

Advice 19-2010 of the Scientific Committee of the FASFC on the declaration of food chain information to the slaughterhouse by the rabbit breeders

It is asked to the Scientific Committee which food chain information has to be declared to the slaughterhouses by rabbit breeders, in order to guarantee food safety.

The rabbit breeding sector has a number of particularities such as the existence of different categories of farming. There are two categories of rabbits raised for human consumption: meat rabbits (fattening or production rabbits, in industrial, semi-industrial or hobby farming) and reform rabbits (reproduction does and male rabbits).

In the rabbit breeding sector, the risk for public health depends more on the preventive or curative use of veterinary drugs than on the microbiological risk due to the consumption of meat.

The Scientific Committee proposes a list of clinical signs and diseases which have to be declared to the slaughterhouse, if they are observed during the fattening period (or a period of 8 weeks before slaughtering for the reformed rabbits). This declaration concerns the categories of rabbits slaughtered for human consumption. The epidemiological unit which has to be considered in the declaration is represented by all the animals of a similar production batch, and in the case of farms with several production batches, by all the animals of the farm.

In case of meat production rabbits, it is recommended to declare mortality rates higher than 15% per production batch over the whole fattening period to the slaughterhouse.

The declaration of the veterinary drug treatment applies as well for meat producing as for reform rabbits and must cover all the treatments given during the fattening period (or the last 8 weeks before slaughtering in the case of reform rabbits), irrespective if they are curative or preventive.

The full text is available on this website in dutch and in french, respectively under the section "Wetenschappelijk Comité/Adviezen" and "Comité scientifique/Avis".