

REGULATION

on the welfare of sheep and goats

SECTION I

Objective, scope and definitions

Article 1

Purpose and scope

The purpose of this Regulation is to ensure the welfare and good health of all sheep and goats through the provision of good treatment, care and living conditions. Sheep and goats should, as far as possible, be given the opportunity to a life consistent with their natural behaviour. The Regulation contains minimum requirements for individual aspects of this goal.

Article 2

Definitions

For the purpose of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:

1. *Animals* means any type of sheep or goats.
2. *Goat* means any member of the *Capra* genus
3. *First-year sheep* means a pubescent sheep less than 12 months of age.
4. *Doe* means a pubescent adult female goat.
5. *Kid* means a goat which has not reached puberty.
6. *Sheep* means any member of the *Ovis* genus
7. *Lamb* means a sheep which has not reached puberty.
8. *Keeper* means the owner or any other person having responsibility for the care of sheep or goats.
9. *Weaklings* means animals which are sick or not thriving and thus potentially suspected of carrying an infectious disease.
10. *Ewe* means a pubescent sheep 12 months or older.

SECTION II

Monitoring, inspection, handling and care

Article 3

Official monitoring

The Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture shall assume responsibility for the general administration of all matters covered by this Regulation. The Food and Veterinary Authority shall monitor the implementation of the Regulation.

Any person intending to acquire ownership of sheep or goats must notify this to the Food and Veterinary Authority in order that mandatory registration, identification marking and monitoring may be carried out.

Keepers of sheep or goats must ensure that those responsible for monitoring activities have easy access to all animals and to all places where they are kept.

Article 4

Ability, competence and responsibility

Keepers of sheep or goats must ensure that all persons having responsibility for the care of sheep or goats in the keeper's ownership have the necessary competence for this and possess knowledge of animal care and the needs of the animals, and of applicable laws and regulations pertaining to the keeping of sheep and goats, as well as the physical and mental ability to care for the animals.

Article 5

General treatment and own surveillance

The ill treatment of sheep and goats is prohibited.

Keepers of sheep or goats must accustom the animals to human contact both outside and inside buildings.

The welfare of all animals must be safeguarded by attending to them frequently and making improvements where necessary.

Sheep and goats kept in houses must be attended to daily. Special and more frequent surveillance should be carried out on newly born, sick or injured animals. The same applies for ewes and does approaching birth. Animals which spend the winter outdoors must be kept within secure fences to enable surveillance until the end of the birthing season.

Attention must be given to health and sanitary aspects, feeding practices, the feed and water provided, as well as other environmental aspects and equipment liable to affect the wellbeing of the animals.

Sick and injured animals must be moved to a special treatment pen with dry, clean and soft bedding. Where individual animals exhibit suspicious symptoms or show signs of undernourishment, the advice of a veterinary must be obtained with regard to the care and treatment to be provided or any further testing. Animals suffering by reason of injury or incurable diseases must be put down.

Horn growth should be carefully monitored to prevent injury, and hoofs must be well cared for.

Sheep or goats must not be tethered on a permanent basis, either outdoors or indoors.

The animals should be kept clean and must be sheared at least once a year. Animals sheared during the winter months must be housed in buildings providing good shelter, and care should be taken to avoid hypothermia and ensure that the animals are well fed.

Shearing apparatus must be properly maintained and disinfected as needed, including when it is moved between sheep farms.

Article 6

Feeding and watering

The quantity, quality and chemical composition of feed must be such as to enable the normal growth, maintenance and production of the animals. When kept inside, lambs not intended for slaughter and first-year sheep must be kept separate from other sheep.

All sheep and goats should have plentiful access to clean and uncontaminated drinking water at all times. Feeding and watering equipment must be designed, installed and maintained in such a way as to minimise any risk of contamination. Sheep and goats should be provided with access to water in sufficient quantities while housed.

Racks for self-feeding must have sufficient room to accommodate, at any one time, at least one-third of the animals having access to them. The racks should be filled as soon as they become empty, and continuous access by the sheep and goats to high-quality feed must be ensured.

Minimum trough spaces are determined by the criteria laid down in Annex I, point A.

The body condition of sheep and goats is to be assessed in accordance with Annex II on body condition scores.

Article 7

Methods, training and competitions

Sheep and goats displayed at special animal exhibitions should be habituated to the presence of humans. The training of sheep or goats may only take place using training methods based on positive reinforcement. The use of training methods based on coercion and punishment is prohibited.

Keepers of sheep or goats which are to be used in the production of advertisements, films or stage performances, or in other situations and/or surroundings which cannot be considered normal for sheep or goats, must notify the Food and Veterinary Authority of the proposed use at least 10 days in advance. The animals may not be used in this way until requirements with regard to housing, equipment, use and adequate knowledge have been met, as confirmed by the Food and Veterinary Authority following an inspection.

Article 8

Veterinary procedures

The procedures of dehorning sheep and goats, where this involves the horn core, and castrating males may only be performed by veterinarians. Sedation must be used for these procedures and long-term analgesics should be used where appropriate. The Food and Veterinary Authority may require the submission of information on all procedures performed on sheep or goats kept at a particular farm or brought in for slaughter, including dehorning and castration procedures.

Article 9

Breeding and reproduction

Animals should be paired so as to avoid the breeding of animals which are known to produce offspring causing considerable birth difficulties.

Article 10

Identification and marking

The marking of sheep and goats for identification purposes is governed by the Regulation on the marking of livestock.

Article 11

Transport, herding and capture

Utmost consideration must always be shown when rounding up or herding sheep or goats, so as to avoid the overexertion of the animals and ensure that they have sufficient access to water.

The transport of sheep and goats is governed by the Regulation on the transport of livestock.

Article 12

Prevention of infection

Cleanliness must be observed around and in the immediate vicinity of sheep or goat houses in order to prevent the introduction of transmissible agents, in addition to pest control.

The entrances of sheep and goat houses must be equipped with facilities for hand washing or for the disinfection of hands, and for the cleaning of footwear. Where this is not feasible, persons entering the houses to provide services and any visitors should wear either protective clothing and footwear provided by the farm or disposable protective clothing. Measures to prevent infection must be applied during the delivery of animals, feed or other supplies to or from the farm.

The aim should always be to avoid disease through preventive measures such as good living conditions and comprehensive feeding practices.

Where a serious infectious disease breaks out at a sheep or goat farm, or there is suspicion of such an outbreak, the keeper of the animals or the farm's veterinarian must notify this to the District Veterinary Officer immediately.

Weaklings and animals suspected of carrying an infectious disease must be separated from the rest of the herd. Those involved in the transport of sheep or goats should ordinarily not enter spaces where the animals are kept in anticipation of transport. Sheep houses built after the entry into force of this Regulation should be constructed so as to make it unnecessary for those involved in the transport of sheep or goats to enter spaces where the animals are kept in anticipation of transport. Means of transport used to bring feed and other supplies to the farm or move products, live animals or other goods away from it should be able to manoeuvre on gravelled or other consolidated surfaces.

Sheep or goats may not be housed in a manner that leads to direct contact with other livestock or to faecal contamination.

Article 13

Killing of animals outside slaughterhouses

Sheep and goats may be killed outside slaughterhouses provided that a captive bolt or free-bullet firearm is used. The animal must be shot in the neck and bled immediately by severing both carotid arteries.

Sheep and goats may also be shot through the chest from a distance where attempts to reach them in other ways have failed. Care must be taken to stun and bleed any animal killed, in accordance with the first paragraph.

Lambs and kids under 14 days old may be killed by a mortal blow to the neck, immediately followed by bleeding.

Seriously sick and/or injured sheep and goats must be killed as soon as possible where no appropriate medical attention can be provided.

The age and physical condition of the animal should guide the choice of a killing device.

In other respects, the killing of sheep and goats is governed by the Regulation on the protection of animals at the time of killing.

SECTION III
Living conditions

Article 14

Living conditions and housing

All sheep and goats must be provided with sufficient housing during the winter. Indoor spatial requirements are as specified in Annex I, point A, and demonstration of compliance with those requirements must be possible at all times where sheep are being fed indoors during the winter.

The area in front of the entrance must be gravelled or paved to ensure that the animals do not become soiled.

Flooring must be of a type ensuring that the animals cannot get their hooves caught or suffer harm in other ways. Flooring with sharp edges or protrusions liable to harm the hoofs or legs of sheep and goats is prohibited. Floors must not be slippery. Dung lying on floors must be kept dry. Flooring must comply with the requirements of Annex I, point B.

In pens where metal grid or metal grate flooring is used, at least 40 per cent of the floor surface must consist of a resting area made of wood or another material with a thermal conductivity similar or inferior to wood.

Furnishings should be designed in a way which does not restrict the natural movement of the animals. Houses must be equipped with mangers, troughs or racks for feeding complying with Annex I, point A.

Article 15

Lighting, air quality and acoustics

All houses must have windows to let in daylight. They should also be equipped with other lighting to ensure that every animal kept in the house can be monitored at all times. Lighting must be located where it does not cause discomfort or pose a risk to the animals. Sheep and goat houses should normally have a level of lighting corresponding to the time of day and to the season. However, maintaining full lighting during the birthing season, as well as subdued lighting during the night at other times, is permitted.

Ventilation in sheep and goat houses must be such as to ensure proper exchange of air and air quality in accordance with Annex I, point C. Air that can pass through spaces where manure is stored may not be used. Particular attention should be given to the temperature of the air when the animals are newly shorn.

Sheep and goats may not be exposed to constant noise or regularly emitted cracking or banging sounds, nor to noise levels exceeding 65 dB in their resting areas.

Article 16

Prevention of accidents

The openings of dung storage rooms must have appropriate covers to prevent animals from falling in. Feed and other materials must be securely stored so as to prevent animals from reaching them.

Damaged and worn furnishings and flooring liable to cause accidents should be repaired without delay.

Article 17

Grazing periods and shelter

All sheep and goats must be allowed to graze for a period of at least 12 weeks between 1 May and 30 September.

When sheep and goats are grazing, measures should always be taken to ensure that their nutritional needs are met and that the grazing areas are not overcrowded.

Animals may not be kept outdoors during the winter where they cannot be fed and where appropriate and regular surveillance is impossible.

Grazing animals should have plentiful access to clean and uncontaminated drinking water at all times.

During the birthing season, ewes and does kept outdoors must be attended to daily.

Goats must have access to shelter against precipitation.

SECTION IV

Miscellaneous provisions

Article 18

Exemptions regarding housing and grazing periods

The Food and Veterinary Authority may grant exemptions from the provisions of Article 14, first paragraph, and Article 17, third paragraph. Such exemptions are restricted to sheep kept on uninhabited, isolated islands in herds of a limited size and where the animals have access to shelter against the elements and to sufficient grazing and water. Applications to obtain an exemption must be submitted to Food and Veterinary Authority and should be duly justified and accompanied by a description of the location and the size of the herd.

Article 19

Penalties

Infringements of this Regulation are subject to the penalties laid down in the Animal Welfare Act, No 55/2013. Infringements will be dealt with in accordance with the Act on Criminal Procedure.

Article 20

Entry into force

This Regulation is issued pursuant to Act No 55/2013 on animal welfare and Act No 25/1993 on animal diseases and measures to control them, as amended. It shall enter into force forthwith. On the entry into force of this Regulation, Regulation No 60/2000 on the control of the living conditions and health status of sheep and goats and of the production of meat and other products from these animals shall be repealed.

Transitional provision

Sheep and goat houses built before the entry into force of this Regulation must meet the requirements laid down in Article 14, fifth paragraph, no later than 31 December 2022.

Ministry of Industries and Innovation, 26 November 2014.

Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson
Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture

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ANNEX I
Minimum dimensions of buildings, furnishings and equipment

A. Spaces in buildings (minimum dimensions):

Floor space must be sufficient to allow all sheep to lie down at one time:	
For all adult sheep and pregnant first-year sheep	0.7 m ²
For first-year sheep	0.6 m ²
For lambs, depending on weight up to 30 kg	0.2 to 0.4 m ²
Lambing pen (reference dimensions 1 m × 1 m)	1.0 m ²
Trough space:	
For adult sheep and pregnant first-year sheep	40 cm
For first-year sheep	36 cm

B. Flooring:

Slatted floors:	
Minimum slat width:	50 mm
Maximum slot width for adult sheep:	22 mm
Ewes with young or year-old lambs, and does with kids	20 mm
Grid floors:	
Maximum interspace width:	20 mm

C. Ventilation and acoustics:

- The ventilation system should be designed based on a calculated capacity of at least 200 m³/hour for each heat production unit. When calculating the number of heat production units each sheep shall count as 0.1 units.
- The concentration of hazardous gases should in principle not be higher than as indicated below:

<i>Gas</i>	<i>Concentration</i>
CO ₂	3,000 ppm
NH ₃	20 ppm
H ₂ S	0.5 ppm

ANNEX II
Feeding and criteria for undernourishment

The feeding level of sheep is to be scored on a 5-degree scale, using half degrees where necessary. The body development of sheep should be considered normal if they have a body condition score ranging between 2 and 4.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>
0	The sheep is emaciated and dying.
1	Spinous processes are prominent and sharp; transverse processes are also sharp, so that fingers can easily be passed under the ends and it is possible to feel between each process. Loin eye muscle is shallow with practically no subcutaneous fat cover.
2	Spinous processes are prominent but smooth, and individual processes can be detected only as minor irregularities; transverse processes are smooth and rounded, and fingers can be passed under the ends with minimal pressure. Loin eye muscle is of average thickness with little subcutaneous fat cover.
3	Spinous processes protrude slightly, are smooth and rounded, and individual processes can be detected only with pressure; transverse processes are smooth and well covered, and firm pressure is needed to feel over the ends. Loin eye muscle is full with a subcutaneous fat cover of average thickness.
4	Spinous processes can be detected only with pressure as a hard line; transverse processes cannot be felt. Loin eye muscle is full with a thick subcutaneous fat cover.
5	Spinous processes cannot be detected, even when applying considerable pressure, and there is a depression in the fat cover where the processes would normally be felt. Loin eye muscle is very full with a very thick subcutaneous fat cover. Lumps of fat are detectable on the croup and on the tail.

Section B – Date of publication: 11 December 2014.