

**PROTOCOL BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA AND
THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF CUSTOMS OF
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
ON INSPECTION, QUARANTINE AND VETERINARY SANITARY REQUIREMENTS
OR FROZEN POULTRY MEAT TO BE EXPORTED
FROM ESTONIA TO CHINA**

The Ministry of Rural Affairs of the Republic of Estonia (hereinafter referred to as MoRA) and the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as GACC) and through friendly negotiations, have agreed on the following inspection and quarantine, veterinary health requirements on frozen poultry meat to be exported from Estonia to China.

Article 1

The Veterinary and Food Board (hereinafter referred to as VFB) governing the production of products of animal origin, reporting to MoRA shall be responsible for the inspection and quarantine of the frozen poultry meat to be exported from Estonia to China and issuing of the veterinary health certificates.

Article 2

VFB shall provide GACC with the laws and regulations governing the slaughter, cutting, processing and storing establishments of frozen poultry meat to be exported from Estonia to China and issuing of the veterinary health certificates for export and relevant inspection and quarantine programs which consist of monitoring substances or diseases, laboratory testing methods, standards and procedures applied, as well as the quarantine stamps or inspection legend/marks for export eligibility.

VFB shall regularly supply GACC with the following information every year:

1. The plans and annual reports of the national monitoring plan of Chemical Residue (veterinary drugs and contaminants, etc.) and pathogenic microorganism.

2. The preventive and zoning measures applied against the diseases listed in Articles 3 of this Protocol.
3. The poultry epidemic situation in Estonia.

VFB shall ensure that administrative systems for food safety comply with the requirements of China, with continuing effectiveness. When deemed necessary, GACC may send experts to Estonia, regularly or occasionally, to conduct an on-site audit or retrospective inspection. Estonia shall provide necessary assistance to enable the audit and inspection.

VFB shall periodically share information with GACC on veterinary supervision concerning: production, exportation and the sanitary and safety supervision situations of the establishments intended for exportation to China. Both sides shall exchange relevant information and cooperate with each other in investigating and handling issues and taking corrective and preventive actions to ensure the establishments satisfy the requirements of China.

Article 3

VFB confirms that Estonia is free from highly pathogenic avian influenza and Newcastle disease complying with the requirements of Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

Article 4

The live birds from which frozen poultry meat intended for export is derived, should:

1. be hatched, raised and slaughtered in Estonia which can be traced back to the farms of origin and never housed together with other farmed animals.
2. originate from farms where there have been no clinical signs of avian chlamydiosis, avian mycoplasmosis, avian infectious bronchitis, avian infectious laryngotracheitis, pullorum disease and fowl typhoid, infectious bursal disease (Gumboro disease), low pathogenic avian influenza, Marek's disease, avian tuberculosis and fowl cholera detected for the past 6 months.

3. originate from premises on where no quarantine surveillance or movement restriction have been imposed due to other than aforementioned notifiable diseases relevant to poultry listed by the OIE, China's and Estonia's animal health regulation for the past 6 months.

Article 5

The manufacturing (including slaughtering, cutting, processing and storing) establishments intended for export of frozen poultry meat to China shall be under the supervision of VFB and be in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations of Estonia and China on veterinary health and public health.

The manufacturing establishments intended for export of frozen poultry meat will be registered with GACC according to the Food Safety Law of the People's Republic of China. Manufacturing establishments that have not registered will not be allowed to import into the People's Republic of China.

Article 6

VFB official veterinarians will attest, through the veterinary health certificate, that:

1. The poultry intended for export has been slaughtered, cut, processed and stored at abattoirs, processing establishments and cold stores approved by China.
2. The live birds from which the frozen poultry meat intended for exportation are derived, have never been administered with veterinary drugs or feed additives prohibited by both sides.
3. The live birds from which the frozen poultry meat intended for export are derived, which have subjected to ante- and post-mortem inspections complying with relevant China's and Estonia's laws and regulations with favorable results, originate from the farms in conformity with Article 4 of this Protocol. All the live birds for slaughter are healthy exhibiting no clinical signs of infectious disease and have no lesions on the carcasses and viscera.
4. The national residue monitoring plan is implemented and certifies that the residue level of veterinary medicinal products, pesticides, long-lasting organic pollutants contained as heavy metals, dioxin, PCB,

dl-PCB, ndl-PCB and other toxic and undesirable substances in the products is below the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) stipulated by China and Estonia.

5. The product is free from the contamination of a pathogenic agent as per laws and the regulations stipulated by China and Estonia and international standards.

6. The frozen poultry meat is hygienic and safe, fit for human consumption.

7. The products are from farms, slaughterhouses and establishments where an effective identification system has been implemented, , which guarantees the frozen poultry meat for export can be traced back to the farms of origin.

Article 7

During the period of transportation (including transportation from the farm to, and at the place of, the slaughterhouse), the birds for slaughter and export to China will not be allowed to be in contact with:

1. any live birds which do not comply with the requirements in Articles 3 and 4 of this Protocol; or
2. any live birds or other species of animals belonging to the establishment which does not achieve the registration in Article 5 of this Protocol.

The frozen poultry meat for export to China will not be allowed to be processed with:

1. animal products which are not in conformity with Article 3 and 4 of this Protocol; or
2. products which are not produced by this registered establishment; or
3. other animal products of other species of origin.

A specific area with clear identification within the cold store will be available exclusively for the storage of the frozen poultry meat intended for export to China.

Article 8

The frozen poultry-meat to be exported to China must be packed with packaging materials of first use in compliance with the China's national food safety standards and international hygienic standards.

The frozen poultry meat for export should be labelled with the commodity name (product description), country of origin, establishment registration number and the batch numbers on the independent interior package in Chinese.

The name, specifications, country of origin, place of origin (specific to state/province/city), establishment registration number, batch numbers, destination (the People's Republic of China only), production date (year/month/day), shelf life and storage temperature should be labeled on the exterior package in Chinese. The packages should bear the official inspection and quarantine marks of Estonia which have been approved by and filed to GACC.

The labels of prepackaged frozen poultry meat and edible by-products should comply with the Chinese standards and regulatory requirements on pre-packaged food labeling.

Article 9

To prevent from contamination with undesirable substances, the frozen poultry meat and edible poultry by-products to be exported to China shall meet the sanitary requirements of China and Estonia during the packaging, storage and transportation.

The storage and transportation will be under suitable temperatures maintaining the core temperature of the frozen poultry meat and edible poultry by-products no warmer than minus 15 degrees Celsius.

Prior to shipment, the container should be sealed under the supervision of VFB official veterinarians.

The seal number should be indicated in the veterinary health certificate. During transportation, the package of the products should not be opened or changed.

Article 10

Each container of frozen poultry meat and edible poultry by-products to be exported to China should be accompanied by at least one official and original veterinary health certificate attesting that the products are in line with the requirements laid down in the veterinary and public health rules and regulations of China and Estonia and this Protocol.

The veterinary health certificates should be written in Chinese and English . The format and content of the certificate should be mutually consented in advance by both sides. To put on record, VFB shall provide GACC with examples of the official quarantine stamp or inspection legend/marks, models of the veterinary health certificate, a list of authorized signatory veterinarians with their corresponding signatures, instructions on the anti-fraud protections and the email address through which the electronic certificates data will be delivered. If there are any modifications or changes of the above, VFB will notify GACC at least one month prior to the changes coming into effect.

To facilitate the border inspection in China, VFB will deliver the electronic data of each veterinary health certificate issued to China through official channels in a timely manner. VFB will guarantee the electronic data is correct and safe.

Article 11

If any avian infectious disease(s) stipulated in Article 3 of this Protocol break(s) out in Estonia, VFB will stop the exportation of frozen poultry meat and edible poultry by-products to China, recall the affected products and the potentially affected products, inform GACC and provide with a detailed account on the status of the disease and management control measures that have been applied.

If there are outbreaks of other infectious avian disease(s) listed in Article 4 of this Protocol or defined as list B diseases in the List of Quarantine Diseases for the Animals Imported to the People's Republic of China by China's laws and regulations which could be transmitted by meat, VFB will stop the exportation of frozen poultry meat and edible poultry by-products produced in relevant containment zone immediately, recall the affected products and the potentially affected products, inform GACC and provide it with a detailed report containing information on the status of the disease and the management control measures that have been applied.

If there is an incident of food contamination related to poultry products for export causing a serious public concern in Estonia, VFB will immediately stop the exportation of frozen poultry meat and edible poultry by-products produced in a relevant establishment, recall the affected products and the

potentially affected products, inform GACC and provide it with a detailed report containing information on the contamination and management control measures that have been applied.

At the end of the aforementioned issue, VFB may negotiate with GACC the conditions for the resumption of exports, in accordance with international practice.

Article 12

If frozen poultry meat and edible poultry by-products exported into China is found by GACC to not be in line with the requirements of this Protocol, GACC will notify VFB immediately, and may take measures of the return, destruction or other disposal of the product. VFB will cooperate with GACC in the addressing of non-compliance and taking corrective actions and rectifications to prevent recurrence of the non-compliance.

Article 13

For the purposes of this Protocol, “frozen poultry meat and edible poultry by-products” refers to the edible meat and by-products of chicken from which the feathers, viscera, head and feet are removed following slaughter and bleed. The by-products which are not approved by GACC are required to be removed. The edible poultry by-products eligible for export to China are listed in Annex1.

Article 14

The sanitary processing requirements (Annex 2) should be satisfied for eligible edible poultry by-products for export to China. Annex 1 and 2 are indispensable parts of this Protocol and can be amended by the mutual consent of GACC and MoRA by an exchange of formal written letters.

Article 15

This Protocol shall be valid and remain in force for a period of 5 years, and can be amended by mutual consent of both sides. The Protocol shall automatically be extended for 5 years if one party, within two

months before the expiration of validity, has not notified the other Party in writing of its intention to amend or terminate this Protocol.

Article 16

This Protocol is, in Chinese and English, in duplicate, equally authentic, signed by the parties hereto in Shanghai on November 6th, 2018 with effect from the date of signature. Should there be any deviation of interpretation, the English text is prevailing.

On behalf of

The Ministry of Rural Affairs of
the Republic of Estonia

On behalf of

The General Administration of Customs of
the People's Republic of China

Annex 1

List of the Eligible Edible Poultry By-products for Export to China

1. Parts of the carcass: frozen chicken leg quarters, frozen chicken thighs, frozen chicken drumstick, frozen chicken feet, frozen chicken paws, frozen chicken wings (including wing tips), frozen chicken wings (excluding wing tips).
2. Others: frozen chicken wing tips, frozen chicken neck, frozen chicken feet bone, frozen chicken cartilage, frozen chicken skin, frozen chicken comb.

Annex 2

Sanitary Processing Requirements of Poultry Edible by-products for Export from Estonia to China

1. Scope

The requirements in this Annex apply to the eligible edible poultry by-products listed in Annex 1 of this Protocol.

2. General requirements

2.1 According to the laws and regulations of Estonia and China, the edible poultry by-products defined in this requirement are suitable for human consumption.

2.2 Estonia has established a food safety and health management system especially for poultry edible by-products.

2.3 The poultry edible by-products for export to China will be derived from the farms, slaughterhouses and establishments which have implemented an effective identification system to their place of origin.

2.4 Only establishments that have been registered with GACC are allowed to export poultry edible by-products into China, and their processing room exclusively for poultry edible by-products should be approved by GACC as well.

2.5 The poultry edible by-products for export to China will be derived from animals that were subjected to Estonia's National Residue Monitoring Plan. Based on the results of this plan, it can be attested that the poultry edible by-products contain no medicine, chemical residue substance, or other toxic and harmful residue substance that can be hazardous to human health.

2.6 The poultry edible by-products for export to China shall be processed and handled as per the food safety requirements intended for human consumption. The HACCP based food safety management system shall be applied to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of this Annex.

3. Edible Poultry by-products processing requirements

3.1 Processing sites, facilities and equipment

3.1.1 The poultry edible by-products for export to China will be processed in a separate poultry edible by-product processing room(s) which is relatively isolated from the inedible by-products processing room(s). The poultry edible by-product processing room and its' sanitary conditions will comply with the sanitary standards prescribed for edible poultry by-products in ESTONIA.

3.1.2 The size of the poultry edible by-product processing room will be compatible with the processing ability. The equipment and facilities will meet the requirements of hygiene and sanitation prescribed for edible poultry by-products. The dirty processing flow and the clean processing flow will be segregated reasonably to avoid cross contamination.

3.1.3 If the establishment conducts pre-chilling of poultry edible by-products, the dedicated pre-chilling facilities and packaging room should be available.

3.2 Personnel sanitary requirements

3.2.1 Establishments exporting edible poultry by-products will have competent personnel that have been trained in the relevant processing procedures for poultry by-product.

3.2.2 The personnel must not access processing rooms through rooms or areas where the clean status of the products is different from that in their own processing room. They must not move directly between working rooms of different status without passing through a hygiene facility, wearing protective clothing and changing visibly contaminated clothing

3.3 Temperature requirement

3.3.1 The temperature of the processing room(s) for poultry edible by-products should be maintained at below 12 degrees Celsius. The temperature of the blast freezer should be below minus 28 degrees Celsius. The chiller temperature should be below minus 18 degrees Celsius.

3.3.2 Controls on freezing of poultry edible by-products will be consistent with controls prescribed for edible poultry products by Estonia, China and with this Protocol.

3.3.3 The temperature of the hot water for equipment cleaning will be higher than 40 degrees Celsius. The temperature of the hot water for equipment sterilization will not be less than 82 degrees Celsius or other sterilization.

3.3.4 If the establishment conducts pre-chilling of poultry edible by-products, the core temperature of the edible by-products will be maintained at 3 degrees Celsius or lower following pre-chilling.

3.3.5 Poultry edible by-products will be transported in refrigerated conveyance(s) which meet sanitary requirements.

3.3.6 The core temperature of the exported poultry edible by-products will be not warmer than minus15 degrees Celsius during transport.

3.4 Requirements for finished products

3.4.1 Any visible fester, effusion, lesion, secretion, gastrointestinal contents or foreign objects (such as plastic, metal and residual feed, etc.), on the edible by-products should be removed by trimming or washing prior to packing and freezing. The finished by-products should not be processed together with inedible by-products within the same room.

3.4.2 The poultry edible by-products for export must be packed in separate packaging material separately according to different types of the products and stored in the specific area with identifiable mark.

3.5 Sanitary control of processing

Each establishment will implement a microbial monitoring plan depending on various poultry edible by-products for export in accordance with the table below. The establishment operator will collect, record and periodically analyze the microbiological results to establish a database.

Table: Sampling plans for microbiological process control monitoring

Microorganism	Sampling -plan		Limit		Sampling frequency		Stage where the sample should be collected
	n	c	m	M	Original frequency	The frequency can be reduced if the results are satisfied.	
APC(36°C)	5	2	5×10 ⁵ CFU/g	5×10 ⁶ CFU/g	For each category, collect 5 samples per week, for 6 consecutive weeks	For each category, collect 5 samples every 2 weeks	End of the processing
Coliforms	5	2	50 CFU/g	500 CFU/g	For each category, collect 5 samples per week	For each category, collect 5 samples every 2 weeks	Prior to freezing
Salmonella	50	7	0 CFU/g		For each category, collect 5 samples per week, for 10 consecutive weeks , 30 weeks in total.	For each category, collect 5 samples every 2 weeks	After freezing

3.5.1 Sampling

5 packing boxes or bulk samples should be collected randomly by cutting method. The samples shall be collected from different parts of the package, mixed thoroughly, then merged into one sample weighing at least 500 grams.

3.5.2 Storage and transportation

The samples shall be placed in the insulation containers with ice packs or ice water. The sample shall not be frozen or in direct contact with the ice pack. After sampling, the samples shall be handled in the laboratory within 1 hour, otherwise the sample should be stored between zero degree Celsius and 4 degrees Celsius for no longer than 24 hours.

3.6 Follow up steps

If result exceeds the “c” value, the corrective actions as follows should be applied:

3.6.1. Checking the internal quality control records (such as temperature, sanitary and other anomalies) to ascertain the reason.

3.6.2 Taking appropriate corrective actions (such as collecting more samples to verify the effectiveness of corrective actions or rectification measures).

3.6.3 Keeping records of the cause of the non-compliance and the corrective actions for at least 2 years.