



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food Safety  
and Inspection  
Service

Washington, D.C.  
20250

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JUN 30 2006

Dr. Marc Cornelis  
Chief Veterinary Officer  
Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain  
WTC III – (8th Floor)  
Simon Bolivarlaan 30  
Brussels, B-1000  
Belgium

Dear Dr. Cornelis:

This letter transmits the Food Safety and Inspection Service final report of a meat inspection system audit conducted in Belgium from December 14 through December 22, 2005. Comments from Belgium have been included as an attachment to the final report. Enclosed is a copy of the final report.

If you have any questions about this audit or need additional information, please contact me by telephone at 202-720-3781, by facsimile at 202-690-4040, or by email at [sally.white@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:sally.white@fsis.usda.gov).

Sincerely,

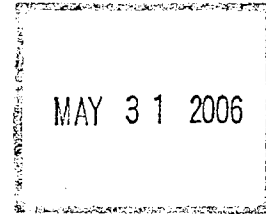
Sally White  
Director  
International Equivalence Staff  
Office of International Affairs

Enclosure

cc:

Roger Wentzel, Counselor, FAS, US Embassy, The Hague  
Geert Criel, Minister-Counselor, Embassy of Belgium, Washington  
Norval Francis, Minister-Counselor, US Mission to the EU, Brussels  
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Belgium Country File

**FINAL**



FINAL REPORT OF AN AUDIT CARRIED OUT IN BELGIUM  
COVERING BELGIUM'S MEAT INSPECTION SYSTEM

DECEMBER 14 THROUGH DECEMBER 22, 2005

Food Safety and Inspection Service  
United States Department of Agriculture

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The audit took place in Belgium from December 14 through December 22, 2005.

An opening meeting was held on December 14, 2005, in Brussels with the Central Competent Authority (CCA). At this meeting, the auditor confirmed the objective and scope of the audit, the auditor's itinerary and requested additional information needed to complete the audit of Belgium's meat inspection system.

The auditor was accompanied during the entire audit by representatives from the Central Competent Authority (CCA), the Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain, and/or representatives from the provincial and local inspection offices.

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE AUDIT

This was a routine annual audit. The objective was to evaluate the performance of the CCA with respect to controls over the processing establishment certified by the CCA as eligible to export meat products to the United States.

In pursuit of the objective, the following sites were visited: the headquarters of the CCA, one provincial office, one laboratory performing microbiological testing of U.S.-eligible product, and one meat processing establishment.

Competent Authority Visits			Comments
Competent Authority	Central	1	Brussels
	Provincial	1	Hasselt
Laboratories		1	Vosselaar (microbiology)
Meat Processing Establishments		1	Hasselt

## 3. PROTOCOL

This on-site audit was conducted in four parts. One part involved visits with CCA officials to discuss oversight programs and practices, including enforcement activities. The second part involved an audit of a selection of records in Belgium's inspection headquarters and provincial offices. The third part involved an on-site visit to one meat processing establishment. The fourth part involved a visit to one private laboratory. The Lavetan Laboratory was conducting analyses of field samples for the presence of *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* species.

Program effectiveness determinations of Belgium's meat inspection system focused on five areas of risk: (1) sanitation controls, including the implementation and operation of Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP) and Sanitation Performance Standards, (2) animal disease controls, (3) slaughter/processing controls, including the implementation and operation of Hazard Analysis/Critical Control Point (HACCP)

systems, (4) residue controls, and (5) enforcement controls. Belgium's inspection system was assessed by evaluating these five risk areas.

During the on-site establishment visit, the auditor evaluated the nature, extent and degree to which findings impacted on food safety and public health. The auditor also assessed how inspection services are carried out by Belgium and determined if establishment and inspection system controls were in place to ensure the production of meat products that are safe, unadulterated and properly labeled.

In the opening meeting, the auditor explained to the CCA that its inspection system would be audited in accordance with three areas of focus. First, under provisions of the European Community/United States Veterinary Equivalence Agreement (VEA), the FSIS auditor would audit the meat inspection system against European Commission Directive 64/433/EEC of June 1964. This directive has been declared equivalent under the VEA.

Second, in areas not covered by this directive, the auditor would audit against FSIS requirements. FSIS requirements include daily inspection in all certified establishments, the handling and disposal of inedible and condemned materials, species verification, and FSIS's requirements for HACCP and SSOP programs.

Third, FSIS auditor routinely audit against any equivalence determinations that have been made by FSIS. There are no equivalence determinations for Belgium at this time.

#### 4. LEGAL BASIS FOR THE AUDIT

The audit was undertaken under the specific provisions of United States laws and regulations, in particular:

- The Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.).
- The Federal Meat Inspection Regulations (9 CFR Parts 301 to end), which include the Pathogen Reduction/HACCP regulations.

In addition, compliance with the following Community Directive was also assessed:

- Council Directive 64/433/EEC of June 1964 entitled Health Problems Affecting Intra-Community Trade in Fresh Meat

#### 5. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS AUDITS

Final audit reports are available on FSIS' website at the following address:  
[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/Foreign\\_Audit\\_Reports/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Foreign_Audit_Reports/index.asp)

The two most recent FSIS audits of Belgium's meat inspection system were conducted in January 2004 (an enforcement audit) and in March/April 2005 (a routine audit).

## January 2004 Audit

No deficiencies were identified during the FSIS audit of Belgium's meat inspection system.

## March/April 2005 Audit

During the FSIS audit of Belgium's meat inspection system in March/April 2005, the following deficiencies were identified:

- The methods being used to test for *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* species were not the FSIS methods and had not been submitted to FSIS for an equivalence determination.
- Testing of ready-to-eat products for *Salmonella* species was not being conducted at the required frequency of three times per year.

## 6. MAIN FINDINGS

### 6.1 Legislation

The auditor was informed that the relevant EC Directive, determined equivalent under the VEA, had been transposed into Belgium's legislation.

### 6.2 Government Oversight

The Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) has four Directorate Generals: one for Laboratories, one for Corporate Services, one for Control Policy, and one for Control. The Directorate for Laboratories is divided into internal (Government) and external (private) laboratories. The Directorate for Corporate Services is responsible for human resource management, finance, and legal services. The Directorate for Control Policy (roughly equivalent to FSIS's Office of Program Development, Policy, and Equivalence) establishes process standards. The Directorate for Control (roughly equivalent to FSIS's Office of Field Operations) carries the responsibility for inspection/audit services and enforcement of process and product standards. This Directorate General for Control is divided into eleven Provincial Control Units (PCUs), one for each of the 10 Provinces and one for the capital city of Brussels. The Directorate General for Control also has two Coordinators, one for the Flemish-speaking (northern) half of the country and one for the French-speaking (southern) half. These Coordinators supervise the Heads of the PCUs.

There are three Sectors under each PCU, each of which has a Sector Head. The three Sectors are:

1. Primary Production, responsible for live animals up to and including slaughter (areas of responsibility include animal welfare, animal disease, and controls of antibiotics and other veterinary pharmaceuticals) before sale in the markets.



2. Fabrication and Transformation (Processing), responsible for food (including meat processing), production of animal feed, and production of fertilizers and pesticides.
3. Distribution, responsible for markets and restaurants.

#### 6.2.1 CCA Control Systems

When the management of an existing establishment wishes to become eligible to export to the United States, the manager makes an application to the PCU. A Provincial Official Inspector conducts an administrative and technical inquiry and submits a report of the results to the Chief of the PCU, who, in turn, makes a recommendation to the DG Control Headquarters on the basis of the report. The final approval for U.S.-export certification is the responsibility of DG Control. To qualify for eligibility to export to the United States, an establishment must first meet EC requirements and must be eligible to produce for inter-community trade. If there is any question regarding the full eligibility of the establishment, a headquarters official from DG Control - Transformation may visit the premises on-site before a final approval is granted.

Communications regarding FSIS requirements are transmitted directly by the agricultural section of the United States Embassy in The Hague, Netherlands, to the Head of FASFC International Affairs [the Counselor General, DG Control Policy]. This information is then transmitted, as well as other official guidelines and instructions that are issued by DG Control Policy, to the DG for Control. DG Control forwards them by e-mail and through the mail service to the Head of the PCU. The latter, in turn, provides them immediately to the Veterinarian-In-Charge (VIC).

To maintain U.S. certification, an establishment must be in full compliance with a detailed checklist of FSIS requirements. The officials from the PCU ensure that these requirements continue to be met. If any of the requirements are not met, the PCU correlates with DG Control and U.S. eligibility is revoked by DG Control.

#### 6.2.2 Ultimate Control and Supervision

The VIC of the establishment is a full-time FASFC employee, who performs the inspection coverage of Est. B-156 on a circuit basis, in addition to coverage of other establishments. There are also two contract FASFC veterinarians. They alternate inspection coverage with the VIC. They have had the same inspection training, including official courses in HACCP and SSOP, as the VIC.

There is a full, written audit/review program with established system controls, including reporting documents and distribution of reports at all levels.

#### 6.2.3 Assignment of Competent, Qualified Inspectors

Applicants wishing employment in the FASFC must take civil service examinations. Specific additional examinations are prepared and required for veterinarians. The responsibility for the hiring of veterinarians and other inspection employees lies with the

Minister of Public Health. The hiring of independent veterinarians (such as the alternate veterinarians providing coverage in Est. B-156) is organized by the Provincial Control Unit. Both federally recruited and independent/part-time veterinarians are required to spend one year in probationary status, during which they are given specific courses in the various aspects of meat inspection, in close coordination with university faculties for veterinary medicine and meat hygiene, and work together with an experienced official inspector. The FASFC's Center for Training and Education provides continuing training and education for official inspectors.

Both full-time and contract government employees are prohibited by law from performing any private, establishment-paid tasks at an establishment in which they perform official inspection duties. For the full-time government employees, this is regulated in the law of February 4, 2000, "Creation of the Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain." A private-practice veterinarian may be hired as a part time or contract government employee, but may not perform any private, establishment-paid tasks in any establishment in which he/she has official duties, nor may he have any additional conflicts of interest. This is regulated by the Royal Decree of December 19, 2002.

#### 6.2.4 Authority and Responsibility to Enforce the Laws

The VIC, as well as all other authorities in the chain of command up to DG Control, has full regulatory authority from retention of product up to and including suspension of operations.

#### 6.2.5. Adequate Administrative and Technical Support

Belgium has adequate administrative and technical support to operate its inspection system.

### 6.3 Headquarters Audit

The auditor conducted a review of inspection system documents. This records review was conducted at the headquarters office of FASFC in Brussels and in the provincial office in Hasselt, which provides supervisory oversight for the establishment. The records review focused primarily on food safety hazards and included the following.

- Internal review reports
- Supervisory visits to establishments that were certified to export to the U.S.
- Training records for inspectors and laboratory personnel
- New laws and implementation documents such as regulations, notices, directives and guidelines
- Sampling and laboratory analyses for microbiology
- Sanitation and processing inspection procedures and standards
- Control of inedible and condemned materials
- Export product inspection and control including export certificates

- Enforcement records, including examples of recalls, seizure and control of noncompliant product, and withholding, suspending, withdrawing inspection services from an establishment that does not meet compliance standards

No concerns arose as a result of the examination of these documents.

## 7. ESTABLISHMENT AUDITS

The FSIS auditor visited the only meat processing establishment that was eligible to export to the United States. The establishment was not delisted and did not receive a Notice of Intent to Delist.

## 8. LABORATORY AUDITS

During laboratory audits, emphasis is placed on the application of procedures and standards that are equivalent to the United States' requirements.

Residue laboratory audits focus on sample handling, sampling frequency, timely analysis data reporting, analytical methodologies, tissue matrices, equipment operation and printouts, detection levels, recovery frequency, percent recoveries, intra-laboratory check samples, and quality assurance programs, including standards books and corrective actions. No residue laboratories were audited.

Microbiology laboratory audits focus on analyst qualifications, sample receipt, timely analysis, analytical methodologies, analytical controls, recording and reporting of results, and check samples. If private laboratories are used to test United States samples, the auditor evaluates compliance with the criteria established for the use of private laboratories under the FSIS Pathogen Reduction/HACCP requirements.

The following laboratory was reviewed:

Lavetan, a private microbiology Laboratory in Vosselaar, was conducting analyses of field samples for the presence of *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* species in ready-to-eat products for Establishment B-156.

No deficiencies were noted.

## 9. SANITATION CONTROLS

As stated earlier, the FSIS auditor focuses on five areas of risk to assess Belgium's meat inspection system. The first of these risk areas that the FSIS auditor reviewed was Sanitation Controls.

Based on the on-site audit of the establishment, Belgium's inspection system had controls in place for SSOP programs, all aspects of facility and equipment sanitation, the prevention of actual or potential instances of product cross-contamination, good personal hygiene and practices, and good product handling and storage practices.

In addition, Belgium's inspection system had controls in place for water records, chlorination procedures, back-siphonage prevention, separation of operations, temperature control, work space, ventilation, welfare facilities, and outside premises.

#### 9.1 SSOP

The establishment was evaluated to determine if the basic FSIS regulatory requirements for SSOP were met, according to the criteria employed in the U.S. domestic inspection program. The SSOP program in the establishment was found to meet the basic FSIS regulatory requirements, with no deficiencies.

#### 9.2 EC Directive 64/433

In the establishment, the provisions of EC Directive 64/433 were effectively implemented.

### 10. ANIMAL DISEASE CONTROLS

The second of the five risk areas that the FSIS auditor reviewed was Animal Disease Controls. These controls include ensuring adequate animal identification, control over condemned and restricted product, and procedures for sanitary handling of returned and reconditioned product.

No Belgian slaughter facilities were certified as eligible to export to the United States at this time. Therefore, a review of Belgium's animal disease controls was not conducted.

### 11. SLAUGHTER/PROCESSING CONTROLS

The third of the five risk areas that the FSIS auditor reviews is Slaughter/Processing Controls. The controls include the following areas: ante-mortem inspection procedures, ante-mortem disposition, humane handling and humane slaughter, post-mortem inspection procedures, post-mortem disposition, ingredients identification, control of restricted ingredients, formulations, processing schedules, equipment and records, and processing controls of cured, dried, and cooked products.

The controls also include the implementation of HACCP systems in all establishments and implementation of a generic *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) testing program in slaughter establishments.

#### 11.1 Humane Handling and Slaughter

No Belgian slaughter facilities are certified as eligible to export to the United States at this time.

## 11.2 HACCP Implementation

All establishments approved to export meat products to the United States are required to have developed and adequately implemented HACCP programs. These programs are evaluated according to the criteria employed in the United States domestic inspection program.

The HACCP program was reviewed during the on-site audit of the establishment. The establishment management had adequately implemented the HACCP requirements with the following exception:

- Monitoring and verification records of the establishment did not include the time each entry was made.

## 11.3 Testing for Generic *Escherichia coli*

No Belgian slaughter facilities were certified as eligible to export to the United States at this time. Therefore, the establishment was not required to meet the FSIS regulatory requirements for generic *E. coli* testing.

## 11.4 Testing for *Listeria monocytogenes*

The processing establishment audited was producing ready-to-eat products (pork shoulders and picnic hams) for export to the United States. This product is fully cooked in hermetically-sealed plastic pouches with no post-lethality exposure to the environment. Accordingly, finished product testing is limited to “non-risk based testing” for *Listeria monocytogenes* as mandated by FSIS Directive 10,210.1 Amendment 6, which requires product testing of three times per year. (Ready-to-eat products are required to be tested for both *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella*.)

## 11.5 EC Directive 64/433

In the establishment, the provisions of EC Directive 64/433 were effectively implemented.

## 12. RESIDUE CONTROLS

The fourth of the five risk areas that the FSIS auditor reviewed was Residue Controls. These controls include sample handling and frequency, timely analysis, data reporting, tissue matrices for analysis, equipment operation and printouts, minimum detection levels, recovery frequency, percent recoveries, and corrective actions.

No Belgian slaughter facilities were certified as eligible to export to the United States at this time. All meat products eligible for export to the United States are imported from eligible establishments in the Netherlands.

### 12.1 EC Directive 96/22

No Belgian slaughter facilities were certified as eligible to export to the United States at this time. Residue testing of incoming product is performed in the country of origin.

### 12.2 EC Directive 96/23

No Belgian slaughter facilities were certified as eligible to export to the United States at this time. Residue testing of incoming product is performed in the country of origin.

## 13. ENFORCEMENT CONTROLS

The fifth of the five risk areas that the FSIS auditor reviewed was Enforcement Controls. These controls include the enforcement of inspection requirements and the testing program for *Salmonella* species.

### 13.1 Daily Inspection in Establishments

Inspection was being conducted daily in the processing establishment on all days on which U.S.-eligible production was conducted.

### 13.2 Testing for *Salmonella* in Raw Product

No Belgian slaughter facilities were certified as eligible to export to the United States at this time. Therefore, the establishment was not required to meet the FSIS regulatory requirements for *Salmonella* testing of raw product.

### 13.3 Species Verification

At the time of this audit, Belgium was required to test product for species verification. Species verification testing was being conducted as required.

### 13.4 Monthly Reviews

During this audit, it was found that monthly supervisory reviews of the establishment were being performed and fully documented as required.

### 13.5 Inspection System Controls

The CCA had controls in place for restricted product, shipment security, including shipment between establishments, and prevention of commingling of product intended for export to the U.S. with product intended for the domestic market.

In addition, controls were in place for the importation of only eligible meat from other countries for further processing, security items, shipment security, and products entering the establishments from outside sources.

#### 14. CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on December 22, 2005, in Brussels with the CCA. At this meeting, the primary findings and conclusions from the audit were presented by the auditor.

The CCA understood and accepted the findings.

Nader Memarian, DVM  
Senior Program Auditor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nader Memarian", with a horizontal line drawn underneath it.

## 15. ATTACHMENTS

Individual Foreign Establishment Audit Forms  
Foreign Country Response to the Draft Final Report



### Foreign Establishment Audit Checklist

1. ESTABLISHMENT NAME AND LOCATION N.V. Deko Vleeswarenfabriek Hasselt	2. AUDIT DATE 12-15-2005	3. ESTABLISHMENT NO. B-156	4. NAME OF COUNTRY Belgium
5. NAME OF AUDITOR(S) Dr. Nader Memarian		6. TYPE OF AUDIT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON-SITE AUDIT <input type="checkbox"/> DOCUMENT AUDIT	

Place an X in the Audit Results block to indicate noncompliance with requirements. Use O if not applicable.

Part A - Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP) Basic Requirements	Audit Results	Part D - Continued Economic Sampling	Audit Results
7. Written SSOP		33. Scheduled Sample	
8. Records documenting implementation.		34. Species Testing	
9. Signed and dated SSOP, by on-site or overall authority.		35. Residue	O
<b>Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP) Ongoing Requirements</b>		<b>Part E - Other Requirements</b>	
10. Implementation of SSOP's, including monitoring of implementation.		36. Export	
11. Maintenance and evaluation of the effectiveness of SSOP's.		37. Import	
12. Corrective action when the SSOP's have failed to prevent direct product contamination or adulteration.		38. Establishment Grounds and Pest Control	
13. Daily records document item 10, 11 and 12 above.		39. Establishment Construction/Maintenance	
<b>Part B - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems - Basic Requirements</b>		40. Light	
14. Developed and implemented a written HACCP plan.		41. Ventilation	
15. Contents of the HACCP list the food safety hazards, critical control points, critical limits, procedures, corrective actions.		42. Plumbing and Sewage	
16. Records documenting implementation and monitoring of the HACCP plan.		43. Water Supply	
17. The HACCP plan is signed and dated by the responsible establishment individual.		44. Dressing Rooms/Lavatories	
<b>Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems - Ongoing Requirements</b>		45. Equipment and Utensils	
18. Monitoring of HACCP plan.		46. Sanitary Operations	
19. Verification and validation of HACCP plan.		47. Employee Hygiene	
20. Corrective action written in HACCP plan.		48. Condemned Product Control	
21. Reassessed adequacy of the HACCP plan.		<b>Part F - Inspection Requirements</b>	
22. Records documenting: the written HACCP plan, monitoring of the critical control points, dates and times of specific event occurrences.	X	49. Government Staffing	
<b>Part C - Economic / Wholesomeness</b>		50. Daily Inspection Coverage	
23. Labeling - Product Standards		51. Enforcement	X
24. Labeling - Net Weights		52. Humane Handling	O
25. General Labeling		53. Animal Identification	O
26. Fin. Prod Standards/Boneless (Defects/AQL/Pork Skins/Moisture)		54. Ante Mortem Inspection	O
<b>Part D - Sampling Generic E. coli Testing</b>		55. Post Mortem Inspection	O
27. Written Procedures	O	<b>Part G - Other Regulatory Oversight Requirements</b>	
28. Sample Collection/Analysis	O	56. European Community Directives	
29. Records	O	57. Monthly Review	
<b>Salmonella Performance Standards - Basic Requirements</b>		58.	
30. Corrective Actions	O	59.	
31. Reassessment	O		
32. Written Assurance	O		

60. Observation of the Establishment

Est. B 156 – Processing  
12/15/2005  
Belgium.

22/51 Monitoring and verification records did not include the time each entry was made [9 CFR part 417.5(b) and 417.8].

61. NAME OF AUDITOR

Nader Memarian, DVM

62. AUDITOR SIGNATURE AND DATE

*Nader Memarian* 12-27-05



Federal Agency  
for the Safety  
of the Food Chain

DG Control Policy  
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**Ms. Sally White**  
**Director**  
**FSIS, International Equivalence Staff**  
**Office of International Affairs**  
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Your letter from : May 16 2005  
Your reference :  
Our reference : PCCB/S4/SHS/125757  
Enclosures :  
Date : 20/04/2006

Subject : **FSIS on-site Audit of Belgium's meat inspection system/  
December 2005/ comments report**

Dear colleague,

Concerning the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) conducted on-site audit of Belgium's meat inspection system from December 14 through December 22, 2005 , you will find below the comments of the Belgian authority regarding the information in the audit report:

- 1) Enclosed letter (heading): "Institute for Veterinary Inspection, Ministry of Social Affairs, Public Health and Environment"

This is the former name. In Belgium the Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) is now the competent authority for official control of the entire food chain, including animal health, plant health and animal welfare. The FASFC is also the competent authority for issuing export certificates for all commodities within the entire food chain, including live animals and for official import control of feed and food of animal and non animal origin and of live animals and plants.

- 2) Page 8, CCA Control Systems  
From January 1, 2006, Directive 64/433/EC will be repealed and replaced by :

- Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules
- Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption.

- 3) Page 9, point 6.2.3 Assignment of Competent, Qualified Inspectors:  
"For the full-time government employees, this is regulated in the Law of July 13, 1981."

This should be adapted by "... regulated in the law of February 4, 2000, creation of the Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain."

Our task is  
to preserve the safety  
of the food chain  
and the quality of food  
in order to protect  
the health of humans,  
animals and plants

"A private-practice veterinarian may be hired as a part time or contract government employee, but may ... nor may he have any additional conflicts of interest. This is regulated by the Royal Decree of July 4, 1986." This must be replaced by "This is regulated by the Royal Decree of December 19, 2002".

4) Page 10: point 8 Laboratory audits

"The following laboratory was reviewed: Laveton..."

This must be replaced by: "The following laboratory was reviewed: Lavetan..."

5) Page 11, point 9.2 EC Directive 64/433

From January 1, 2006 Directive 64/433/EC on hygiene in meat processing plants will be repealed and replaced by:

- Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs;
- Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact the office of International affairs.

Yours sincerely,

Ir. G. HOUINS  
Director general

*Cc: Dr. J.M. DOCHY, Director general, DG Control*