

HILMAN

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(79) 37 final

Brussels, 9 February 1979

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COMMISSION REPORT TO THE COUNCIL

on certain problems of hygiene involved in the process for chilling
poultry carcasses by immersion in water

and

Proposal for a

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE

amending, in respect of chilling, Directive 71/118/EEC on health
problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

COM(79) 37 final

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The present communication fulfils the mandate given to the Commission by the Council in Article 2 of the Directive 78/50/EEC of 17 December 1977 completing as far as the cooling process the Directive 77/118/EEC concerning health problems of trade in fresh-poultry meat. The Commission was charged with establishing a report concerning the particular hygienic conditions in which the process of cooling complying with the standard established in the aforesaid Directive may be applied to poultry carcasses which are not immediately frozen or quick frozen.

A proposal for amending Directive 78/50/EEC, based on the conclusions of this report, is annexed.

The Member States were consulted in the Standing Veterinary Committee on the 8th December 1978.

Commission report to the Council on certain problems
of hygiene involved in the process for chilling poultry carcasses by
immersion in water

1. Article 1 of Council Directive 78/50/EEC of 13 December 1977 supplementing, as regards the chilling process, Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat, prohibits, from 15 February 1979, the chilling of fresh poultrymeat by means of immersion in water, unless it is effected in accordance with the conditions laid down in points 28a and 28b of Chapter V of Annex I. ^{/of the Directive 71/118/EEC.} The use of this process is in any case restricted to carcasses which are frozen or deep-frozen immediately after chilling.

The Council adopted this provision because of the uncertainty as to whether, from a health point of view, the use of this chilling process could be extended to meat for marketing chilled.

2. Article 2 of Directive 78/50/EEC requires the Commission to draw up and submit to the Council, by 15 October 1978 and after consulting the Member States in the Standing Veterinary Committee, a report possibly accompanied by proposals on the specific conditions of hygiene under which the process which complies with the conditions laid down in points 28a and 28b of Annex I, Chapter V may be applied to carcasses which are neither immediately frozen or deep-frozen. ^{of the Directive 71/118/EEC.}

Article 2(3) lays down that the Council shall act unanimously on the Commission proposals before 31 December 1978.

3. In order to collect background information on the possibility of extending the use of the chilling process in question to carcasses for marketing chilled, and thereby carry out the task entrusted to it, the Commission organized a survey at Community level in May-July 1978 which made it possible to draw up a comparison with regard to the microbiological aspect and the keeping properties of poultry carcasses chilled by the immersion process and by the air process, which has been used industrially for quite some time.

2 The study was made following an experimental protocol developed to give valid and comparable results.

4. Institutes in the following Member States have carried out investigations in their abbatoirs : France, Germany, United Kingdom and Denmark.

Institutes in the following Member States collaborated in the elaboration of the experimental protocol and examination and discussion of the results : Ireland, Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands.

In addition representatives of these institutes were offered the possibility of helping with the work on the spot.

5. The main conclusion of this survey is as follows :
no significant difference in keeping qualities at + 2° C was found between poultry carcasses chilled by the immersion process and those chilled by air. Carcasses chilled by immersion in water kept for an average of 8.6 days whereas those chilled in air kept for an average of 8.8 days.

From the microbiological point of view, no significant difference was found between the two types of carcase when stored at + 2°C.

6. The Commission accordingly considers that the immersion chilling process, when carried out in accordance with Directive 78/50/EEC, may be applied to carcasses which are not immediately frozen or deep-frozen and are for marketing chilled.
7. The Commission therefore proposes that the Council adopt the attached proposal for a Directive.

ANNEX

Proposal for a
Council Directive

amending, in respect of chilling, Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems
affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Articles 43 and 100 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Having regard to Council Directive 71/118/EEC of 15 February 1971 on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat⁽¹⁾, as last amended by Directive 78/50/EEC⁽²⁾, and in particular Article 14(a)(2) and (3) thereof,

Whereas the above Directive restricted the use of the immersion chilling process for fresh poultrymeat, carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Directive to poultry carcasses which, after chilling, are immediately frozen or deep-frozen; whereas this provision resulted from the uncertainty at the time the Council adopted the Directive as to whether, from a health point of view, the use of the above-mentioned process could be extended to carcasses for marketing chilled;

Whereas that Directive required the Commission to submit to the Council a report possibly accompanied by proposals on the specific conditions of hygiene under which the chilling process referred to above might be applied to carcasses which were neither immediately frozen nor deep-frozen;

(1) O.J. No L 55, 8.3.1971, p. 23

(2) O.J. No L 15, 19.1.1978, p. 28

Whereas the Commission has submitted to the Council, after consulting the Member States within the Standing Veterinary Committee, a report stating that on grounds of health there are no objections to the chilling process referred to above being extended to poultry carcasses which, after chilling, are neither immediately frozen nor deep-frozen;

Whereas in the case of carcasses for marketing chilled the scalding temperature specified in the interest of hygiene should not exceed a certain limit and carcasses should be adequately drained immediately after chilling by immersion in water,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE:

Article 1

Directive 71/118/EEC is amended as follows :

1. The words "and the carcasses thus chilled are immediately frozen or deep frozen" in Article 14(1) are deleted.

2. In Annex I Chapter V:

1. The first sentence of 28a is replaced by the following:

"28a Carcasses to be subjected to an immersion chilling process in accordance with the process described in 28b

a) must not, when they are intended for marketing chilled, be scalded at a temperature exceeding +54°C

b) must, immediately after evisceration, be thoroughly washed by spraying and immersed without delay."

2. Paragraph c of 28b is replaced by the following:

"It must be carried out in such a way that the temperature specified in Chapter XII is reached in the shortest possible time and carcasses for marketing chilled must be adequately drained immediately."

Article 2

The Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions required in order to comply with this Directive by at the latest.

Article 3

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President

