Text consolidated by Valsts valodas centrs (State Language Centre) with amending regulations of:

21 December 2010 [shall come into force on 1 January 2011];

10 April 2012 [shall come into force on 13 April 2012];

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If a whole or part of a paragraph has been amended, the date of the amending regulation appears in square brackets at the end of the paragraph. If a whole paragraph or sub-paragraph has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted paragraph or sub-paragraph.

Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 715

Adopted 3 August 2010

**Welfare Requirements for the Keeping of Fur Animals**

*Issued pursuant to*

*Section 10, Clause 1 of the Animal Protection Law*

**I. General Provisions**

1. The Regulation prescribes the welfare requirements for the keeping of minks, polecats, foxes, nutrias, and chinchillas (hereinafter – the fur animals) intended for fur production.

2. An owner or keeper of the fur animals shall ensure that an adequate number of trained employees with appropriate skills and professional experience in the welfare of the fur animals are permanently present in the animal housing.

[*8 February 2022*]

2.1 A handbook of good practice shall be developed by an owner or keeper of the fur animals, setting out the criteria for rearing and keeping of the fur animals and the requirements for training employees in the following areas:

2.11. the physiology and behaviour of the fur animals;

2.12. the identification of sick animals;

2.13. the medical treatment of the fur animals and wound treatment;

2.14. the capture of the fur animals, including preparation for transport;

2.15. the movement of the fur animals in the territory of one holding;

2.16. the process of weaning the fur animals;

2.17. the breeding process of the fur animals;

2.18. the killing of the fur animals in accordance with Articles 7 and 21 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing (hereinafter – Regulation No 1099/2009).

[*8 February 2022*]

**II. Requirements for the Holdings of the Fur Animals**

3. Accommodations and enclosures of the fur animals shall be arranged so as to prevent a possibility of the fur animals getting out of them and to reduce the possibility for wild animals and birds to access the fur animals.

4. The parts of the accommodation, cages, equipment, or accessories for the rearing of the fur animals which come into contact with the fur animals shall be cleaned, washed, and disinfected regularly after each production process.

[*8 February 2022*]

4.1 Manure shall be removed from the area of the holding at least once a year or continuously according to the drainage system.

[*8 February 2022*]

5. A place shall be arranged in accommodations and enclosures of the fur animals where they may hide from humans or from animals that are located in other cages or pens.

6. Cages shall be placed at the appropriate height in order to facilitate removal of faeces from the bottom of cages.

7. Cages shall not be placed one on top of another, except for multilevel cages for chinchillas and two-level cages for minks.

8. Cages shall be constructed in such a way that the fur animals do not get injured and cannot get out of a cage.

9. The doors of a cage shall be constructed in such a way that a fur animal does not get injured when taken out of the cage.

10. A nest box shall be created from a material harmless to the health of the fur animals, ensuring it with suitable litter according to the animal species and with such planning of the nest box opening in order to protect newborn fur animals from the influence of the environment and in order for their mother to have easy access to them.

11. Paragraph 10 of this Regulation shall not apply to chinchillas.

12. An owner or keeper of the fur animals shall ensure equipment for the movement of the fur animals in order to examine, take care of, or inspect them.

13. The premises where treatment of carcases of the fur animals after killing them is intended shall be arranged separately from the place of keeping of the animals.

13.1 In order to prevent cruel treatment of animals and also in order to monitor the fulfilment of the animal protection, welfare, health requirements and the fulfilment of the special epidemiological safety conditions in the animal population laid down in the laws and regulations governing the field of epidemiological safety, an owner or keeper of the fur animals shall equip the accommodations and cages of the fur animals in which animals are located with video surveillance devices which are placed in such a way that physical activity with animals can be seen.

[*8 February 2022*]

13.2 Video surveillance devices shall operate continuously during the working time of the holding, except for an interruption caused by technical damages which shall not exceed three working days.

[*8 February 2022*]

13.3 An owner or keeper of the fur animals shall keep the data obtained during video surveillance for 14 days and then delete them. An owner or keeper of the fur animals shall regularly, at least once a day, watch and assess the video surveillance records, and also upon request they shall be presented and submitted to the Food and Veterinary Service or the Health Inspectorate if the relevant video recording shows a violation of the animal protection, welfare, health requirements and the special epidemiological safety conditions laid down in laws and regulations.

[*8 February 2022*]

**III. General Welfare Requirements for Keeping of the Fur Animals**

14. An owner or keeper of the fur animals shall ensure the fur animals with safe, hygienic, and high-quality feed according to their species and age, feeding it to them at specified feeding times and in appropriate quantities or continuously by using the automatic feeding method, and also with freely accessible water for drinking.

[*8 February 2022*]

15. An owner or keeper of the fur animals shall ensure inspection of the fur animals at least once a day and, if necessary, also individual inspection of the animal.

16. If health or behavioural disorders of the fur animals are detected, their keeping conditions shall be assessed at first. If the reason for health or behavioural disorders is deficiencies in keeping conditions that cannot be eliminated immediately, it shall be done after removal of animals from the accommodation.

17. Aid shall be immediately provided to sick or injured fur animals. If necessary, they shall be separated in an accommodation suitable for that purpose and shall be treated or killed according to the instructions of a practising veterinarian in accordance with Article 2(d) and Article 19 of Regulation No 1099/2009.

[*8 February 2022*]

18. Fur animal kits shall be weaned from a suckler at the age that is the most favourable for the welfare of the mother and kits, but not earlier than at the age of six weeks.

19. Fur animal kits may be weaned from the mother before the age of six weeks only in case when the life of the mother or the kit is endangered.

20. In order for animals to be able to resist stress, favourable attitude of humans shall be ensured from the first days of their life.

21. Groups of fur animals shall be formed from animals of one litter, ensuring supervision of adaptation. Isolation of certain fur animal kits following weaning from a suckler shall not be permissible.

22. It is prohibited to use medicinal products promoting growth and maturating fur.

**IV. Requirements for the Keeping of Minks and Polecats**

23. At least 30 x 70 centimetres of floor area and at least 45 centimetres of height shall be ensured in the cages of minks and polecats.

24. The minimum area of a cage (including nest box) shall be as follows:

24.1. for one adult breeding animal with or without kits – 2550 square centimetres;

24.2. for young animals after weaning from a suckler:

24.2.1. for one or two animals – 2550 square centimetres;

24.2.2. for more than two animals – additionally 850 square centimetres shall be ensured for each animal.

[*21 December 2010*]

**V. Requirements for the Keeping of Foxes**

25. At least 75 x 100 centimetres of floor area and at least 70 centimetres of height shall be ensured in the cages of foxes.

[*21 December 2010*]

26. The minimum area of a cage shall be as follows:

26.1. for one adult animal – 0.75 square metres;

26.2. for one adult animal with kits – two square metres;

26.3. for young animals after weaning from a suckler:

26.3.1. for one or two animals – 1.2 square metres;

26.3.2. for more than two animals – additionally 0.5 square metres shall be ensured for each animal.

27. A possibility to rest and observe the surroundings shall be ensured for foxes so that each breeding animal would have a separate area or elevation, or nest box with a roof at the place of keeping.

28. A pregnant fox or a vixen with kits shall be ensured with a nest box with anteroom that has been placed so as to hide the entrance into the nest box.

29. Neck pliers for fixing of the animal shall be used only in such case if fixing of the animal in any other way is not possible.

30. Nails of foxes shall be kept in good condition.

**VI. Requirements for the Keeping of Nutrias**

31. Nutrias shall be kept in groups.

32. When keeping nutrias in a cage it shall be ensured that 70 per cent of the area to be used is a solid one-piece surface.

33. The minimum area of a pen or cage shall be as follows:

33.1. for one adult animal with or without kits – two square metres;

33.2. for young animals after weaning from a suckler – 0.5 square metres for one animal.

34. Nutrias shall be ensured with appropriate nibbling material for wearing of the teeth, water for swimming, and materials for activities (for example, tree branches, parts of logs).

35. Pens or cages of nutrias shall be made so that animals could see and smell each other.

36. A nest box of nutrias shall be made so that all animals of one enclosure could lie down concurrently therein. The nest box shall have two compartments and two exits.

**VII. Requirements for the Keeping of Chinchillas**

37. At least 40 x 50 centimetres of floor area and at least 40 centimetres of height shall be ensured in the cages of chinchillas.

38. The minimum area of a cage shall be as follows:

38.1. for one or two adult animals – 0.2 square metres;

38.2. for one adult animal with kits – 0.2 square metres;

38.3. for young animal after weaning from a suckler – 0.13 square metres, additionally 0.03 square metres shall be ensured for each next animal.

39. The following shall be ensured in the accommodations of chinchillas:

39.1. temperature (12-25°C);

39.2. humidity (within limits of 65-70 per cent);

39.3. if necessary, ventilation which supplies fresh air, prevents accumulation of water condensate and gases harmful to the health of animals.

40. Chinchillas shall be ensured with appropriate nibbling material for wearing of the teeth and at least once a day – with dry sand for cleaning of coat hair.

41. Cages of chinchillas shall be formed so that animals could see and smell each other.

42. Chinchillas shall be moved carefully by holding the bottom of the tail with a thumb and index finger and putting the other hand around the chest and front limbs in order to support the body.

**VIII. Closing Provision**

43. The Regulation shall come into force on 1 January 2011.

44. Until 31 December 2016, cages of minks and polecats the height of which is 35 centimetres and more and the minimum area of which conforms to the requirements referred to in Paragraph 24 of this Regulation shall be replaced with cages the height and area of floor of which conform to the requirements referred to in Paragraph 23 of this Regulation.

[*10 April 2012*]

45. The conditions referred to in Paragraph 44 of this Regulation shall not be applicable to cages of minks and polecats at newly built holdings or holdings where the reconstruction of cages is being carried out.

[*10 April 2012*]

Prime Minister V. Dombrovskis

Minister for Agriculture J. Dūklavs