

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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WORLD
HEALTH
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INFORMATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

Prepared by OIE

1. The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) thanks the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene for the opportunity to contribute to its standards development process.
2. The relationship between the OIE and the CAC is particularly important because risks to human health and food safety may arise at the farm or at any subsequent stage in the food production continuum. Therefore, risk management must be tailored to detect and address risks at the appropriate stage(s). For food safety and international trade, the standard setting activities of the OIE and the CAC are thus interdependent and complementary.
3. This paper outlines some key OIE activities relevant to the CCFH.

Zoonotic Parasites

4. The OIE convened an expert *ad hoc* Group on Zoonotic Parasites, which included participation from the WHO, FAO and Codex. At its first meeting, in October 2010, the Group updated the current OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code) Chapter 8.13. on Trichinellosis with the objective of recommending control measures at the on-farm level to help prevent food borne illness in humans.
5. The draft chapter provides recommendations for on-farm prevention of *Trichinella* infection in domestic pigs (*Sus scrofa domesticus*), and safe trade of meat and meat products derived from suids and equids. The focus is on requirements for establishing a 'negligible risk compartment' because there is a clear and objective means of establishing this status in pigs kept under controlled management conditions. The articles dealing with international trade of meat and meat products of suids and equids include a cross reference to the relevant Codex Guidelines.
6. The draft chapter has undergone two rounds of consultation with OIE Members. The latest revision undertaken by the *ad hoc* Group, in July 2012, considered the comments of OIE Member Countries from the second round of consultation. This meeting also included the two Co-chairs of the Codex Working Group on Guidelines for Control of Specific Zoonotic Parasites, who had been invited in response to some Member Countries request that the OIE work in closer collaboration with the CAC on the development of this standard. The participation of the Co-chairs provided a good opportunity for the OIE and Codex to work closely together on the development of respective standards on *Trichinella* and ensure alignment of risk-based recommendations while avoiding duplication of effort, overlap and gaps.

7. The revised draft chapter was reviewed by the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (TAHSC) at their September 2012 meeting and has been circulated to OIE Members as part of the TAHSC's September 2012 report (refer to Annex XXI of the report available at: <http://www.oie.int/en/international-standard-setting/specialists-commissions-groups/code-commission-reports/meetings-reports/>)

8. The draft Chapter is presented in Annex 1.

9. Collaboration between OIE and CAC should not occur uniquely at the international level. The OIE encourages its national Delegates to collaborate with national Delegates to the CAC, in particular to ensure alignment of relevant standards under development by the respective organisations.

Prioritisation of pathogens for future standard at the OIE

10. With respect to the prioritisation of pathogens for future standard setting, OIE experts are reviewing the scientific literature on *Salmonella* spp. in food-producing animals other than poultry (i.e. pigs, cattle, small ruminants) and on verotoxigenic *E.coli* (VTEC) in food-producing animals. The objective is to determine the usefulness and feasibility of developing OIE advice on the control of these pathogens in the production phase to reduce foodborne illness. The OIE, through its working group on Animal Production Food Safety (APFS Working Group) will examine these reviews at its meeting in November 2012 and make recommendations on next steps.

Harmonisation of OIE and CAC approaches to standard setting in the food production continuum

11. The OIE had proposed steps to strengthen the relationship between the OIE and the CAC, including the potential development of joint standards on relevant topics. This matter was again considered at the 27th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) in April, 2012. The CCGP agreed to establish an electronic working group to propose: guidance for the OIE and the CAC on making consistent cross references to standards; and guidance to each organisation on how they can better take into account relevant work that has been undertaken or is in progress by their counterpart organisation.

12. The OIE is pleased to participate in the development of this work.

National focal points

13. The OIE encourages all Member Countries to nominate national Focal Points, under the authority of the OIE Delegate, for seven strategic issues, including animal production food safety. The creation of the OIE national Focal Point for animal production food safety aims to improve communication between the OIE, its Members and agencies responsible for food safety at the national level. A series of specific training workshops for OIE Focal Points has been conducted worldwide and this is continuing, on a region by region basis.

Collaboration

14. The OIE is committed to ensure collaboration by the OIE and Codex to standard-setting on certain key topics, including on trichinellosis and other zoonotic parasitic diseases, with the objective of ensuring appropriate harmonisation of standards and recommendations while avoiding duplication of effort, overlap and gaps in standard setting work.

Background

15. The OIE and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) are two of the three international standard setting organizations recognised under the World Trade Organization (WTO) SPS Agreement. In this context, the OIE is responsible for setting standards on animal health (including zoonotic diseases) and the CAC on food safety. For food products of animal origin, hazards to human health may arise at the farm or at any subsequent stage in the food production continuum. Since 2001, at the request of its Members, the OIE mandate has included setting standards for animal production food safety, i.e. the management of risks arising at the level of the farm to primary processing.

16. In 2002, the OIE established a Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety (APFSWG) with the view to improving the coordination and harmonisation of standard setting activities of OIE and CAC. The Secretary of Codex and, on an observer basis, the Chair of Codex, regularly attend the annual meeting of the Working Group. Through this mechanism and through participation in each other's standard setting procedures, the OIE and CAC collaborate closely in the development of standards relevant to the whole food

production continuum, taking care to avoid gaps, duplications and contradictions in the SPS standards of these two WTO reference organisations.

17. The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission is responsible for setting standards for terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees), including animal production food safety issues, which are contained in the Terrestrial Code.

18. The OIE Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission is responsible for setting standards for aquatic animals, including animal production food safety issues, which are contained in the *Aquatic Animal Health Code* (the *Aquatic Code*).

19. The OIE will continue to address food safety-related issues as a high priority in its standard-setting work and will work closely with CAC and its Committees, and with other international bodies in promoting safe international trade in animal and their products.

CHAPTER 8.13.

INFECTION WITH *TRICHINELLA* SPP.

Article 8.13.1.

General provisions

Trichinellosis is a widely distributed *zoonosis* caused by eating raw or undercooked *meat* from *Trichinella*-infected food *animals* or *wildlife*. Given that clinical signs of trichinellosis are not generally recognised in *animals*, the importance of trichinellosis lies exclusively in the risk posed to humans and costs of control in slaughter populations.

The adult parasite and the larval forms live in the small intestine and muscles (respectively) of many mammalian, avian and reptile host species. Within the genus *Trichinella*, twelve genotypes have been identified, nine of which have been designated as species. There is geographical variation amongst the genotypes.

Prevention of *infection* in susceptible species of domestic *animals* intended for human consumption relies on the prevention of exposure of those *animals* to the *meat* and *meat products* of *Trichinella*-infected animals. This includes consumption of food waste of domestic animal origin, rodents and *wildlife*.

Meat and *meat products* derived from *wildlife* should always be considered a potential source of *infection* for humans. Therefore untested *meat* and *meat products* of *wildlife* may pose a public health risk.

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, *Trichinella infection* is defined as an *infection* of suids or equids by parasites of the genus *Trichinella*.

This chapter provides recommendations for on-farm prevention of *Trichinella infection* in domestic pigs (*Sus scrofa domesticus*), and safe trade of *meat* and *meat products* derived from suids and equids. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the Codex Alimentarius Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CAC/RCP 58-2005).

Methods for the detection of *Trichinella infection* in pigs and other animal species include direct demonstration of *Trichinella* larvae in muscle samples. Demonstration of the presence of *Trichinella*-specific circulating antibodies using a validated serological test may be useful for epidemiological purposes.

When authorising the import or transit of the commodities covered in this chapter, with the exception of those listed in Article 8.13.2., *Veterinary Authorities* should apply the recommendations in this chapter.

Standards for diagnostic tests are described in the *Terrestrial Manual*.

Article 8.13.2.

Safe commodities

When authorising the import or transit of the following *commodities*, *Veterinary Authorities* should not require any *Trichinella* related conditions, regardless of the status of the animal population of the *exporting country* or *zone*:

- 1) hides, skins, hair and bristles;
- 2) semen, embryos and oocytes.

Article 8.13.3.

Measures to prevent infection in domestic pig herds kept under controlled management conditions

- 1) Prevention of *infection* is dependent on minimising exposure to potential sources of *Trichinella*:
 - a) facilities and the surrounding environment should be managed to prevent exposure of pigs to rodents and *wildlife*;
 - b) raw food waste of animal origin should not be present at the farm level;
 - c) feed should comply with the requirements in Chapter 6.3. and should be stored in a manner to prevent access by rodents and *wildlife*;

- d) a rodent control programme should be in place;
 - e) dead *animals* should be immediately disposed of in accordance with provisions of Chapter 4.12.;
 - f) introduced pigs should originate from *herds* officially recognised as being under controlled management conditions as described in point 2, or from *herds* of a *compartment* with a negligible risk of *Trichinella infection*, as described in Article 8.13.5.
- 2) The *Veterinary Authority* may officially recognise pig *herds* as being under controlled management conditions if:
- a) all management practices described in point 1 are complied with and recorded;
 - b) at least two visits, a minimum of 6 months apart, have been made in the 12 months preceding recognition to verify compliance with good management practices described in point 1;
 - c) a subsequent programme of audits is conducted.

Article 8.13.4.

Prerequisite criteria for the establishment of a compartment with a negligible risk of *Trichinella* infection in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions

A *compartment* with a negligible risk of *Trichinella infection* in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions can only be established if the following criteria are met in the country, as applicable:

- 1) *Trichinella infection* in all species of susceptible *animals* is notifiable in the whole territory and communication procedures on the occurrence of *Trichinella infection* is established between the *Veterinary Authority* and the Public Health Authority;
- 2) the *Veterinary Authority* has current knowledge of, and authority over, all domestic pigs;
- 3) the *Veterinary Authority* has current knowledge of the distribution of susceptible species of *wildlife*;
- 4) an *animal identification* and *traceability* system for domestic pigs is implemented in accordance with the provisions of Chapters 4.1. and 4.2.;
- 5) appropriate provisions are in place for tracing of *meat* from *wild animals* harvested for human consumption;
- 6) *surveillance* appropriate to the assessed epidemiological situation and capable of detecting the presence of *Trichinella infection* (including genotype, if relevant) in domestic pigs and exposure pathways, is in place.

Article 8.13.5.

Compartment with a negligible risk of *Trichinella* infection in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions

A *compartment* may be officially recognised as having negligible risk of *Trichinella infection* in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions if the following conditions are met:

- 1) all *herds* of the *compartment* comply with requirements in Article 8.13.3.;
- 2) the criteria described in Article 8.13.4. have been complied with for at least 24 months;
- 3) the absence of *Trichinella infection* in the *compartment* has been demonstrated by a *surveillance* programme. The choice of design, including duration, prevalence and confidence levels should be based on the prevailing, or historical, epidemiological situation, as appropriate, in accordance with Chapter 1.4. and using tests described in the *Terrestrial Manual*;
- 4) once a *compartment* is established, a subsequent programme of audits of all *herds* within the *compartment* is in place to ensure compliance with Article 8.13.3.;
- 5) if the audit identified a lack of compliance with one or more of the criteria described in Article 8.13.3. and the *Veterinary Authority* determined this to be a significant breach of biosecurity, the *herd(s)* concerned should be removed from the *compartment* until compliance is re-established.

Article 8.13.6.

Recommendations for the importation of meat or meat products of domestic pigs

Veterinary Authorities of importing countries should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the entire consignment of *meat* or *meat products*:

- 1) has been produced in accordance with the Codex Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CAC/RCP 58-2005);

AND

- 2) either:

- a) comes from domestic pigs originating from a *compartment* with a negligible risk for *Trichinella infection* in accordance with Article 8.13.5.;

OR

- b) comes from domestic pigs that tested negative by the digestion method for the detection of *Trichinella* larvae, as described in the *Terrestrial Manual*;

OR

- c) was processed to ensure the inactivation of *Trichinella* larvae in accordance with Codex recommendations [under study].

Article 8.13.7.

Recommendations for the importation of meat or meat products of wild or feral pigs

Veterinary Authorities of importing countries should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the entire consignment of *meat* or *meat products*:

- 1) has been produced in accordance with the Codex Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CAC/RCP 58-2005);

AND

- 2) either:

- a) comes from *wild* or *feral* pigs that tested negative by the digestion method for the detection of *Trichinella* larvae, as described in the *Terrestrial Manual*;

OR

- b) was processed to ensure the inactivation of *Trichinella* larvae in accordance with Codex recommendations [under study].

Article 8.13.8.

Recommendations for the importation of meat or meat products of domestic equids

Veterinary Authorities of importing countries should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the entire consignment of *meat* or *meat products*:

- 1) has been produced in accordance with the Codex Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CAC/RCP 58-2005);

AND

- 2) comes from domestic equids that tested negative by the digestion method for the detection of *Trichinella* larvae as described in the *Terrestrial Manual*.

Article 8.13.9.

Recommendations for the importation of meat or meat products of wild and feral equids

Veterinary Authorities of importing countries should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the entire consignment of *meat* or *meat products*:

- 1) has been inspected in accordance with the provisions in Chapter 6.2;

AND

- 2). comes from *wild* or *feral* equids that tested negative by the digestion method for the detection of *Trichinella* larvae as described in the *Terrestrial Manual*.
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