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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. 743

Adopted 7 July 2009

**Pig Welfare Requirements**

*Issued pursuant to*

*Section 10, Clause 1 of the Animal Protection Law and Section 54, Paragraph six of the Veterinary Medicine Law*

**I. General Provisions**

1. Terms used in the Regulation:

1.1. pig – an animal of the porcine species, of any age, kept for breeding or fattening;

1.2. boar – a male pig after puberty, intended for breeding;

1.3. gilt – a female pig after puberty and before the first farrowing;

1.4. sow – a female pig after the first farrowing;

1.5. piglet – a pig from birth to weaning;

1.6. weaner – a pig from weaning to the age of 10 weeks;

1.7. rearing pig – a pig from 10 weeks to service;

1.8. fattening pig – a pig from 10 weeks to slaughter.

2. The Regulation prescribes the pig welfare requirements.

3. The conformity with this Regulation shall be supervised and controlled by the Food and Veterinary Service (hereinafter – the Service).

4. The Service shall, once in two years by the last working day of April, inform the European Commission (hereinafter – the Commission) of the State supervision and control results and of the number of checks carried out in relation to the total number of pig holdings.

5. Experts of the Commission have the right, in cooperation with the Service, to carry out unplanned checks of conformity with the pig welfare requirements in Latvia. In carrying out checks, experts shall implement personal hygiene measures to exclude any risk of transmission of infectious diseases.

6. Taking into account the results of checks obtained by experts of the Commission, the Service shall take corresponding measures to eliminate the deficiencies detected.

7. Pigs imported from the third countries (countries other than European Union Member States) shall have a certificate issued by the competent authority of the relevant country attesting that the welfare requirements of the imported pigs have been equivalent to or stricter than the requirements of this Regulation.

8. The pig owner shall ensure that sufficient number of such employees is permanently employed to attend to pigs in the holding who have appropriate skills, knowledge, and competence in the field of pig welfare and who:

8.1. have acquired the pig welfare requirements referred to in this Regulation;

8.2. conform to the general requirements for the welfare of animals kept for farming purposes laid down in laws and regulations.

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8.1 In order to ensure conformity with the requirements referred to in Paragraph 8 of this Regulation, the pig owner or holder shall train each employee who starts working and also all employees if the keeping conditions or management system of pigs are changed in the holding. Information on the training implemented shall be indicated in the logbook and the logbook shall be presented to the Service upon request. The logbook regarding training of employees shall be stored for five years after the last entry.

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**II. Requirements for Keeping Pigs**

9. Pigs shall be fed at least once a day.

10. Where pigs are kept in groups and fed without using farrowing or an automatic system feeding, pigs shall have access to the feed at the same time.

11. Pigs over two weeks of age shall have free access to fresh water.

12. The following procedures for the identification of pigs and the following non-therapeutic operations shall be permitted:

12.1. for piglets not later than the seventh day of life – clipping or grinding of corner teeth leaving an intact smooth surface of teeth;

12.2. for boars – reduction of tusks in length where necessary;

12.3. docking of a part of the tail;

12.4. castration of male pigs (by other means than tearing of tissues);

12.5. nose-ringing for animals which are kept in an outdoor husbandry system.

13. The procedures referred to in Sub-paragraphs 12.1 and 12.3 of this Regulation shall be carried out only in case if injuries to sows’ teats or other pigs’ ears and tails have occurred. Before carrying out the abovementioned procedures, measures shall be taken to prevent tail-biting or other vices, taking into account environment and stocking densities. If the abovementioned procedures are carried out, keeping conditions or the management system of pigs shall be changed.

13.1 When applying the general requirements referred to in this Regulation on the prevention of tail-biting and thereby a reduction routine tail-docking, the pig owner or holder shall assess the incidence of tail-biting, based on animal and non-animal based indicators (hereinafter – the risk assessment). The following indicators shall be assessed in the risk assessment:

13.11. the provision with materials which do not compromise the health of the pigs (for example, straw, hay, wood, sawdust, mushroom compost, peat or a mixture of such, natural ropes, granules) (hereinafter – the enrichment materials) and the availability thereof to animals;

13.12. the conformity of the area with the number of animals in the pen and also the competition of animals for space;

13.13. the cleanness of the pen;

13.14. the air quality of the holding;

13.15. the thermal comfort conditions;

13.16. the quality, quantity of animal feed and the competition of animals for feed;

13.17. the health status of animals;

13.18. the frequency of tail-biting or ear-biting cases, including other traumas if any.

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13.2 The pig owner or holder shall:

13.21. carry out the risk assessment if any of the indicators referred to in Paragraph 13.1 of this Regulation has significantly changed but not less than once in six months;

13.22. document the results of the risk assessment and, on the basis of the results, introduce the necessary changes in the keeping conditions of pigs (for example, ensure corresponding keeping conditions and the enrichment materials, balanced diet). The documented results shall be stored for five years after the last entry and also presented to the Service upon request.

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13.3 In order to satisfy the essential needs of pigs, the pig owner or holder shall ensure the conformity of the enrichment materials with the following requirements:

13.31. they evoke sustainable interest and encourage the exploratory behaviour of pigs and also are regularly replaced and replenished and are safe, harmless to pigs, clean, hygienic, and given in sufficient quantity;

13.32. they are accessible for oral manipulations, are edible or chewable, preferably with nutritional benefits;

13.33. they are suitable for pigs to be able to investigate them;

13.34. they can be moved so that pigs could change their location, appearance, or structure.

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13.4 The enrichment materials referred to in Paragraph 13.3 of this Regulation shall be classified as follows:

13.41. optimal materials – materials possessing all the characteristics referred to in Paragraph 13.3 of this Regulation and therefore such materials can be used alone;

13.42. suboptimal materials – materials possessing most of the characteristics referred to in Paragraph 13.3 of this Regulation and therefore such materials should be used in combination with other materials;

13.43. materials of marginal interest – materials not possessing most of the characteristics referred to in Paragraph 13.3 of this Regulation. They provide distraction for pigs but do not fulfil their essential needs and therefore they should be used together with optimal or suboptimal materials.

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13.5 The Service shall inspect the following in the pig holding:

13.51. the fulfilment of the indicators of the risk assessment referred to in Paragraph 13.1 of this Regulation and the documentation of the results referred to in Paragraph 13.2 of this Regulation, and the changes introduced in the keeping conditions of pigs, if any;

13.52. incidence of injuries to pigs ears and signs of bitten tails or skin lesions, or abnormal behaviour by pigs (such as a low level of interest in the enrichment materials provided, fights to use enrichment materials, biting elements other than the enrichment materials provided, rooting their faeces or in the case of sows, an increase in false nest building behaviour) in the holding.

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14. The non-therapeutic operations referred to in Paragraph 12 of this Regulation shall be performed, in corresponding sanitary conditions using appropriate means, by a practising veterinarian or a person who has been theoretically and practically trained by a veterinarian for performing of the relevant operations.

15. Piglets over seven days of age shall be castrated or their tail shall be docked by a practising veterinarian, using anaesthetic and additional prolonged analgesia.

**III. Requirements for Keeping Different Types of Pigs**

16. The following area shall be ensured to each weaner, rearing pig, and fattening pig kept in groups, except for gilts after service and sows, according to the weight of the animal:

16.1. 0.15 square metres if the pig weighs up to 10 kilograms;

16.2. 0.20 square metres if the pig weighs from 11 to 20 kilograms;

16.3. 0.30 square metres if the pig weighs from 21 to 30 kilograms;

16.4. 0.40 square metres if the pig weighs from 31 to 50 kilograms;

16.5. 0.55 square metres if the pig weighs from 51 to 85 kilograms;

16.6. 0.65 square metres if the pig weighs from 86 to 110 kilograms;

16.7. one square metre if the pig weighs more than 110 kilograms.

17. The total floor area available to each gilt after service when gilts are kept in groups shall be at least 1.64 square metres.

18. The total floor area available to each sow when sows are kept in groups shall be at least 2.25 square metres.

19. When gilts after service or sows are kept in groups of fewer than six pigs, the total floor area referred to in Paragraphs 17 and 18 of this Regulation shall be increased by 10 per cent.

20. When gilts after service or sows are kept in groups of 40 and more pigs, the total floor area referred to in Paragraphs 17 and 18 of this Regulation may be decreased by 10 per cent.

21. Part of the total floor area referred to in Paragraphs 17, 18, 19, and 20 of this Regulation shall be of continuous solid floor:

21.1. for a gilt after service, at least 0.95 square metres of continuous solid floor shall be intended;

21.2. for a pregnant sow, at least 1.3 square metres of continuous solid floor shall be intended;

21.3. drainage openings shall occupy a maximum of 15 per cent of the floor area.

22. If pigs are kept in groups in holdings with concrete slatted floors:

22.1. the maximum width of the openings shall be:

22.1.1. 11 millimetres for piglets;

22.1.2. 14 millimetres for weaners;

22.1.3. 18 millimetres for rearing pigs and fattening pigs;

22.1.4. 20 millimetres for gilts after service and sows;

22.2. the minimum slat width shall be:

22.2.1. 50 millimetres for piglets and weaners;

22.2.2. 80 millimetres for rearing pigs, fattening pigs, gilts after service, and sows.

23. During the construction of or conversion of holdings, it is prohibited to arrange installations in which gilts and sows are tethered.

24. The use of tethers for gilts and sows is prohibited.

25. When fewer than 10 sows are kept in a holding, sows and gilts shall be kept in groups during a period starting from four weeks after the service to one week before the expected time of farrowing. When six or more animals are kept in a pen, the pen shall have sides greater than 2.8 metres in length. When fewer than six animals are kept in a pen, the pen shall have sides greater than 2.4 metres in length.

26. When fewer than 10 sows are kept in a holding, sows and gilts may be kept in individual pens during a period starting from four weeks after the service to one week before the expected time of farrowing, ensuring that they can turn around easily.

27. Sows and gilts shall be ensured with permanent access to manipulable material which conforms to the requirements referred to in Sub-paragraph 43.1 of this Regulation.

28. In order to satisfy the hunger of pigs and their need to chew, dry pregnant sows and gilts shall be provided with sufficient quantity of feed which is in big pieces or with high fibre content and high energy value.

28.1 Pigs that are intended to be kept in groups but that are particularly aggressive or have been attacked by other pigs, or that are sick or injured may temporarily be kept in individual pens. The pen to be used for this purpose shall allow the animal to turn around easily if this is not in contradiction with specific advice of a practising veterinarian.

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28.2 Sows and gilts kept in groups shall be fed, using a system which ensures that each animal can obtain sufficient amount of animal feed even when there is competition for feed.

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29. The intended area of a boar pen shall be at least six square metres so as to allow the animal to turn round and to hear, smell, and see other pigs.

30. Where a boar pen is also used for natural service, the floor area of at least of 10 square metres and free of any obstacles shall be ensured.

31. Pregnant sows and gilts:

31.1. shall, if necessary, be treated against external and internal parasites;

31.2. shall be cleaned before placement in a farrowing crate.

32. In the week before the expected farrowing time, sows and gilts shall be given suitable nesting material in sufficient quantity unless it is not technically feasible for the slurry system used in the holding.

33. An unobstructed area in the farrowing crate shall be ensured for the ease of natural or assisted farrowing.

34. Farrowing pens shall have farrowing rails appropriate for the protection of the piglets.

35. Piglets shall be ensured with sufficiently large area to allow all piglets to rest together at the same time. It may be solid, covered with a special mat, or littered with straw or any other suitable material.

36. Piglets in a farrowing crate shall have sufficient space to be able to be suckled without difficulty.

37. No piglets shall be weaned from the sow at less than 28 days of age.

38. Piglets may be weaned from the sow after reaching the age of 21 days if it is necessary due to the health and welfare of the sow or the piglet. In such case, piglets shall be moved into a specialised housing which is cleaned and disinfected before the introduction of a new group of animals.

39. The separated piglets, rearing pigs, and fattening pigs shall be kept in groups in order to minimise the need for re-grouping to the extent possible.

40. In re-grouping pigs of any age:

40.1. it shall be preferable to do it within a week after weaning;

40.2. pigs shall be provided with an opportunity to escape from each other;

40.3. tranquillising medicaments shall be used only upon recommendations of a practising veterinarian;

40.4. adaptation supervision shall be ensured.

41. When signs of severe fighting appear in a group of pigs, the causes shall be investigated and appropriate measures taken, such as providing plentiful straw to the animals or other materials for investigation. Animals at risk or particularly aggressive animals shall be kept separate from the group and temporarily placed in an individual pen.

**IV. Requirements for Pig Holdings**

42. Noise levels as loud as 85 decibels and also sudden and constant noise shall be avoided in a pig holding.

43. Pig pens shall be:

43.1. ensured with sufficient quantity of the enrichment materials intended for busying the pigs which are appropriate for the relevant sewage system;

43.2. ensured with warm, comfortable, sufficiently clean and dry lying area where all the pigs can rest together at the same time;

43.3. arranged in a way that pigs can see each other. The abovementioned condition shall not apply to gilts and sows which, in the week before the expected farrowing time and during farrowing, may be kept separately.

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44. The floors of the holding shall be:

44.1. mechanically durable;

44.2. smooth and not slippery so as to prevent injury to the pigs;

44.3. suitable for the size and weight of the pigs.

45. Light with an intensity of at least 40 lux shall be ensured in a holding for a minimum period of eight hours per day.

46. Pigs shall be surveyed at least once a day.

**V. Closing Provisions**

47. Cabinet Regulation No. 152 of 23 March 2004, Pig Welfare Requirements (*Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 2004, No. 47; 2007, No. 37), is repealed.

48. The requirements referred to in Paragraphs 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 27 of this Regulation regarding ensuring the freedom of movement of pigs in a pen, if it is not in contradiction with the recommendations of a practising veterinarian, shall apply to the holdings constructed or conversed after 26 March 2004. From 1 January 2013, these requirements shall apply to all pig holdings.

**Informative Reference to European Union Directive**

The Regulation contains legal norms arising from Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs.

Prime Minister V. Dombrovskis

Minister for Agriculture J. Dūklavs