FOR MEAT.....63

ANNEX II - VERIFICATION OF PROCESS CONTROL OF MEAT HYGIENE BY
MICROBIOLOGICAL TESTING.....69

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THE GAMBIA STANDARDS BUREAU

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For further information on and copies of Gambian Standards, please contact The Gambia Standards Bureau.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

The Technical Committee on National Food Standards which supervised the development of this Gambian Standard consists of representatives from the following organizations:

National Codex, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee (NCSPSC)

Food Safety and Quality Authority of The Gambia (FSQA)

National Nutrition Agency (NaNA)

Food Technology Unit of Department of Agriculture (FTU-DOA)

Animal Health and Production Services (AHPS)

Plant Protection Services (PPS)

National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI)

National Association of Food Processors (NAFP)

National Poultry Farmers Association of The Gambia (NPFA)

National Women Farmers Association (NAWFA)

Consumer Protection Association of The Gambia (CPAG)

Jawneh and Family Cashew Farm (JFCF)

Agribusiness Services and Production Association (ASPA)

Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency (GLMA)

Fisheries Department

Association of Fishing Companies

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Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency (GLMA)

National Poultry Farmers Association of The Gambia (NPFA)

Food Safety and Quality Authority of The Gambia (FSQA)

Animal Health and Production Services (AHPS)

National Codex, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee (NCSPSC)

FOREWORD

The Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB), in conformity with international best practice, coopted the National CODEX, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee (NCSPSC) as its Technical Committee (TC) on Food Standards. The Secretariat for this TC is the Bureau. This TC adopted the CODEX Standard on the Code of Hygienic Practices for Meat. The Procedure for adoption was the *ISO/IEC Guide 21-1 - Regional or national adoption of International Standards and other International Deliverables - Part 1: Adoption of International Standards*. The method of adoption was Direct Adoption.

This Gambian Standard covers hygiene provisions for raw meat, meat preparations and manufactured meat from the time of live animal production up to the point of retail sale.

The Standard addresses the following:

- Scope, Use of this Code and definitions
- General Principles of Meat Hygiene
- Primary Production
- Presentation of Animals for Slaughter
- Presentation of Killed wild Game for Dressing
- Establishment: Design and Facilities
- Process Control
- Establishment – Maintenance and Sanitation
- Personal Hygiene
- Transportation
- Product Information and Consumer Awareness
- Training

This Standard can be obtained from The Gambia Standards Bureau.

INTRODUCTION

1. Meat has traditionally been viewed as a vehicle for a significant proportion of human food-borne disease. Although the spectrum of meat-borne diseases of public health importance has changed with changing production and processing systems, continuation of the problem has been well illustrated in recent years by human surveillance studies of specific meat-borne pathogens such as *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, *Salmonella* spp., *Campylobacter* spp. and *Yersinia enterocolitica*. In addition to existing biological, chemical and physical hazards, new hazards are also appearing e.g., the agent of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Furthermore consumers have expectations about suitability issues which are not necessarily of human health significance.
2. A contemporary risk-based approach to meat hygiene requires that hygiene measures should be applied at those points in the food chain where they will be of greatest value in reducing food-borne risks to consumers. This should be reflected in application of specific measures based on science and risk assessment, with a greater emphasis on prevention and control of contamination during all aspects of production of meat and its further processing. Application of HACCP principles is an essential element. The measure of success of contemporary programmes is an objective demonstration of levels of hazard control in food that are correlated with required levels of consumer protection, rather than by concentrating on detailed and prescriptive measures that give an unknown outcome.
3. At the national level the activities of the Competent Authority having jurisdiction at the slaughterhouse (usually Veterinary Administrations²) very often serve animal health as well as public health objectives. This is particularly the case in relation to ante- and post-mortem inspection where the slaughterhouse is a key point in animal health surveillance, including zoonoses. Regardless of jurisdictional arrangements, it is important that this duality of functions is recognized and relevant public health and animal health activities are integrated.
4. A number of national governments are implementing systems that redefine the respective roles of industry and government in delivering meat hygiene activities. Irrespective of the delivery systems the competent authority is responsible for defining the role of personnel involved in meat hygiene activities where appropriate, and verifying that all regulatory requirements are met.
5. The principles of food safety risk management³ should be incorporated wherever appropriate in the design and implementation of meat hygiene programmes⁴. Specifically, work conducted by JEMRA, JECFA and FAO/WHO Expert Consultations and resulting risk management recommendations should be considered. Further, newly-recognised meat-borne risks to human health may require measures additional to those usually applied in meat hygiene, e.g., the potential for zoonotic transmission of central nervous system disorders of slaughtered livestock means that additional animal health surveillance programmes may need to be undertaken.

SCOPE

The scope of this code covers hygiene provisions for raw meat, meat preparations and manufactured meat from the time of live animal production up to the point of retail sale. It further develops 'The Recommended International Code of Practice: General Principles of Food Hygiene' 4 in respect of these products. Where appropriate, the Annex to that code (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point System and Guidelines for its Application) and the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods⁵ are further developed and applied in the specific context of meat hygiene.

For the purposes of this code, meat is that derived from domestic ungulates, domestic solipeds, domestic birds, lagomorphs, farmed game, farmed game birds (including ratites) and wild game. This Code of Practice may also be applied to other types of animals from which meat is derived, subject to any special hygienic measures required by the competent authority. Further to general hygiene measures applying to all species of animal as described above, this code also presents specific measures that apply to different species and classes of animals, e.g. wild game killed in the field.

The hygiene measures that are applied to the products described in this code, should take into account any further measures and food handling practices that are likely to be applied by the consumer. It should be noted that some of the products described in this code may not be subjected to a heat or other biocidal process before consumption.

Meat hygiene is by nature a complex activity, and this code refers to standards, texts and other recommendations developed elsewhere in the Codex system where linkages are appropriate, e.g., Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification (CAC/GL 20 - 1995), Proposed Draft Principles and Guidelines for the Conduct of Microbiological Risk Management (CX/FH 01/7 and ALINORM 03/13 paras 99-128), General Guidelines for Use of the Term "Halal" (CAC/GL 24-1997) and recommendations of the *Ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding (ALINORM 01/38 and ALINORM 01/38A).

To provide information that will enhance consistency, linkages should also be made to the standards, guidelines and recommendations contained in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code that relate to zoonoses.

Subsets of the general principles (Section 4) are provided in subsequent sections within 'double-line boxes'. Where guidelines are provided at the section level, those that are more prescriptive in nature are presented in 'single-line boxes'. This is to indicate that they are recommendations based on current knowledge and practice. They should be regarded as being flexible in nature and subject to alternative provisions so long as required outcomes in terms of the safety and suitability of meat are met.

Traditional practices may result in departures from some of the meat hygiene recommendations presented in this code when meat is produced for local trade.

3. DEFINITIONS

13. For the purposes of this code, the following definitions apply. (Note that more general definitions relating to food hygiene appear in The Recommended International Code of Practice: General Principles of Food Hygiene)

<i>Abattoir</i>	Any establishment where specified animals are slaughtered and dressed for human consumption and that is approved, registered and/or listed by the competent authority for such purposes.
<i>Animal</i>	Animals of the following types: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domestic ungulates;• Domestic solipeds;• Domestic birds i.e. poultry;• Lagomorphs;• Farmed game;• Farmed game birds, including ratites;• Wild game, i.e. wild land mammals and birds which are hunted (including those living in enclosed territory under conditions of freedom similar to those of wild game);• Animals as otherwise specified by the competent authority.
<i>Ante-mortem inspection</i> ⁷	Any procedure or test conducted by a competent person on live animals for
<i>Carcass</i>	The body of an animal after dressing.
<i>Chemical residues</i>	Residues of veterinary drugs and pesticides as described in the Definitions for the Purpose of the Codex Alimentarius ⁸ .
<i>Competent authority</i> ⁹	The official authority charged by the government with the control of meat hygiene, including setting and enforcing regulatory meat hygiene requirements.
<i>Competent body</i>	A body officially recognised and overseen by the competent authority to undertake specified meat hygiene activities.
<i>Competent person</i>	A person who has the training, knowledge, skills and ability to perform an assigned task, and who is subject to requirements specified by the competent authority.

<i>Condemned</i>	Inspected and judged by a competent person, or otherwise determined by the competent authority, as being unsafe or unsuitable for human consumption and requiring appropriate disposal.
<i>Contaminant</i>	Any biological or chemical agent, foreign matter, or other substance not intentionally added to food that may compromise food safety or suitability. ¹⁰
<i>Disease or defect</i>	Any abnormality affecting safety and/or suitability.
<i>Dressing</i>	The progressive separation of the body of an animal into a carcass and other edible and inedible parts.
<i>Equivalence</i>	The capability of different meat hygiene systems to meet the same food safety and/or suitability objectives.
<i>Establishment</i>	A building or area used for performing meat hygiene activities that is approved, registered and/or listed by the competent authority for such purposes.
<i>Establishment operator</i>	The person in control of an establishment who is responsible for ensuring that the regulatory meat hygiene requirements are met.
<i>Food safety objective (FSO)</i>	The maximum frequency and/or concentration of a hazard in a food at the time of consumption that provides or contributes to the appropriate level of protection (ALOP).
<i>Fresh Meat</i>	Meat that apart from refrigeration has not been treated for the purpose of preservation other than through protective packaging and which retains its natural characteristics.
<i>Game depot</i>	A building in which killed wild game is temporarily held prior to transfer to an establishment, and which is approved, registered and/or listed by the competent authority for this purpose. (<i>Note that for the purposes of this code, a game depot is a particular type of establishment</i>).
<i>Good Hygienic Practice (GHP)</i>	All practices regarding the conditions and measures necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food at all stages of the food chain. ¹¹

<i>Hazard</i>	A biological, chemical or physical agent in, or condition of, food with the potential to cause an adverse health effect. ¹²
<i>Hunter</i>	A person involved in the killing and/or bleeding, partial evisceration and partial field dressing of killed wild game.
<i>Inedible</i>	Inspected and judged by a competent person, or otherwise determined by the competent authority to be unsuitable for human consumption.
<i>Manufactured Meat</i>	Products resulting from the processing of raw meat or from the further processing of such processed products, so that when cut, the cut surface shows that the product no longer has the characteristics of fresh meat.
<i>Meat</i>	All parts of an animal that are intended for, or have been judged as safe and suitable for, human consumption.
<i>Meat hygiene</i>	All conditions and measures necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of meat at all stages of the food chain.
<i>Meat preparation</i>	Raw meat which has had foodstuffs, seasonings or additives added to it.
<i>Mechanically separated meat (MSM)</i>	Product obtained by removing meat from flesh-bearing bones after boning or from poultry carcasses, using mechanical means that result in the loss or modification of the muscle fibre structure.
<i>Minced meat</i>	Boneless meat which has been reduced into fragments.
<i>Official inspector</i>	A competent person who is appointed, accredited or otherwise recognised by the competent authority to perform official meat hygiene activities on behalf of, or under the supervision of the competent authority.
<i>Organoleptic inspection</i>	Using the senses of sight, touch, taste and smell for identification of diseases and defects.
<i>Performance criterion</i>	The effect in frequency and/or concentration of a hazard in a food that must be achieved by the application of one or more control measures to provide or contribute to a performance objective (PO) or a food safety objective (FSO).

<i>Performance objective</i>	The maximum frequency and/or concentration of a hazard in a food at a specified step in the food chain before the time of consumption that provides or contributes to a food safety objective (FSO) or appropriate level of protection (ALOP), as applicable.
<i>Post-mortem inspection</i>¹³	Any procedure or test conducted by a competent person on all relevant parts of slaughtered/killed animals for the purpose of judgement of safety and suitability and disposition.
<i>Primary production</i>	All those steps in the food chain constituting animal production and transport of animals to the abattoir, or hunting and transporting wild game to a game depot.
<i>Process control</i>	All conditions and measures applied during the production process that are necessary to achieve safety and suitability of meat. ¹⁴
<i>Process criterion</i>	The physical process control parameters (e.g. time, temperature) at a specified step that can be applied to achieve a performance objective or performance criterion ¹⁵ .
<i>Quality assurance (QA)</i>	All the planned and systematic activities implemented within the quality system and demonstrated as needed, to provide adequate confidence that an entity will fulfill requirements for quality. ¹⁶
<i>Quality assurance (QA) System</i>	The organisational structure, procedures, processes and resources needed to implement quality assurance.
<i>Raw meat</i>	Fresh meat, minced meat or mechanically separated meat ¹⁷ .
<i>Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Products</i>	Products that are intended to be consumed without any further biocidal steps.
<i>Risk-based</i>	Containing any performance objective, performance criterion or process criterion developed according to risk analysis principles. ¹⁸
<i>Safe for human Consumption</i>	Safe for human consumption according to the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• has been produced by applying all food safety requirements appropriate to its intended end-use;

- meets risk-based performance and process criteria for specified hazards; and
- does not contain hazards at levels that are harmful to human health.

***Sanitation standard
operating procedures
(SSOPs)***

A documented system for assuring that personnel, facilities, equipment and utensils are clean and where necessary, sanitised to specified levels prior to and during operations.

***Suitable for human
Consumption***

Suitable for human consumption according to the following criteria:

- has been produced under hygienic conditions as outlined in this code;
- is appropriate to its intended use¹⁹; and
- meets outcome-based parameters for specified diseases or defects as established by the competent authority.

Validation

Obtaining evidence that the food hygiene control measure or measures selected to control a hazard in a food is capable of effectively and consistently controlling the hazard to the appropriate level.²⁰

Verification


Activities performed by the competent authority and/or competent body to determine compliance with regulatory requirements.

Verification (Operator)

The continual review of process control systems by the operator, including corrective and preventative actions to ensure that regulatory and/or specified requirements are met.

Veterinary Inspector

An official inspector who is professionally qualified as a veterinarian and carries out official meat hygiene activities²¹ as specified by the competent authority.



Only the informative sections of standards are publicly available. To have access to the full standard, you will need to purchase the standard from The Gambia Standards Bureau. You can contact the Bureau on **TEL:** 4464210, **Email:** info@tgsb.gm