



QAFP SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

General section

WARSAW

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1.INTRODUCTION

With the development of markets and increasing number of links between operators engaged in the production, processing and marketing of agri-food products, the risk of deterioration of their quality increases. As this threat can occur at any stage of the food chain, it is necessary to create a system within which all participants meet established requirements aimed at obtaining higher produce quality parameters which carry with them a guarantee of their repeatability. By creating a system of common relations between successive activities, the level of product control and protection against the possible consequences of adverse events in the food chain increases significantly. The starting point for ensuring food safety is compliance with applicable legal provisions in this respect, while the system provides the opportunity to intensify comprehensive quality supervision over the product throughout the food chain.

As a target, System Participants form a cohesive, specific and unified food chain starting from: producers of breeding and propagating material, producers of feed and primary products, agricultural holdings, processors, logistics operators and ending with the retail sale of products and the offering of food service operations. The system may also include organisations which provide services related to particular food chain activities.

Considering the above, the **Quality Assurance for Food Products (QAFP) System** was created. A detailed description of the system and its requirements is included in the collective document entitled '**QAFP System Requirements**'.

The '**QAFP System Requirements**' lay down the rules for participation in the system, allowing the preservation of the principles of **identification and traceability** at every stage. It was deemed necessary that the application of these principles be confirmed by means of inspections carried out by an independent Certification Body with documented competence, authorised by the **System Administrator**.

The requirements of the currently binding provisions and guidelines were taken into consideration when drafting these '**QAFP System Requirements**'. The reiteration of certain provisions in both the '**QAFP System Requirements**' and in industry notebooks aims to provide a reminder and emphasis that legal provisions apply regardless of their inclusion in the content of the QAFP System.

At the same time, when developing the assumptions of the **QAFP System**, they were not directed towards any specific agricultural market sector; on the contrary – the principle of generality was maintained, thus allowing the creation of a uniform, cohesive and intelligible system permitting mutual promotion of various agri-food products that meet the requirements specified in the '**QAFP System Requirements**' and '**Industry Notebooks**'.

QAFP SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS – General Section								
<i>Horizontal guidelines</i>								
Industry notebook	Industry notebook	Industry notebook	Industry notebook		Industry notebook	Industry notebook	Industry notebook	Industry notebook
Fig	QA	Quality	nce for Food Products					

The QAFP System assumes an open catalogue of Industry Notebooks, which will be created as the QAFP System develops and in line with market needs.

In presenting the 'QAFP Quality Assurance for Food Products System', the authors realise that there is no one, universal standard that is able to meet all the criteria of the holistic approach to the quality and safety of agri-food products. For this reason, action has been taken to establish the QAFP Quality Assurance for Food Products System in which, thanks to defined and supervised criteria and production conditions, it will be possible to ensure high, reproducible and reliable quality of agri-food products. Under the QAFP System, thanks to reliable and available scientific knowledge, verifiable criteria and conditions have been established, the fulfilment of which allows quality and safety in each link in the food chain to be maintained. These criteria will be subject to a continuous process of improvement and definition along with the development of the relevant knowledge and experience.

It should be noted that the QAFP System contains both vertical requirements as well as requirements and verifiable horizontal criteria within the food chain links. Furthermore, under the QAFP System we are faced with the provision of traceability and cross-compliance.

The purpose of developing and implementing the System is to harmoniously combine the requirements and criteria of the horizontal and vertical systems for each link of the production chain of high and guaranteed quality agri-food products. In this system, care for the quality of agri-food products, supported by animal welfare, food safety, GAP, GMP, GLP, is subject to verification by a competent Certification Body. The overriding objective of the development and implementation of the QAFP System is to guarantee the final recipient that the purchased agri-food product not only meets the requirements on food safety, but also provides the buyer with additional, identifiable qualities.

The System is open to all entities that meet the requirements set out in the **'QAFP System Requirements – General Section' and a selected Industry Notebook**.

The following industry notebooks have been issued under the QAFP System:

- a. accredited
 - Industry notebook: 'Culinary pork. Production and quality requirements'.
 - Industry notebook: 'Chicken and turkey carcasses, cuts and meat. Production and quality requirements'.
 - Industry notebook: 'Dried, salted or smoked meat. Production and quality requirements'.
- b. not accredited
 - Industry notebook: Industry notebook: 'Canned food. Production and quality requirements'.
 - Industry notebook: 'Minced meat. Production and quality requirements'.
 - Industry notebook: 'Meat products for grilling or roasting. Production and quality requirements'.

The scope of accreditation of the Certification Body certifying entities under the Quality Assurance

for Food Products (QAFP) System is defined as follows:

Type of certification:	Reference document:
CERTIFICATION OF FOOD PRODUCTS IN THE QAFP PROGRAMME	Quality Assurance for Food Products (QAFP) (Y edition of DD.MM.YYYY)
Groups of operations	QAFP Industry Notebooks
<p>Dried, salted or smoked meat</p> <p>I. Dried, salted or smoked pork and beef</p> <p>1. Smoked meat</p> <p>1.1 Steamed smoked meat</p> <p>1.2 Raw and aged raw smoked meat</p> <p>2. Steamed sausages</p> <p>2.1 Raw and aged raw sausages</p> <p>3. Formed products</p> <p>4. Offal products</p> <p>II. Dried, salted or smoked poultry</p> <p>1. Steamed smoked poultry</p> <p>2. Steamed poultry sausages</p> <p>3. Formed poultry products</p> <p>4. Poultry offal products</p>	<p>Dried, salted or smoked meat. Production and quality requirements. (Y edition of DD.MM.YYYY)</p>
Pigs	<p>Culinary pork meat. Production and quality requirements. (Y edition of DD.MM.YYYY)</p>
Half-carasses	
<p>Pork</p> <p>(loin, ham, shoulder, tenderloin, neck, knuckle, ribs)</p>	
Chickens	<p>Chicken and turkey carcasses, cuts and meat. Production and quality requirements. of DD.MM.YYYY)</p>
Turkeys	
Culinary chicken breast meat	
<p>Chicken carcasses (carcasses without giblets) and cuts (pieces) (carcasses [carcass without giblets], breasts as a whole or cut with or without skin, quarter, leg, thigh, drumstick, whole or cut wing, and deboned carcass cuts meat)</p>	
Culinary turkey breast meat	
<p>Turkey carcasses (carcasses without giblets) and cuts (pieces) (carcass [carcass without giblets], breasts as a whole or cut with or without skin, leg, thigh, drumstick, whole or cut wing, deboned turkey leg meat, deboned carcass cuts meat)</p>	

2.TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

In order to harmonise the terms used in the QAFP System, their respective definitions found in other standards or EU legislation implemented in the Polish law or in Polish legislation, and defined by the QAFP System owner shall apply.

QAFP System Administrator (System owner)

Union of Producers and Employers of the Meat Industry (UPEMI) - an organisation which supervises the correct functioning, continuous improvement and promotion of the QAFP System; the owner of the QAFP mark.

Update

immediate and/or planned action to ensure use of the latest information.

Agri-food products

agricultural products, groundcover, game, marine and freshwater organisms in the form of raw materials, semi-finished products and finished products obtained from these raw materials and semi-finished products, including foodstuffs.

Animal welfare

the state of physical and psychological health achieved under the condition of full harmony in the animal's environment and in conditions which cause no unnecessary suffering, pain or injury.

Documents

information and its medium.

Corrective action

action aimed at eliminating the cause of the detected non-compliance or other undesirable situation.

Production cycle

a sequence of interrelated actions carried out over a specified period of time, the purpose of which is to produce a finished product.

GAP (Good Agricultural Practice)

basic management standards bearing in mind environmental protection that should be observed by every rational farmer. These standards concern: rational management of fertilisers, protection of soils and waters, preservation of valuable habitats and plant and animal species and protection of the agricultural landscape.¹

GHP (Good Hygienic Practice)

actions which must be taken and hygienic conditions which must be met and controlled at all stages of production or marketing in order to ensure food safety.

GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice)

in reference to food production: actions which must be taken and conditions which must be met in order to ensure that food production takes place in a manner which ensures food safety, in accordance with its intended use, and in terms of production of materials and products intended to come into contact with food.

¹ Kodeks dobrej praktyki rolniczej (Good Agricultural Practice Code), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Warsaw 2004

Inspection

testing the product on the basis of the production process at the customer's site and determining its conformity with the specified requirements laid down in the industry notebooks

Inspector

a competent person authorised to inspect entities – an employee of the Certification Body.

Certification Body

a third-party body assessing conformity, acting in the programme of the QAFP System, that has obtained accreditation pursuant to the EN ISO/IEC 17065 standard in the scope of the Quality Assurance for Food Products System.

Final consumer

means the final consumer of a foodstuff who does not use food as part of a food business enterprise.

Mandatory inspection

announced full inspection of all customers with a contract with the Certification Body according to the certification cycle.

Competences

the scope of knowledge, skills and experience.

Food chain

a sequence of stages and processes taking place in the production, processing, distribution, storage and handling of food and its components, from primary production and feed production to the sale or delivery of food to the consumer.

Production batch

a specific quantity of an agri-food article produced, processed or packaged under practically the same conditions, and in the case of animals: a uniform group of individuals of the same species, breed and age, whose rearing took place under the same conditions, at the same time and in the same place.

Entity

customer applying for certification under the QAFP System

Procedure

a determined manner of conducting activities or a process.

Risk

a risk of the occurrence of adverse effects on health and the severity of such effects as a result of the threat.

System - QAFP (Quality Assurance for Food Products)

a system of mutually connected participants in the food chain, applying the principles described in the 'QAFP System Requirements – General Section' and interacting with each other.

Supervisory measures

actions taken to ensure that the finished product meets the System requirements.

System participant

an entity producing, processing, storing, packaging or marketing agri-food products (including an individual agricultural producer) who have obtained a certificate in accordance with the requirements specified in the 'QAFP System Requirements – General Section' documentation

Critical value

a criterion differentiating an acceptable state from an unaccepted one.

Evaluation

confirmation, by providing objective proof, that the requirements specified in the 'QAFP System Requirements – General Section', specific industry notebooks and other provisions applicable to a given System Participant have been met.

Multi-branch organisation

an organisation with an identified head office (hereinafter referred to as the head office - but not necessarily the headquarters of the organisation) where specific actions are planned, supervised or managed, and a network of local offices or branch offices where those actions are carried out in whole or in part.

Producer group

a group of legal or natural persons whose production processes are organised by a supervising organisation. The purpose of allowing group certification is to enable small producers to participate in certification.

Placing on the market

the holding of food or feed for sale, including the offering for sale or any other form of disposal, be it free or not, as well as selling, distribution and other forms of disposal.

Finished product

a product which will not be subjected to further treatment or processing by the System Participant.

Record

a document in which the obtained results or evidence of performed activities are presented.

Occupational health and safety principles

a set of occupational health and safety rules.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR FOOD PRODUCTS (QAFP)

1. Anyone joining the Quality Assurance for Food Products (QAFP) System, hereinafter referred to as 'the System', is obliged to implement the principles of GHP, GMP, GAP, GLP, HACCP and OSH as appropriate for the scope of their business activities.
2. The System Participant should document, implement and maintain the System, the rules for which are set out in the 'QAFP System Requirements – General Section' and in the industry notebook dedicated to their type of activity.
3. The System Administrator publishes and updates the following content on the System website:
 - a) 'QAFP System Requirements – General Section' and the Industry Notebooks referred to in 3.2
 - b) rules for the provision and use of the QAFP mark: The Trademark Regulations of the QAFP Quality Assurance for Food Products System and the Brand Book
4. The System Participant should define the scope of the System, including products or product categories, processes and production sites.
5. The System Participant should:
 - a) ensure that the requirements set out in the System for a given type of activity are met and constantly monitored,
 - b) provide adequate information in the food chain regarding issues related to agri-food products subject to the System principles,
 - c) assess periodically and update, as necessary, the established and implemented procedures in order to meet the requirements of the System,
 - d) ensure that the Certification Body has access to all parts of the production unit and all facilities, as well as to accounting documentation and relevant source documents,
 - e) provide the Certification Body with any information deemed necessary for the purposes of the evaluation,
6. If a System Participant outsources the implementation of any process which may affect the conformity of the finished product, they should ensure supervision of such processes, which should be documented in accordance with the entity's requirements for supervision of subcontracted processes. The supervisory process should include at least a risk assessment of the subcontracted process in terms of the need for an internal audit.
7. The System Participant has the right to submit to the Administrator any comments relating to the functioning of the System and proposals for changes aimed at improving its principles and increasing customer trust. These comments may relate to, inter alia, criteria and checklists for inspection purposes.
8. The System Participant is guaranteed the right to submit complaints regarding the manner of operation of the Certification Body and to appeal against decisions made by it.

9. The System Participant has the right to access up-to-date information on the functioning of the System, its rules and implemented changes, which must be communicated to System Participants in advance. The Administrator shall publish current updates and changes concerning the System on their website and send them to the person responsible for the System at the Certification Body. The Certification Body shall provide information about any necessary changes in its customers' System.
10. The System Participant is guaranteed impartiality, objectivity and confidentiality by the System Administrator and Certification Bodies participating in the evaluation process in the scope of all activities carried out at their enterprise and information obtained during this process.

3.1. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPANT'S ACCESSION TO THE SYSTEM

1. In order to begin their participation, the System Participant is obliged to submit such intention in writing/electronically to the System Administrator who keeps a register of submitted applications. It is also possible to apply to a selected Certification Body, which is obliged to send the application (Application for participation in the QAFP Food Quality Assurance System) to the System Administrator for registration.
2. Applications are made on an application form (Application for participation in the QAFP Food Quality Assurance System), the model for which is provided by the System Administrator and which is also available on the System website.
3. The following shall be attached to the submission:
 - a. documents confirming the applicant's status (e.g. tax identification number, National Official Business Register number or corresponding identifiers used in other Member States),
 - b. production plans specifying the size and type of production (in the case of agricultural holdings: animal production plans)
4. If the data provided in the application form (Application for participation in the QAFP Food Quality Assurance System) changes, the System Participant is obliged to immediately inform the System Administrator of such using the appropriate form (Change of data in the Application for participation in the QAFP Food Quality Assurance System), available from the System Administrator and the System website.
5. The entity that submits an application for participation has the right to choose the Certification Body that will evaluate its operations notified to the System and has the right to change the Certification Body during the period of participation in the System.
6. The System Administrator submits the application (Application for participation in the QAFP Food Quality Assurance System) to the Certification Body selected by the applicant.
7. Once the Certification Body has confirmed fulfilment of the 'QAFP System Requirements – General Section' and the requirements specified in the indicated Industry Notebook, it issues a certificate confirming that the requirements have been met in the requested scope. The certificate is valid for 12 months.
8. The certificate is issued on numbered forms and should contain the following information:
 - a. the certificate number;
 - b. the participant's details (name and address);
 - c. the basis for issuing the certificate (evaluation criteria);

- d. the scope of certification – name of the Industry Notebook, date of its issue and type of activity (production/transport/slaughter/cutting/distribution, etc.);
 - e. the name and address of the Certification Body issuing the certificate;
 - f. the certificate validity period,
 - g. the date and place of issue of the certificate (granting certification).
9. The entity that obtained a certificate signs a contract with the System Administrator for participation in the System, which defines the rights and obligations of the System Participant and the rules for the use of the mark and the labelling of products in accordance with the Regulations on the Use of the Mark (Trademark Regulations of the QAFP Quality Assurance for Food Products) and the Brand Book.
 10. The System Participant shall bear the cost of inspections in accordance with the price list set out by the Certification Bodies, as well as the cost of tests in case of taking samples during inspections specified on the basis of risk assessment.
 11. The System Participant shall pay a System membership fee, the amount of which is determined and made public by the System Administrator and included in the cost of certification by the Certification Body.
 12. Each of the QAFP System Participants is required to:
 - a. inform the Certification Body of any changes to previously submitted information,
 - b. immediately notify the Certification Body of any identified discrepancies concerning agri-food products placed on the market with the QAFP Trademark
 13. If a System Participant submits a notification, referred to in 3.1.12(b), they have the right to obtain information regarding the further course of proceedings carried out by the Certification Body in agreement with the System Administrator and the outcome of the case in question.

3.2. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION OF A CERTIFICATION BODY IN THE SYSTEM

1. The System Administrator authorises Certification Bodies to carry out evaluations within the System.
2. A Certification Body should have at their disposal inspectors who meet the following requirements:
 - a. education – higher education covering: agriculture, animal production and rearing, veterinary services, food technology or commodity science
 - b. certificate of completion of training on the knowledge of the System, carried out by the Union of Meat Industry Producers and Employers (UPEMI), in the industry notebook in the field in which the inspector will carry out inspection. The training may be conducted in English and on-line
 - c. at least three years of professional experience
 - d. experience in the performance of agri-food product assessment inspections, i.e. participation in at least five inspections in the last two years. In case of a lack of experience in inspections/audits, at least three training inspections are required to be carried out in the presence of a qualified inspector, ending with an inspection confirming the experience.
 - e. in the absence of the required education, at least six years of professional experience related to the relevant industry notebook

3. Competence criteria for employees of Certification Bodies to carry out a certification process are determined by individual Certification Bodies with the use of internal procedures, depending on the specificity of work and organisational structure of the Certification Body, but they have to maintain impartiality while conducting conformity assessments.
4. The principles of Certification Body operations, cooperation with the System Administrator and the granting of authorisation are specified in the agreement between the Certification Body and the System Administrator.
5. The System Administrator grants the Certification Body a one-year transition period (from the date of signing an agreement between the Certification Body and the Administrator) for obtaining accreditation in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065 within the scope of the QAFP Food Quality Assurance System.
6. The System Administrator maintains and publishes a list of authorised Certification Bodies on the website of the System.
7. The System Administrator shall provide Certification Bodies with printed copies of certificates, with full numerical registration of the issued copies. The Certification Body is obliged to inform the System Administrator of collected certificates and indicate the entity to which a given certificate was granted.
8. The Certification Body maintains a register of issued certificates.
9. Certification Bodies must publish procedures regarding the submission of complaints and appeals.
10. The System Administrator and the Certification Body are obliged to keep separate records for received complaints and appeals within their internal procedures.

3.3. REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING SYSTEM PARTICIPANT DOCUMENTATION

1. System Participant documentation should contain:
 - a. documents needed by the System Participant to ensure effectiveness of the implementation of the 'QAFP System Requirements - General Section' and the requirements specified in dedicated industry notebooks.
 - b. provisions required by these 'QAFP System Requirements - General Section' and the requirements set out in the dedicated industry notebooks.
2. A System Participant is obliged to store documentation and records regarding the qualifications of staff employed in operations related to the manufacturing of products bearing the QAFP mark.
3. A System Participant should maintain records in order to provide evidence of compliance with the 'QAFP System Requirements - General Section' and the requirements set out in the dedicated industry notebooks throughout the production cycle, starting from the purchase of goods or services to the delivery of the finished product to the recipient. The records referred to in 3.3.4 shall be maintained for the indicated purpose and on the indicated conditions regardless of whether they are also maintained in order to implement the provisions of the law. This obligation does not infringe upon nor limit the requirements for monitoring food, animal feed, breeding animals and any substances intended for adding to food or animal feed, or which may be added to them. The same applies to the System Participant's Production Records referred to in 3.3.7.

4. Records kept in the form of registers should be:
 - a. adequate to the scale and scope of operations
 - b. legible, easy to identify and find.
5. If a System Participant operates several production units, they shall submit to the Certification Body a statement on the type and size of production at individual units.
6. The period during which such records and documents must be kept may not be shorter than five years from the end of the year in which the certificate was issued.
7. Each batch of product/animals must be identified at all stages of production and distribution.
8. Specified batches of animals, raw materials, semi-finished products and products must be marked so that their identification is possible in a quick and unambiguous manner.

4. INSPECTIONS

4.1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Certification Body performs an obligatory inspection of all System Participants at least once a year.
2. Inspections consist in the verification of: information provided by the System Participant, the accurate application of System Requirements, the manner of using the certificate and confirmation of the effectiveness of corrective action in the event of non-conformity.
3. The scope of the inspection covers all requirements specified in the industry notebooks related to monitoring, verification and validation of processes, for the compliance with which entities are certified.
4. Inspections are carried out on the basis of checklists which are developed by the System Administrator and are obligatory to be used during inspections in order to collect evidence from the conducted tasks.
5. The Certification Body shall, in addition to the regular mode, carry out unannounced inspections and/or inspections announced shortly beforehand – up to three calendar days. Each entity is subject to an equal probability of undergoing an unannounced inspection as determined on the basis of a risk assessment.
6. The frequency of unannounced and/or short-notice inspections shall depend on the results of previous inspections and the types of risk associated with the products and processes.
7. The following factors (A) are taken into account in risk assessment:
 - a) Number of products covered by the QAFP certification / size of herd / type of certified products / production volume
 - b) Derogations granted
 - c) Results of previous inspections (Non-conformity found during the inspections).

We distinguish three types of risk (B):

- a) Low level of importance (1),
- b) Medium level of importance (2),
- c) High level of importance (3),

Risk (R) = Value A x Value B

Depending on the process, thresholds qualifying risk as low, medium or high were defined in individual risk assessments depending on the industry notebook.

8. Unannounced and/or short-notice inspections shall be carried out at a minimum of 5% of the number of the QAFP System Participants certified by the Certification Body in the previous calendar year (the number is determined by mathematical rounding of the obtained result). If the number of certified participants is lower than 20 per calendar year, a minimum of one unannounced or short-notice inspection shall be carried out. If an entity has one certified participant in a calendar year, an unannounced inspection or short-notice inspection shall be carried out at least once every three years. The participants of the system with the highest level of risk are selected for inspection. Where a customer with the highest level of risk has been subject to an unannounced or short-notice inspection in the last three years, another customer with a high or sequentially medium or low risk, who has not been subject to an unannounced or short-notice inspection in the last three years, is selected. When selecting participants for unannounced/short-notice inspections, the Certification Body is primarily guided by how big the estimated risk is and secondly by ensuring that participants from different risk groups and certification areas (industry notebooks) are subjected to the above-mentioned inspections, where it is assumed that it is more probable that a participant who has not yet had an unannounced/short-notice inspection will be selected.
9. During additional inspections determined on the basis of a risk assessment, the Certification Body shall take samples in order to confirm the application of System Requirements or to detect any contamination, changes in composition or other characteristics of the product that may mislead the customer. Samples should be taken in accordance with applicable laws, ISO standards, the guidelines of Codex Alimentarius and good laboratory practice. Sampling methodology is defined in the procedures of the Certification Body.
10. The analysis of the samples taken shall be carried out in laboratories accredited for the testing methodology to be performed.
11. Where the requirements of the industry notebook indicate that environmental measurements must be taken, e.g. in the case of pig breeding, the Certification Body provides inspectors with the required measuring and inspection equipment for measurements confirming compliance with the requirements of the given industry notebook. This equipment should be included in the process of supervision of the measuring equipment (e.g. calibration).
12. Samples are taken at min. 5% of the number of QAFP System Participants certified by the TRP in the previous calendar year (the number is determined by mathematical rounding of the result obtained). If the number of certified participants is lower than 20 per calendar year, samples shall be taken from at least one entity from each certified product. If the entity has one certified participant per calendar year, samples from them shall be taken at least once every three years. It is recommended, if possible, that samples are taken from customers who undergo simultaneous unannounced and/or short-notice inspections. Sampling may be carried out by taking samples of certified products for laboratory analysis and by measuring environmental parameters with measuring and inspection equipment for animal breeding.
13. After each inspection, an inspection report is prepared, which is signed by the System Participant or by a representative having their authorisation.
14. Evidence collected during the inspection is subject to analysis at the Certification Body and based on that analysis, a decision is made about granting certification, its continuation, extension, limitation, suspension or withdrawal.

4.2. TYPES OF CERTIFICATION

The following types of certification are possible under the System:

1. **Single certification** - applies to a single entity/plant.

2. **Multi-branch certification**

Multi-branch certification applies to multi-branch organisations encompassing several branches (with the application of principles set out in IAF MD1) and where sampling of branches may be used by the Certification Body in its conformity assessment work, under the conditions laid down in document EA-6/04. The scope of certification covers actual products and processes as defined in the normative documents describing the given programme.

3. **Group certification**

In group certification, a group of producers (a group of legal or natural persons whose production processes are organised by a supervising organisation) consists of members. Each member may have one or more branches. The purpose of allowing group certification is to enable small producers to participate in the certification system. Therefore, the size of member entities in a group is limited. Members are not entitled to be certified by a Certification Body. The detailed rules are laid down in document EA-6/04.

5. PRINCIPLES OF PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND MARKETING OF PRODUCTS IN THE SYSTEM

5.1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Agricultural holdings and enterprises engaged in processing, transport, marketing or other operations under QAFP food channels shall meet the applicable national and EU legal requirements.
2. A System Participant may separate, chronologically or physically, part of the production space for production carried out by methods other than QAFP methods.
3. In the case of conducting activities with the use of different methods, documentation should be kept that confirms that they are actually separated. The obligation to keep records and evidence lies with the System Participant.
4. In addition to the general principles set out in 5.1 in animal production, the following rules apply:
 - a. holdings that apply QAFP methods do not engage in practices that lead to environmental degradation;
 - b. animals have a documented origin and only represent breeds specified in the Industry Notebooks;
 - c. animals are kept in accordance with the QAFP rules throughout the whole production period;
 - d. the method of rearing, including staffing and indoor conditions, ensures the developmental, physiological and ethological needs of animals are met;
 - e. the animal transport time is kept to a minimum; animal needs are taken into consideration during the transport; transport is carried out by means that allow for the prevention of injury and suffering and ensure the safety of animals;
 - f. animal feeds come from legally approved/registered plants and meet the legal requirements regarding the possibility of their monitoring and identification, and their use is fully documented;

- g. feed should be kept away from chemicals and other products unfit for animal consumption. The feed storage areas and containers must be clean and dry and, if necessary, pest control measures must be implemented. The feed storage areas and containers should be cleaned regularly in order to avoid undesirable cross-contamination. Grains should be stored in an appropriate manner and inaccessible to animals. Medicated feeds and other feeds intended for individual animal categories or species are stored in a manner reducing the risk of feeding them to animals for which they are not intended;
- h. the diet and feeds used must satisfy the animals' nutritional needs at all stages of their development. The feeds used must be safe and must not have direct negative impact on the environment or animal welfare.
- i. animals are subject to constant veterinary care;
- j. the use of veterinary medicinal products is only possible if:
 - they have been prescribed by a veterinary physician;
 - they are used in accordance with the instructions of a veterinarian;
 - the minimum withdrawal periods are observed;
- k. all veterinary medicinal products must be stored in a safe place and in accordance with the instructions on the packaging; access to veterinary medicinal products is available only to authorised persons,
- l. in order to prevent diseases effectively, when production cycles are used, appropriate periods should be allowed between them, in which enclosures and paddocks remain empty due to disinfection;
- m. manure and post-production waste must be stored in accordance with applicable regulations;
- n. animal husbandry takes place under welfare conditions and meets the requirements laid down in the applicable legal provisions;
- o. animal production personnel should:
 - have the necessary, documented knowledge about health and needs related to animal welfare;
 - be trained in emergency procedures, contingency plans and procedures that have been developed in order to address potential emergencies such as fire, flood and accidents at work;
 - have access to the list of emergency telephone numbers that can be used in emergencies;
 - be provided with working conditions in a clean and safe workplace, with free access to toilets, adequate lighting, access to clean locations for meals and with convenient access to drinking water, adequately ventilated and/or heated rooms and access to first-aid kits and necessary equipment in the event of an emergency;
 - have a guaranteed schedule that allows for breaks appropriate for the workload associated with a given job;
 - have other required skills, knowledge or competence necessary to correctly care for and feed animals.

5.2. PRODUCTION OF PROCESSED FOOD

1. In addition to the general principles set out in 5.1, the requirements set out in the Industry Notebooks shall apply to the production of processed food.
2. No use shall be made of substances and techniques that reproduce properties lost during the processing and storage of processed food, repair the effects of negligence during processing or otherwise mislead with respect to the true nature of products.

6. INTERNAL AUDITS

1. The System Participant should carry out documented activities aimed at verifying the correctness of operations resulting from the 'QAFP System Requirements - General Section' and industry notebooks dedicated to their production. These activities may be carried out as internal audits or self-audits (in the case of agricultural holdings or sole proprietorships).
2. Internal audits should be carried out according to a set plan. The scope (including external areas) and frequency should be determined by risk analysis.
3. Internal audits should be conducted at least once a year in all departments and areas covered by the System.
4. Auditors should have documented competence in the knowledge about the System and audit methodology, and be independent of the audited areas.
5. The results of the audits must be communicated to the person responsible for the given area of operations.
6. Necessary corrective action and an implementation schedule should be established, documented and communicated to every interested party responsible for the implementation of activities under the System.
7. The implementation of corrective action should be verified and the results of internal audits should be communicated to the management of the entity.
8. In the case of agricultural holdings or sole proprietorships, the conduct of audits may be replaced by continuous self-monitoring. The obligation to carry it out and document it rests with the owner of the holding or sole proprietorship.

7. LABELLING

1. Agri-food products may only be labelled with the QAFP mark if the producer or labeller holds a valid certificate for the product in question and a signed contract with the System Administrator for the use of the QAFP mark. Absence of a signed contract with the System Administrator does not authorise the entity to use the QAFP mark on their label.
2. The type of information indicating the linking of an agri-food product with the System and the manner of its inclusion on labels, hangers, tags, excise bands, ties, in advertising folders, media advertisements or other carriers must be consulted with the System Administrator.
3. The information referred to in 7.2 should be supplemented with the website address at which consumers may obtain more information about the System. Alternatively, this information may be placed at the point of sale which markets the products bearing the QAFP mark.
4. In the event of loss of the right to use the QAFP mark, the System Participant shall immediately stop placing the QAFP mark and information suggesting a link between the agri-food article and the System on all items containing information intended for the customer or recipient.

8. SUPERVISION OF THE SYSTEM

8.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTICIPANT

1. All System Participants exercise all due diligence in order to meet the 'QAFP System Requirements - General Section' and the industry notebooks dedicated to their business.
2. Should there be any irregularities in the functioning of the System, the Participant shall notify the System Administrator about this fact. The notification may be provided in written or oral form and shall contain information on the identified deficiency and its scale.
3. In the event of irregularities regarding raw materials or material intended for further production, the Participant shall record the information in the document confirming the quality of the received product, a copy of which shall be sent to the System Administrator.

8.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR

1. The QAFP System Administrator supervises the functioning of the system through:
 - a) communication with authorised persons from the Certification Bodies within the scope of applicable Industry Notebooks and other current issues;
 - b) random ownership inspections of entities (System Participants);
 - c) taking samples of certified QAFP products placed on the market from a shop shelf or analysing the results of samples taken by Certification Bodies as part of the sampling;supervising the correct application of the QAFP mark by System Participants.

8.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CERTIFICATION BODY

1. The Certification Body shall supervise the system by carrying out additional inspections and sampling prescribed on the basis of risk assessment.
2. Any irregularities reported to the System Administrator are passed on to the Certification Body, which is obliged to immediately undertake explanatory action.
3. The outcome of the conducted explanatory action is submitted to all interested parties by the Certification Body.
4. The Certification Body shall document procedures for handling non-conformities, including the criteria for action, which may lead to:
 - a) failure to issue or withdrawal of the certificate;
 - b) withdrawal of membership in the QAFP System;
 - c) the matter being reported to the competent, official executive body in the event of non-compliance which poses a health risk.

9. EXEMPTIONS

1. Derogations from the requirements of the QAFP System may be made following prior approval by the System Administrator.
2. In order to obtain the consent referred to in point 1, the System Participant submits a request to the System Administrator with a detailed description of the proposed derogation.
3. The System Administrator, in granting consent to specific derogations, creates at the same time a catalogue of derogations, which is subject to periodic analysis. The catalogue is available from the System Administrator.

4. Derogations must not affect food safety, any characteristics required by the system, and must ensure high quality of the final product.
5. The rules for granting derogations and their categories are specified in a separate document available from the System Administrator.

10. SANCTIONS IN THE APPLICATION OF THE CERTIFICATION MARK

In view of the correct implementation of the System assumptions by all of its Participants, the Administrator makes a decision in the case of violation of the provisions of the Regulations (Trademark Regulations of the QAFP Food Quality Assurance System). A sanction against an entity violating the Regulations may be:

- an admonition (in the case of failure to meet the conditions of the Regulations);
- a warning (after a second inspection showing that an existing issue has not been remedied);
- a termination of the Agreement with the System Administrator.

When deciding on sanctions, the System Administrator is guided by safeguarding the good reputation of the collective guarantee trademark and protecting consumer rights.

11. FINAL REMARKS

1. All System Participants and Certification Bodies have the right to submit comments and proposals for changes aimed at improving the functioning of the System.

12. REPORT FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

1. Each authorised Certification Body shall submit to the System Administrator a report on the System operation for the previous year no later than by 31 January of each year.
2. The report should contain information on the number of System Participants and the type and volume of production under supervision.
3. If non-conformities are found during an inspection, an additional element of the report shall be information on the non-conformities found and the manner of their correction.

QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR FOOD PRODUCTS (QAFP)



INDUSTRY NOTEBOOK CULINARY PORK

Production and quality requirements

WARSAW

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1. INTRODUCTION

For a number of years, both in Poland and across Europe, pig breeding has focused on improving their meat content. In practice, this means using data from station and farm inspections (ultrasonic measurements of backfat thickness) to select the animals (replacement gilts and young boars) with the highest ability to accumulate large amounts of protein during growth. By means of such selection, animals are chosen for breeding based on their high mass growth, good feed conversion, low fat content and good flesh development. Animals selected in this way should be the basis for increasing mass within the pig population.

The meat industry is one of the most important parts of the food industry from the perspective of both producers and consumers.

The QAFP System offers the possibility of stimulating the pig meat market, opening it to export and promoting pig meat effectively by enhancing cooperation across all elements of the culinary pork production and sales chain.

Every element of the culinary pork production chain within the QAFP must meet all the quality requirements in numerous fields, including animal welfare, consumer health and safety, and high culinary meat quality.

This document lays down the requirements for entities operating in the field of pig breeding, transport and slaughter, and meat-cutting and distribution, in order to guarantee high-quality culinary pork produced within the QAFP.

2. DEFINITIONS

Culinary pork covered by the QAFP quality mark

Cuts – sirloin, ham, neck, shoulder, tenderloin, ribs, knuckle – as whole muscles or divided into smaller culinary portions produced in accordance with the QAFP System objectives and which meet the System's quality requirements.

Sirloin

cut from the thoracic lumbar region of the half-carcass; the cut lines run:

- from the front – between the fourth and fifth thoracic vertebra;
- from the top – along the carcass division line;
- from the rear – along the line of the separation of the hip, i.e. along the front edge of the wing of the hip bone, so that the cartilage part of the side stays at the loin;
- from the bottom – in a straight line at a distance of 3 cm below the lower limit of the attachment of the longissimus dorsi to the ribs; fat removed from the loin; however, it may be covered with a layer of fat 2–5 mm thick, depending on the further intended purpose; the loin contains split thoracic vertebrae from the fifth to the last together with the adjacent upper sections of the ribs and split lumbar vertebrae; the main muscles: the longissimus dorsi, multifidus dorsi, spinalis and psoas major (i.e. inner loin).

Ham without knuckle

knuckle cut from the ham at 1/3 of the length of the shin bone, counting down from the knee joint;

halved sacral vertebrae and groin fat fold cut out; fat from the external surface of the ham should be removed but a fat layer of up to 2 cm may be left; the ham consists of pelvic bones (ischium, pubis and ilium without the wing), the femur with the patella, 1/3 of the shin bone (fibula and tibial bone) and muscles: the semimembranosus, quadriceps, biceps femoris, semitendinosus, gluteal, the gastrocnemius without the lower part.

Pork neck

cut from the neck section of the half-carcass; the cut lines run:

- from the front – on the head separation line;
- from the rear – along the line of the separation of the loin. i.e. with a cut perpendicular to the spine between the fourth and fifth thoracic vertebra and the corresponding ribs;
- from the top – along the carcass division line;

- from the bottom – along the cervical vertebrae bodies and further cutting the ribs parallel to the thoracic vertebrae; fat completely removed; the neck consists of seven split cervical vertebrae, four split anterior thoracic vertebrae with upper ribs; main muscles; neck muscles and part of the longissimus dorsi.

Shoulder without knuckle

cut from the half-carcass without the skin fold and without armpit fat; knuckle cut from the bottom at the elbow joint so that the antebrachial bone and the lower epiphysis of the humerus remain at the knuckle and part of the olecranon remains at the shoulder; muscles and their surrounding fascia intact: the shoulder without the knuckle includes the shoulder bone with the cartilage, the humerus shoulder bone without the lower epiphysis of the humerus and part of the olecranon; main muscles: supraspinatus, infraspinatus, subscapularis, triceps.

Tenderloin

a boneless element consisting of the entire internal lumbar muscle and the part of the iliacus completely free of fat and membranes.

Ribs

cut from the thoracic region of the half-carcass; the cut lines run - from the bottom – along the line below the lower edge of the sternum and costal cartilages;

- from the front – along the front edge of the first rib;
- from the rear – along the rear edge of the last rib;
- from the top – along the line of the separation of the loin when cutting bacon and ribs off the half-carcass – ribs consist of the first four ribs with the cartilage part and a section of halved sternum as well as the ribs remaining where the bacon with ribs and the loin were cut from the half-carcass; ribs are covered with a thin layer of muscle and fat and consist of rib bones without the parts left at the loin and neck, and half of the sternum bone; the main muscles: external and internal intercostal muscles.

Knuckle

Rear knuckle

cut from the ham at 1/3 of the length of the shin bone, counting down from the knee joint: leg cut off above the ankle joint, heel bone left at the leg;

the knuckle contains 2/3 of the shin bones (fibula and tibial bone) without the lower epiphysis;

main muscles: extensor digitorum and flexor digitorum profundus.

Front knuckle

cut from the shoulder at the elbow joint so that the forearm without part of the olecranon and without the lower epiphysis of the antebrachial bone remains in the knuckle; the foreleg is cut off so that the bones of the wrist remain with it; the knuckle contains the lower epiphysis of the humerus and of the antebrachial bone (the ulna and the radius) without the part of the olecranon remaining at the shoulder; main muscles: extensor digitorum and flexor digitorum profundus.

Culinary pork covered by the QAFP quality mark must:

- a) be characterised by pinkish-red colour, correct structure and lack of excessive free leakage;
- b) have no quality defects;
- c) for sirloin (the *longissimus* muscle): be characterised by intramuscular fat content of 2–3%.

Culinary pork covered by the QAFP quality mark may not be:

- a) frozen,
- b) injected or subjected to any other treatments involving the introduction of water or any other additional substances.

3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION PLAN

1. In order to obtain a QAFP certificate, a pig producer should have and implement a plan to reduce the carbon footprint (CF) of their holding by a minimum of 10% within five years from the start date of the plan's implementation.
2. The audit to determine the carbon footprint of a holding is carried out by an independent entity authorised to do so in accordance with the tools available on the market².
3. On the basis of the above audit, a five-year plan to reduce the carbon footprint of the holding shall be drawn up by an independent entity authorised to do so.
4. The plan shall contain annual objectives and the manner of their achievement.

4.1. The plan should take into account issues related to pig feeding and rearing and production elements, such as:

² Indicators used to calculate the carbon footprint should be based on officially recognised tools or calculators. The currently available methodologies for calculating carbon footprint (CF), officially used in calculations, are the BSI PAS 2050 standard in the ISO14040 and 14044 standards (LCA analysis methodology) and the IPCC 2006 database updated annually.

- a) Change of heat and/or energy sources in a producer's infrastructure from conventional sources (fossil fuels such as coal, diesel or natural gas) to renewable energy sources (biomass boilers, PV modules, heat pumps, biogas plants, wind, water, geothermal, biomethane, cogeneration, hybrid installations);
- b) Management of waste from production (fertilisers, biogas plants), especially manure, measures to reduce odour and ammonia emissions in accordance with BAT recommendations for pigs.

4.2 For pigs, the reduction of NH₃ emissions is based on one or more of the following principles:

- a) reducing the area contaminated by manure;
 - b) fast removal of urine; fast separation of faeces and urine;
 - c) reducing the flow rate and air temperature above the manure;
 - d) reducing the pH and temperature of the manure;
 - e) manure drying;
 - f) removal (scrubber) of NH₃ from exhaust air;
 - g) direct application of manure to soil - reduces NH₃ emissions by 20%
5. The producer is obliged to start the implementation of the carbon footprint reduction plan, prepared by an independent entity authorised to do so, within three months of the date of a written confirmation of its adoption.
6. An independent entity authorised to carry out a carbon footprint audit shall inspect the level of the reduction of the carbon footprint on the farm 12 months after the date of the implementation of the plan to reduce the carbon footprint by the producer.

4. PIG REARING

4.1 PIG GENOTYPE

1. Weaners accepted for fattening should originate from reproductive selection within the same breeds: wbp [Polish Large White], pbz [Landrace], Puławska, Złotnicka White, Złotnicka Pstra, or commercial cross-breeding: double-breed (wbp [Polish Large White] × pbz [Landrace], pbz [Landrace] × wbp [Polish Large White], Puławska × wbp [Polish Large White], wbp [Polish Large White] × Puławska, Złotnicka White × wbp [Polish Large White]) or triple-breed (wbp [Polish Large White] × pbz [Landrace] × Duroc, pbz [Landrace] × wbp [Polish Large White] × Duroc and Puławska × wbp [Polish Large White] × Duroc, Złotnicka White × wbp [Polish Large White] × Duroc). Duroc boars may be substituted by other finishing boars of known origin, free from recessive RYR1^T and RN⁻ genes.
2. Weaners bred under programmes run by hybrid animal-producing companies can be fattened, as long as their origin is known.
3. The area encompassed by the System starts at the stage of piglet production.
4. The condition for accepting weaners for fattening is proving that the pig farms the material used for their production originates from are free from the recessive RYR^T gene. Similar requirements apply to companies producing hybrid animals.

4.2. ANIMAL FEEDING

1. Animals must be provided with feed in the amount and of nutritional value appropriate for their breed, age, weight and physiological condition.
2. Pigs must be fed at least once a day.
3. Pigs kept in groups must be given access to feed simultaneously.
4. The equipment and animal feeding and drinking facilities are located so as to minimise the possibility of feed or water contamination and provide these animals with conflict-free access to feed and water.
5. In addition to vitamins and minerals, premixtures used for feeding pigs may contain other substances permitted by law.
6. It is forbidden to add any feed additives not entered in the Register of Feed Additives or materials referred to in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 767/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the placing on the market and use of feed, amending European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 and repealing Council Directive 79/373/EEC, Commission Directive 80/511/EEC, Council Directives 82/471/EEC, 83/228/EEC, 93/74/EEC, 93/113/EC and 96/25/EC and Commission Decision 2004/217/EC (OJ EU L 229 of 1.9.2009, p. 1, as amended).

7. Due to the muscle coverage of the carcass and feed conversion, fattening must be terminated upon reaching the body mass of 95–135 kg.

4.3. REARING CONDITIONS

1. Every holding must be supervised by a veterinarian.
2. Any person handling animals should have documented knowledge of pig husbandry.
3. The producer shall draw up and implement, together with a veterinarian, a plan to minimise the use of antibiotics at the holding. The plan shall include, among other things, avoiding the use of medicines that the European Medicines Agency (EMA) considers Highest Priority Critically Important Antibiotics (HP-CIAs) in treating humans.
4. The producer shall make available to the inspector written information concerning the use of antibiotics at the holding, prepared and confirmed jointly by the producer and the veterinarian.
5. The producer is obliged to comply with the holding's biosecurity rules.

4.4. ANIMAL WELFARE

1. The condition of farmed animals must be checked at least twice a day.
2. Premises where animals are kept are equipped with fixed or portable artificial lighting that allows the inspection of animals at any time.
3. Premises where animals are kept, their equipment and instruments used when keeping animals are made from materials harmless to the animals and suitable for cleaning and disinfection. They must be cleaned and disinfected.
4. Livestock buildings and facilities must be constructed with no elements sticking out or sharp elements which could harm animals or cause them suffering.
5. Premises for pigs must have artificial light with an intensity of at least 40 lx for a minimum of eight hours per day.
6. There must not be constant or sudden noise in the premises for pigs and volume levels must not exceed 85 dB.
7. Premises where pigs are kept must be equipped with an appropriate, efficient ventilation system including emergency ventilation and an alarm/warning system. On premises in which animals are kept, the air circulation, level of pollination, temperature, relative humidity and concentration of gases shall be kept at a level harmless to the animals.
8. On premises where pigs are kept:
 - a) the NH_3 concentration must not exceed 20 ppm,
 - b) the H_2S concentration must not exceed 5 ppm,
 - c) the CO_2 concentration must not exceed 3 000 ppm.

9. Premises for pigs must be constructed in a way that protects the animals from adverse weather conditions and significant differences in climatic conditions.
10. The temperature in premises where pigs are reared should be maintained at 16 to 18 °C, taking into account their age and keeping conditions.
11. Pig housing shall have a space allowance per sow at least 20% larger than the minimum space allowance required by the relevant legislation in force.
12. Pig housing shall have a space allowance per fattening pig at least 20% larger than the minimum space allowance required by the relevant legislation in force.
13. In spaces where pigs are reared, materials that attract the attention of the animals and/or manipulable materials (such as, ball-type toys, chains, straw, sawdust, etc.) shall be provided. Pigs of all age groups and keeping methods shall have permanent access to these materials and worn out toys shall be replaced with new ones. The way toys are attached should satisfy pigs' natural need to root; hence, they must be hung so that they partially touch the floor. An adequate number of toys shall be provided in relation to the number of pigs in the pen, i.e. a minimum of one toy per 15 animals. When symptoms of cannibalism (bitten ears, tails, sides) appear, the number of toys should be increased and a greater variety of enrichment materials available to the animals should be provided.

4.5. PIG PURCHASE

1. Only animals bred in accordance with the QAFP requirements may be purchased.
2. The purchase of pigs should be carried out in a way that minimises an adverse impact on animals, in particular limiting their stress and fatigue. The organisation of the purchase of animals from which meat is obtained, for which said quality mark can be used, only allows for loading (at the breeder's holding) and unloading (in a slaughterhouse) once.
3. Full identification regarding the genotype, environmental conditions of rearing and feeding conditions must be kept throughout the purchasing process.

4.6. PREPARATION FOR TRANSPORT TO A SLAUGHTERHOUSE

1. At least three weeks before achieving slaughter weight, fattened pigs must not be fed feed containing ingredients which influence the sensory or technological value of the carcass. The use of fishmeal, stillage and whey is prohibited, and it is recommended to limit the use of maize middlings and rapeseed oilcakes.

5. TRANSPORT OF ANIMALS

1. The transport of pigs to a slaughterhouse, including their loading onto a vehicle at the breeder's holding and their unloading at the slaughterhouse, must be carried out with particular care for their welfare, in a way that takes into account natural animal behaviour and minimises their agitation. It is forbidden to transport or commission the transport of animals in a manner that causes injury or contributes to their suffering.
2. Every person handling pigs during their transport as well as loading and unloading must be properly trained for such activities. Drivers must have proven authorisation for road animal transport.
3. Only persons who have in their means of transport documents stating the following are authorised to transport animals:
 - a) the origin and owner of the animals;
 - b) their place of departure;
 - c) the date and time of departure;
 - d) their intended destination;
 - e) the expected duration of the intended journey.

The carrier shall make the documentation available to the competent authority upon request.

5.1. LOADING/UNLOADING OF ANIMALS

1. Animals must not be kicked or hit. The use of instruments causing electric shock shall be kept to a minimum. In certain cases they may be used on adult pigs which refuse to move, and only when they have room ahead of them. Shocks should last no longer than one second, be adequately spaced, and only applied to the muscles of the hindquarters. Shocks must not be used repeatedly if the animal fails to respond.
2. When driving animals, any activities which could cause their pain and suffering, including beating, applying unnecessary pressure, lifting or pulling, are unacceptable.
3. Passageways and loading/unloading ramps through which animals move must minimise the risk of slipping. Ramps must not be steeper than an angle of 20 degrees – 36.4% to the horizontal plane for pigs. Where the slope is steeper than 10 degrees – 17.6% to the horizontal plane – ramps must be fitted with cleats, which ensure that the animals can safely climb up or down.
4. Passageways and loading/unloading ramps must be at least 100 cm wide to allow for the simultaneous movement of two pigs. Turns must allow for the free movement of animals.

5. Loading/unloading platforms must have safety barriers so as to prevent animals from falling or escaping; the side walls must be strong enough to withstand pressure exercised by a group of animals.

5.2. MEANS OF TRANSPORT

1. Vehicles used for transporting animals must be in good technical condition and, if required by the relevant provisions of the law, their certificates of approval must be valid.
2. Pigs can only be transported to a slaughterhouse in clean vehicles. Their cleanliness must be verified before the loading of animals and the inspection must be documented.
3. Pigs can only be transported to a slaughterhouse in vehicles adequately equipped for loading and unloading of animals.
4. Vehicles must be constructed and equipped so as to protect animals from inclement weather conditions, extreme temperatures and variable climatic conditions.
5. Vehicles must be equipped with a ventilation system allowing the temperature inside to be maintained at 5 to 30 °C (with a tolerance of +/- 5 °C, depending on the temperature outside), regardless of whether the vehicle is moving or not. Ventilation devices must be checked before transport.
6. Vehicles must be equipped with a temperature control and registration system, and a warning system notifying the driver when the limit values are exceeded. The sensors must be located in those parts of the vehicle that are most prone to the worst climatic conditions, depending on the construction.

5.3. CONDITIONS FOR THE TRANSPORT OF ANIMALS

1. Pigs must begin their pre-slaughter fasting no later than four hours before the transport starts. The total fasting period, including the period when the animals remain at the breeder's holding, transport and pre-slaughter rest, must not exceed 18 hours.
2. During the transport, loading and unloading of pigs, their contact with unknown persons and animals must be minimised.
3. The transport of pigs to a slaughterhouse should be carried out in a planned and timely manner, and it must be documented.
4. The conditions of animal welfare during transport should be regularly checked and maintained at the appropriate level by persons holding a relevant licence.
5. It is recommended that animals are loaded onto the surface of transport vehicles in primary technological groups.

6. During pig transport, adequate (i.e. stipulated in Chapter VII, Part D of Annex 1 to Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97) loading density must be ensured so that all pigs are at least able to lie down and stand up in a natural position.
7. After the delivery of animals to the slaughterhouse, they should be immediately unloaded with the use of appropriate unloading equipment and devices. The time between the delivery of animals to a slaughterhouse and their unloading must not be longer than 30 minutes.

6. GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR THE SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS

1. The quality mark in question may be applied solely to meat derived from animals whose slaughter and carcass dressing have been carried out in facilities approved in accordance with the applicable provisions of EU or national law.
2. All slaughtering and related operations must be carried out ensuring appropriate animal protection against any unnecessary pain, distress or suffering.
3. Pig slaughter must be carried out only by persons who have undergone theoretical training within the scope laid down in Article 7(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals during slaughter, with a three-month work placement in a slaughter position, completed under the supervision of a person with a proven record of three years' experience of working in such a position. Meeting these requirements must be confirmed by holding a valid certificate of competence.
4. The duration of slaughter and carcass processing must be as short as possible and may not exceed 35 minutes.
5. Stunning, bleeding, skinning, evisceration and initial processing must be carried out without unnecessary delay and in a manner preventing meat contamination.

6.1. KEEPING ANIMALS BEFORE SLAUGHTER

1. Upon terminating transport and unloading of animals, they may be taken to pre-slaughter warehouses to rest and reduce their agitation. Animals should rest for four hours, and if they were transported for over 100 km – for six hours.
2. Persons handling animals at the slaughterhouse premises must be adequately trained and have worked at a slaughterhouse for at least a month under the constant supervision of a person with a proven record of three years' experience in driving and keeping animals.
3. Pre-slaughter warehouses must be kept clean. Their cleanliness must be inspected and the results of such inspections must be documented. Animals are kept clean.
4. Pre-slaughter warehouses must be equipped with adequate ventilation ensuring animal welfare, and the temperature and humidity must be kept at appropriate levels, controlled and documented. The temperature of 15–18 °C and the humidity of 60–68% are considered optimal for pre-slaughter pig storage.
5. The construction of stalls (pens) in a pre-slaughter warehouse must enable the free movement of animals and guarantee free access to clean water without the

risk of injury or restricting their movement. The floor surface must minimise the risk of slipping and allow for the maintenance of proper hygiene.

6. The size of pre-slaughter warehouses must be adequate to the volume of production in a slaughterhouse and enough to store no less than 50% of animals slaughtered during one shift. Each animal must have enough space to stand up, lie down and turn over.
7. The size of pens in a pre-slaughter warehouse should be limited to 50 animals. It is not permissible to keep more animals in a pen. It is recommended that animals are kept in primary technological groups. For each pen, the date and time of arrival as well as the maximum number of animals that may be kept there shall be visibly indicated.

6.2. MOVING PIGS TO THE SLAUGHTER POINT (THE PLACE OF SLAUGHTER)

1. Pigs should be moved to the slaughter point with particular care to ensure their welfare, in the least tiring way possible, protecting them from excessive agitation and stress.
2. When moving animals to the passageway leading to the stunning point, the handlers' intervention should be minimised. The use of mechanically moved gates is recommended.
3. The use of instruments administering electric shocks must be avoided. However, they may be used on adult pigs which refuse to move, and only when they have room ahead of them. Electric shocks shall last no longer than one second, be adequately spaced, and only applied to the rump muscles. Shocks must not be used repeatedly if the animal fails to respond.
4. The construction of the passageways leading to the stunning point should provide conditions similar to those during herd driving. The animals must be able to see and feel the proximity of another animal. The construction of the walls should be openwork. The use of pawls which prevent individual animals from turning back is recommended. The rooms should be dark and the source of light should be located at the end of the drive passageway; the passageways should be slightly inclined upwards.

6.3. STUNNING

1. Stunning must be performed solely with the use of dedicated tools or devices. Stunning equipment must be regularly inspected and maintained and meet the technical standards. Appropriate backup instruments must be available during stunning operations.

2. The stunning effect must last long enough for the animal to die by bleeding out before it regains consciousness (no less than 30 seconds).
3. Regular inspections of a representative group of animals shall be carried out to ensure that the animals show no sign of consciousness or sensitivity to stimuli in the period from completion of the stunning process until death.

6.4. BLEEDING

1. Immediately after stunning, the pig must be stuck to start its bleeding, so that the stunning effect is prolonged by the loss of consciousness due to blood loss. The stun-to-stick time must be as short as possible. For pigs bled in a lying position, the stun-to-stick time must not be longer than 10 seconds and for bleeding while hung — 20 seconds.
2. The bleeding of pigs should be as profuse and complete as possible.
3. The bleeding of pigs may be carried out with the animal in a lying or hanging position.
4. The time of bleeding must not be longer than four minutes.

6.5. SCALDING

1. The scalding of pig skin should begin immediately after the completion of bleeding, no later than within one minute, though only after confirmation that the animal shows no sign of life.
2. Scalding can be carried out with vertical, water-spray or condensing scalding tanks.
3. Immersion scalding is acceptable but the following parameters must be maintained:
 - water temperature: 58–62 °C,
 - scalding tank water exchange: every four hours.
4. The parameters of water/vapour used for scalding must be adjusted to the time of the year and the breed of the animals slaughtered. Normally, the correct scalding conditions are achieved at a medium temperature of 58–62 °C for 5-7 minutes. The parameters of the scalding process should be monitored and documented.

6.6. DEHAIRING, SINGEING AND SCRAPING

1. The parameters of the dehairing process (the speed and force of the flails, the duration) should be selected so as to allow for efficient removal of hair together with a layer of the epidermis without mechanically damaging the surface of the carcass. Slaughterhouse equipment working parameters must be formalised and their correct use must be monitored. It is also necessary to monitor the technical condition of dehairing devices.
2. During dehairing and epidermis scraping, water must be sprayed and its temperature must not exceed 36 °C.
3. After dehairing, the carcass must be singed in a tunnel furnace (800 °C, 15 seconds). Manual singeing is also acceptable.
4. Upon the completion of singeing, carcasses should be cooled immediately by spraying cold water on them, and then transferred to scraping devices that remove the burnt layer of the skin.

6.7. EVISCERATION

1. Evisceration should begin immediately after the completion of skin processing activities in a way that makes it impossible to contaminate the meat.
2. Evisceration should be carried out in a manner that protects internal organs from any damage. If the gastrointestinal tract perforates and its contents spill into body cavities, the animal's body must be discarded.
3. Between eviscerations and whenever it is necessary in order to meet the meat hygiene requirements, the tools used must be disinfected with water at no less than 82 °C or with an alternative measure having equivalent effect.

6.8. DIVISION OF CARCASSES INTO HALF-CARCASSES

1. Pig carcasses must be divided into half-carcasses in such a way as to halve the vertebrae and uncover the spinal canal. The nerve cord must be removed from the spinal canal. The correct performance of the division must be monitored.

6.9. FINAL CLEANING

1. Carcass dressing must be completed with final cleaning which includes removing free scraps of connective tissue, adipose tissue and clotted blood from the surface of the carcass, and washing the carcass with water at 20 °C. The correctness of the final cleaning of pig carcasses must be monitored.

6.10. CLASSIFICATION OF CARCASSES

1. The meat content of pig carcasses must be graded according to the EUROP classification system permitted within the EU.
2. The meat content of carcasses may only be assessed with the use of devices permitted for such use according to the EU requirements. The grading shall be carried out by adequately-qualified staff competent in EUROP classification. Proper post-slaughter carcass grading must be monitored.
3. The quality mark in question can be used only for culinary pork from carcasses whose meat content has been classified as S, E or U.

6.11. POST-SLAUGHTER COOLING

1. Immediately after the post-slaughter examination, meat must be cooled down to a temperature no higher than 3 °C for offal and 7 °C for other meat, with a cooling curve that ensures a continuous temperature decrease. The air parameters in cooling chambers, allowing quick achievement of the set temperatures, must be formalised and the maintenance of these determined ranges must be monitored. The cooling of carcasses must start no later than 10 minutes after completing post-slaughter processing. Appropriate ventilation must be ensured during cooling to prevent condensation on the surface of the meat.
2. Proper meat cooling must be monitored by measuring the temperature in the ham's geometric centre.
3. The distance between carcasses hanging in cooling chambers must allow for the free movement of cooling air, i.e. at least 10 cm between hams.
4. To ensure the high quality of the derived culinary meat, it is recommended that post-slaughter carcass cooling be carried out in two stages.
5. Single-step continuous cooling is also acceptable.

6.12. BASIC CARCASS-CUTTING AND FURTHER DIVISION INTO CULINARY CUTS

1. The quality mark in question may be applied to pork derived from carcasses whose basic and secondary cutting was carried out in accordance with the Polish Standard.
2. The correctness of the cutting and division process must be monitored.
3. The temperature in the meat-cutting room must be maintained below 12 °C, monitored and documented.

4. The temperature of meat during cutting, deboning, trimming, portioning and single or batch packaging must not exceed 3 °C for offal and 7 °C for other meat, and it must be monitored. Such inspection must be documented.

6.13. QUALITY CONTROL OF CULINARY PORK

1. The quality mark in question may only be applied to culinary pork that has undergone quality assessment and meets all the criteria set out in the System.
2. Quality assessment may be carried out only by an adequately trained employee. The results of such measurements taken must be documented and analysed. The outcome of the analyses should be used to enhance the System.
3. Quality assessment of meat must include:
 - a) a measurement of the pH value of the longissimus muscle 45 minutes after pig slaughter (pH_1) by means of punching a calibrated pH-metric electrode into the muscle at the location of the last dorsal vertebra. If the work of a particular slaughterhouse is organised in such a way that cooling starts earlier than 45 minutes after the slaughter, the measurement must be taken directly before cooling, however, no earlier than 35 minutes after the slaughter.
 - b) a measurement of the pH value of the longissimus muscle 24 hours after pig slaughter (pH_2) by means of punching a calibrated pH-metric electrode into the muscle at the location of the last dorsal vertebra.
 - c) for sirloin and ham muscles:³ a visual classification of the brightness of the colour by comparison with models⁴.
 - d) for sirloin: a visual classification of marbling by comparison with models⁵.
 - e) for all culinary cuts: an assessment of the correct preparation of a culinary meat cut, i.e. its correct cut and portioning.
4. Culinary pork may be labelled with the quality mark in question if:
 - it is derived from carcasses in which the longissimus muscle's pH is $\text{pH}_1 \geq 6.1$ ⁶
 - The measurement of electrical conductivity taken after 180 minutes (EC_{180}) falls in the PE1 4.5–8 (mS/cm) range.

³ It is appropriate to develop and use national models for the brightness of the colour and the content of each tissue, including adipose tissue, for all culinary cuts.

⁴ Model: Pork Quality Standards, National Pork Board 1999.

⁵ Model: Pork Quality Standards, National Pork Board 1999.

⁶ Where the measurement is taken earlier, the critical values will probably need to be verified.

- It is recommended to take a measurement of pH₂₄ (recommended value: 5.5–5.7).
- a) Sirloin may be labelled with the quality mark in question if its brightness, assessed visually by comparison with the model, falls in the range of 3.0–4.0.
- b) Ham may be labelled with the quality mark in question if its brightness, assessed visually by comparison with the model, does not indicate any PSE or DFD meat quality defects.
- c) Sirloin may be labelled with the quality mark in question if its marbling, assessed visually by comparison with the model, falls in the range of 2.0–3.0.

6.14. MATURING OF CULINARY MEAT

1. It is recommended that culinary meat be matured as bone-in parts at 0 °C for three days after the completion of the post-slaughter carcass cooling process.

6.15. CUTTING AND PACKAGING OF CULINARY MEAT

1. It is acceptable to cut culinary cuts into smaller parts (one- or multiple-portion), if specifications for such products are prepared and contain precise definitions of cuts, forms and weight accompanied by colour photographs. Such specifications must be approved and, subsequently, their proper use must be monitored by a Certification Body.
2. Culinary pig meat packaged under inert gas atmosphere (MAP) may be labelled with the quality mark in question. Vacuum-packaging is also acceptable.
3. The concentration of each gas in the mixture used for packaging must be monitored and documented.
4. Culinary meat packaging may be performed only by adequately trained employees wearing clean protective clothing, including caps thoroughly covering hair, and masks.
5. The temperature in a meat-cutting and packaging room must be maintained below 12 °C and it must be monitored and documented.
6. The meat temperature during cutting and packaging must not exceed 7 °C and it must be monitored. Such monitoring must be documented.
7. When packaging culinary meat labelled with the quality mark in question, full traceability must be ensured. The packaging in particular must be labelled in a way that allows the identification of the animal's number and, thus, its genotype, breeder and feeding conditions.

6.16. STORAGE

1. Inventory management must be based on the 'first in, first out' principle.
2. The temperature in finished product warehouses must be maintained below 4 °C, monitored and documented.
3. The temperature of meat in warehouses must not exceed 3 °C for offal and 7 °C for other meat, and it must be monitored. Such monitoring must be documented.

7. TRANSPORT OF MEAT

1. Meat may be transported only in special vehicles that allow for maintaining cold-chain continuity during transit. The loading of meat may only take place into cold cargo space. The temperature conditions in transit must be monitored and documented.
2. Meat may be transported only in clean vehicles. Their cleanliness must be inspected before loading. Such inspection must be documented.
3. If cold-chain continuity has not been maintained for meat during transport, such meat must not be marketed.

8. SALES

1. Prior to the acceptance of culinary meat into point-of-sale warehouses, it is necessary to inspect the cleanliness of the vehicle, the history of temperature changes in its cargo space during transport, and the temperature of the meat. The results of such an inspection must be documented.
2. Culinary pork must not be marketed if:
 - a. based on the records of the temperature history in the cargo space of vehicles, it is discovered that cold-chain continuity has been interrupted;
 - b. the temperature checked upon receiving stock is higher than 3 °C for offal and 7 °C for other meat.
3. Temperature conditions in point-of-sale warehouses and showcases must be monitored and documented.
4. The temperature of meat stored in point-of-sale warehouses and displayed in showcases must not exceed 3 °C for offal and 7 °C for other meat, and must be monitored. Such monitoring must be documented.
5. If cold-chain continuity has not been maintained during the storage or sale of meat, such meat must not be marketed.

6. When selling culinary pork labelled with the quality mark in question, it is necessary to:
 - a. regularly check the quality of the displayed products visually;
 - b. regularly remove from display any packages damaged by clients;
 - c. never display or sell products of inferior visual quality.
7. Any non-conformities relating to meat labelled with the quality mark in question must be immediately communicated to the manufacturer or appointed person overseeing the functioning of the System.
8. The manufacturer should have a documented procedure for withdrawing QAFP-labelled products from the market.
9. At every retail shop selling culinary meat labelled with the quality mark in question, colour posters must be displayed in an easily accessible place, presenting basic parts of the carcass and the culinary cuts derived from it.
10. At every point of sale of culinary pork labelled with the quality mark in question, a poster must be displayed in a visible place, presenting the models of colour and marbling of pork chops, along with information about the optimal ranges of these parameters.
11. At every point of sale of culinary pork labelled with the quality mark in question, culinary cuts should be accompanied by information on recommended heat processing and dish preparation (frying, boiling, stewing, etc.) and the heat treatment conditions guaranteeing optimal sensory quality of dishes.