

Ministerial decree amending the Ministerial Decree of 19 March 2004 establishing the list of low-ammonia-emission stable systems, implementing Articles 1.1.2 and 5.9.2.1bis of the Decree of the Flemish Government of 1 June 1995 laying down general and sectoral provisions on environmental hygiene with regard to the V1 Groove flooring measure

Legal basis

This Decree is based on:

- the Decree of 5 April 1995 laying down general regulations concerning environmental policy, Article 5.4.1, inserted by the Decree of 25 April 2014;
- the Decree of the Flemish Government of 1 June 1995 laying down general and sector-specific provisions on environmental hygiene, Article 1.1.2, last amended by the Decree of the Flemish Government of 12 September 2025.

Procedural requirements

The following procedural requirements have been met:

- The Inspectorate of Finance provided an opinion on XX.
- The Council of State provided opinion no. XX on (date).
- This draft was notified to the European Commission on XX, pursuant to Article 5 of Directive (EU) 2015/1535 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 September 2015 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical regulations and of rules on Information Society services.

Legal context

This Decree is consistent with the following regulations:

- the Decree of 26 January 2024 on the programmatic approach to nitrogen;
- the Decree of 19 April 2024 on ammonia emission reduction measures.

THE FLEMISH MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE HEREBY DECREES:

Article 1. In Annex I to the ministerial decree of 19 March 2004 establishing the list of low-ammonia-emission stable systems, implementing Articles 1.1.2 and 5.9.2.1bis of the decree of the Flemish Government of 1 June 1995 laying down general and sectoral provisions on environmental hygiene, last amended by the ministerial decree of 25 March 2026, a sub-section 7.1.32 in chapter seven of the same annex is added, consisting of points 7.1.32.1 to 7.1.32.5 and that reads as follows:

“7.1.32. V1 Groove flooring

7.1.32.1

Animal category:

R-1 Dairy cattle and mature cows over two years of age

Code:

R-1.30

Name of the system:

V1 Groove flooring

Emission reduction:

25%

This measure is only applicable to stables where no or almost no farmyard manure is produced.

7.1.32.2 Principle of operation

The reduction in ammonia emissions is achieved by frequently removing manure and urine from the floor, lowering the acidity of the urine, and reducing the surface area from which emissions occur by sealing off the manure pit.

The profiled solid rubber floor contributes to lowering the acidity of the urine. This rubber flooring is equipped with slots in the longitudinal direction of the corridors in which the urine and manure are collected. The floorboards between the grooves are profiled so that they slope down towards the longitudinal grooves. The manure and urine is frequently removed from the floor and from the longitudinal slots with an adapted finger manure scraper [also known as slatted floor scraper].

7.1.32.3 Implementation of the measure

Section 1. Requirements as regards implementation

The tolerances applicable to the material and the product in question apply to all the sizes listed.

1° Floor: the running section, the main floor, shall be designed with a flat concrete floor or slatted floor with a rubber flooring on it. This rubber flooring has the following specifications:

- a) the rubber flooring shall be at least 25 mm thick, shall be profiled at the bottom and shall have 1 mm high studs;
- b) this rubber flooring shall be intact, and shall fully cover the concrete (slatted) floor to prevent emissions from the manure pit;
- c) the floor shall be equipped with flattened longitudinal slots of a width of 25 mm and a distance between the slots of 100 mm (centre-spaced 125 mm);
- d) the longitudinal slots are flat and 20 mm deep;
- e) The flat floor panels between the longitudinal channels feature a profile consisting of a V-shaped main profile running in the direction of the manure discharge. This studded profile slopes at a gradient of 6.3% from the centre of the beam towards the longitudinal slot, with a depth of 0 mm at the centre of the beam and 6 mm at the junction with the longitudinal slot. The flat sections between the main profile shall be fitted with shallow grooves and studs.

The crossing, the waiting area and the walkways do not need to have been carried out with the system described above.

If a different flooring system is used in the crossing, the waiting area and the walkways, and this results in additional emissions from the manure pit due to the so-called chimney effect, a sealing device must be installed at every transition between flooring systems in the manure pit. The area of the crossing, the waiting area and the walkways that have not been fitted with the system described above must not exceed 20% of the total floor area soiled with manure.

2° Manure pit and manure discharge:

a) beneath the manure discharge points, and where the floor in the passageways, waiting area and walkways is not constructed as a solid floor, a manure collection pit or manure pit is provided. Manure can be stored under the floor, provided there is no open connection between the space above and below the floor, or in a sealed outdoor storage facility;

b) At one or both ends of the corridors, a manure chute is made in the floor for the drainage of the manure. The manure chutes are equipped with a so-called letterbox closure, rubber flaps or any other device that prevents emissions from the manure pit as much as possible. The manure chute must be at least as long as the forward-facing manure guides on the finger-type manure scraper;

c) Where intermediate manure chutes are used, e.g. if the inclined design makes this necessary or when they are installed as an emergency facility, they must be provided with what is known as a letterbox closure, rubber flaps or other device that prevents emissions from the manure pit as much as possible. In the case of a fixed finger manure scraper, the manure chute shall be at least the length of the forward-facing manure guides.

3° Finger-type manure scraper: to remove manure, a manure scraper fitted with fingers must be installed, which fit into the longitudinal channels to clear them of manure and urine. This is a fixed mechanical setup comprising a finger-type manure scraper, fitted with a drive mechanism (operated by cable or chain) and a timer. The scraper blade shall be designed in such a way that the running surface is properly cleaned by means of a plastic strip at the bottom of the finger manure scraper that follows the profile of the plastic floor covering.

4° Emitting surface

a) The floor area smeared with manure shall not exceed 5.5 m² per animal place. This area includes the corridors, passageways, waiting area and walkways. It shall include neither the floor area of the milking stall nor the feeding area, if present.

b) The waiting area is not included in the 'area soiled with manure' of up to 5.5 m² if the following conditions are met:

- i. The waiting area may be closed so that the dairy cows do not have access to the waiting area between milkings;
- ii. The floor of the waiting area consists of a low-emission floor system or is designed with a sealed floor;
- iii. The floor is cleaned after each milking;
- iv. The manure pit under the waiting area is closed off from the rest of the stable or adapted so that no additional emissions from the pit can occur (the so-called 'chimney effect').

5° Recording equipment: The recording equipment present shall be able to demonstrate both the frequency and the duration of cleaning by the manure scraper with a three-month readback option.

Section 2. Requirements for the use of the system

The manure is removed from the floor at least 12 times a day with the finger manure scraper.

The floor areas in passageways, waiting areas and walkways that are soiled with manure must be cleaned manually at least twice a day. If the passageways, waiting areas and walkways are also fitted with rubber flooring, the longitudinal grooves in this flooring must also be cleaned at least twice a day.

Section 3. System maintenance

The user checks the finger manure scraper and the sealing devices in the manure deposits on a daily basis and maintains them where necessary. It is important to carry out a visual check to ensure that the floor has been cleaned properly. Immediate action must be taken to rectify the problem in the event of any damage to the finger manure scraper or blockages in the sealing mechanism.

The floor, the finger manure scraper and the sealing mechanism must be inspected for damage by a qualified party at least once a year and maintained, if necessary. It is mandatory to enter into a maintenance contract for this purpose with the supplier of the floor and the finger-type manure scraper, or another qualified party.

The livestock farmer must keep a logbook in which they record when and by whom the inspection and maintenance of the finger-type manure slide and the sealing mechanism in the manure chutes took place, including how any faults were rectified.

7.1.32.4 Control of the measure

When applying for the planning permission, it must be demonstrated that the equipment to be purchased is sufficient to clean the walking surface at the prescribed frequency. Here the surface of the walking floor, the loading time (if applicable) and the speed of the manure scraper must be indicated.

The following conditions shall be met in the course of checks:

- 1° all conditions included in the implementation of the measure;
- 2° the floor must be visually clean. That is, free from caked old manure.
- 3° after the passage of the finger manure scraper, the manure is sufficiently removed from the floor.
- 4° the operation of the cleaning equipment during the last three months is analysed using data on the frequency of its operation, using the recording equipment in place;
- 5° with the help of invoices it must be possible to demonstrate maintenance, which is carried out annually at a minimum. Invoices for the last five years must be made available for inspection by the monitoring authority.

7.1.32.5 Emission reduction

The emission reduction of the Groove floor is 25%.

Article 2. This decree enters into force on the day of its publication in the Belgian Official Gazette.

Brussels, (date).

The Flemish Minister for Environment and Agriculture,

Jo BROUNS