# **01-001 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**DIVISION OF REGULATIONS**

**Chapter 352: DOMESTICATED DEER PROCESSING**

**Summary**: The purpose of this chapter is to set forth the standards for licensing and regulations for domestic deer processing.

**I. DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this chapter and unless the context otherwise indicates, the following words shall have the following meanings:

A. "Domesticated Deer" means Fallow Deer; family Cervidae, sub-family Cervinae, genus Dams; red deer, family Cervidae, sub-family Cervinae, genus Cervus, species Elaplus and any other species specified under subsection 1-A of Public Law 649; to be kept as domestic animals for the purpose of either breeding stock or for sale as food.

B. "Building" means the building or buildings or parts thereof, used for or in connection with, the manufacturing, processing packaging, labeling or holding of human food.

C. "Department" means the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

D ."Food Processing and Manufacturing Establishments" means an establishment in which food is processed or otherwise prepared .and packaged for human consumption.

E. "Potentially Hazardous Food" means any perishable food which consists in whole or part, of milk or milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish or other ingredients capable of supporting rapid and progressive growth of infectious or toxigenic microorganisms.

F. "Corrosion Resistant Material" means those materials that maintain their original surface characteristics under prolonged influence of the food to be contacted, the normal use of cleaning compounds and bactericidal solutions, and other conditions of environment.

G. "Easily Cleanable" means readily accessible and of such material and finish and so fabricated, the residues may be completely removed by usual cleaning methods.

H. "Food Contact Surfaces" means those surfaces of equipment and utensils with which food normally comes into contact.

I. "Sanitary" means that all buildings, equipment, and utensils shall be suitable for their intended use, so designed and of such material and workmanship as to be adequately cleanable and properly maintained.

J. "Wholesome" means food in sound condition, clean and free from adulteration and otherwise suitable for human consumption.

**II. PLANT CONTROL AND DESIGN**

A. Adequate ventilation shall be provided to eliminate objectionable odors and vapors, including steam, and constructed in such a manner as to avoid possible airborne contamination.

B. Processing room floors shall be graded to a trapped drain to allow for complete runoff of liquids.

C. Toilet sever lines shall be separate from other drainage lines to a point outside the building.

D. Metal is recommended for floor drains, but other suitable materials may be used.

E. Furnace room shall be separate from the processing area.

F. Separate handwashing sink shall be provided in the processing area, operated by a foot treadle.

G. Holding pens must be clean and maintained in an sanitary manner.

H. Floors, walls, and ceilings shall be constructed so as to be readily cleanable and shall be kept clean and in good repair.

I. Fixtures, ducts, pipes shall not be suspended over working areas in a manner whereby drip may contaminate foods, raw materials or equipment.

J. Operations which may cause cross-contamination with bacteria, molds, toxic, chemicals, filth, or the like shall be separated by partitions or located in different parts of the plant.

K. Adequate lighting shall be provided where food or food ingredients are stored, processed or examined, where equipment or utensils are washed, and in handwashing areas, dressing and locker rooms and toilets.

L. Light bulbs, fixtures, skylights, or other glass suspended over exposed food in any step of preparation, shall be of the safety type or otherwise protected to prevent food contamination in case of breakage.

M. Adequate screening, where necessary, shall be provided to exclude birds, dogs, flies and other vermin and rodents.

N. The grounds of the outer building or buildings shall be reasonably clean and well drained, free from any materials or conditions that create rodent, bird and or insect harborages and free from other nuisances and sources of contamination.

**III. EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS**

A. Knives and saws that are used in skinning operation shall not be used for the evisceration process. Sheaths and scabbards must be available for storage of knives.

B. Hooks and gambrels used in the process shall be made of non corrosive material and be easily washable.

C. Equipment and utensils shall be adequate for their intended use.

D. Equipment and utensils shall be designed and constructed to enable easy cleaning and maintenance.

E. Equipment shall not contaminate food with lubricants, fuel, metal fragments, contaminated water and the like.

**IV. SANITARY OPERATIONS AND CONTROLS**

A. An ample supply of hot and cold water under pressure shall be maintained in all processing areas sufficient to provide water for each processing day. Private supplies must be tested yearly, and be from a safe sanitary source.

B. Non-toxic fly ribbons may be used for insect control if located properly and changed frequently. Pressurized insecticides shall be used strictly according to container instructions and must be of the type approved by USDA for use in food plants.

C. Rendering barrels shall be kept in a separate area and shall be rodent proof. Primary offal containers shall be emptied, washed, and sanitized at least daily.

D. All equipment and utensils shall be maintained in a sanitary condition through cleaning at frequent intervals to prevent contamination of food and food products.

E. Suitable facilities for cleaning equipment and utensils shall be provided at convenient locations.

F. All food contact surfaces shall be cleaned and sanitized prior to use and following any interruption during which such utensils and contact surfaces may have become contaminated. Where such equipment and utensils are used in a continuous production operation, the contact surfaces of such equipment and utensils shall be cleaned and sanitized on a predetermined schedule using adequate methods for cleaning and sanitizing. Sanitizing agents shall be effective and safe under conditions of use.

G. Unitization shall be accomplished by one of the following methods: (1) Immersion for at least one half minute in clean, hot water at a temperature of at least 170 degrees F. or (2) Immersion for at least one minute in a clean solution containing at least 50 parts per million of available chlorine as a hypoclorite and at a temperature of at least 75 degrees F.; or (3) Immersion for at least one minute in a clean solution containing at least 12.5 parts per million of available iodine and having a Ph not higher that 5.0 and at a temperature of at least 75 degrees F. (4) Quaternary ammonium compounds may also be used, following directions of the manufacturer. Where both cleaning and sanitation required, sanitation shall follow cleaning. The food contact surfaces of all equipment and utensils which cannot be immersed shall be sanitized by rinsing, spraying or swabbing with a chemical sanitizing solution of at least twice the strength required for method (1), (2), and (3) of this section.

H. All cleaned and sanitized portable equipment and utensils shall be stored above the floor in a clean and dry location in such a manner that all food contact surfaces are protected from splash, dust or other contamination.

I. Hot and cold running water under pressure shall be provided in all areas where foods are processed. Only a three bay sink made of corrosion resistant material shall be used for washing equipment and utensils.

J. Sewage disposal shall be made into an adequate approved sewerage system.

K. Adequate floor drains shall be provided in areas where floors are subjected to flooding type of cleaning or where there is release or discharge of water or waste onto the floor.

L. Toilets shall be adequate for the number of employees and have self-closing doors not opening directly into any rooms used for processing or packaging. Handwashing facilities shall be adequate and conveniently located in relation to the toilet and food processing area. Soap or detergent, and paper towels or other drying devices shall be provided at all times. Toilet and handwashing facilities shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Handwash signs shall be posted. The toilet room shall be ventilated to the outside, kept free of odors, clean and in good repair.

M. Offal and rubbish shall be conveyed, disposed of or stored in such a manner as to minimize the development of odor, prevent waste from becoming an attractant, harborage or breeding place for vermin and flies and prevent contamination of food, food contact surfaces and water supply.

N. Effective measures shall be taken to protect against contamination of food in or on the premises by cats, dogs, birds, rodents or insects.

O. Buildings, fixtures, and other physical facilities shall be kept in good repair and maintained in an orderly, sanitary condition at all times.

P. Cleaning operations shall be conducted in such a manner as to minimize food contamination or the contamination of food contact surfaces.

Q. Only detergents, disinfectants and other cleaning supplies contained in the current *List of Chemical Compounds*, authorized for use under *U.S.D.A. Inspection and Grading Programs* shall be used in food manufacturing and processing facilities. Such detergents, disinfectants, and cleaning supplies shall be used only for their approved purposes as noted in the *List*.

**V. PROCESSING AND CONTROLS**

A. Domesticated deer must be slaughtered humanely stunned or rendered senseless before being bled.

B. The incision made to bleed the animal must be made to prevent contamination.

C. Skinning of the Domesticated Deer must be done carefully to prevent contamination to the meat.

D. Ground Domesticated Deer meat must not have any added meats or fats from other types of animals, unless labeled as having added substances.

E. Adequate cooler and freezer space shall be provided for processed meat and meat products. Each unit shall be supplied with an accurate and conspicuous thermometer.

F. Domesticated meat shall not contain any residual medication, and shall come from sound, disease-free Domesticated Deer.

G. Refrigeration temperatures for cooling and storing fresh Domesticated Deer meat shall be 40 degrees F. or below. Freezer temperatures shall be -10 to -40 degrees F. for the freezing of Domesticated Deer meat. Frozen Domesticated Deer meat shall be maintained at 0 degrees F. or below.

H. Domesticated Deer may be slaughtered and processed in a United States Department of Agriculture Inspection Plant, if agreed upon by parties involved.

I. No domesticated deer may be slaughtered or processed in any custom plant if the meat is to be offered for sale.

J. If any person has a domesticated deer slaughtered of his own raising for the use or his family or non paying guest, the requirements pertaining to the processing and control of these regulations will not prevail.

K. Evisceration must be performed in a manner that will prevent fecal contamination.

L. Holding area for live domesticated deer shall be separated from the processing area by a solid partition.

M. The edible by-products, heart, tongue, liver, must be handled in a manner that will prevent contamination. The bile duct must be removed carefully to prevent rupturing.

N. *[Not in use]*

O. Containers and carriers of raw materials shall be inspected on receipt to assure that their condition will not contribute to contamination or deterioration of the product.

P. Any ice used in contact with the product shall be made from potable water and manufactured in accordance with sanitary standards, and it shall be stored, transported and handled in a sanitary manner.

Q. Food processing areas and equipment used for the processing of human food shall not be used in the processing of animal feed or inedible products unless such use cannot result in the contamination of human food.

R. Chemical, microbiological or extraneous testing procedures may be utilized where necessary to identify sanitation failures or food adulterants.

S. Packaging processes or materials shall not transmit contaminants or objectionable substance to the product.

T. Processors and manufacturers shall keep records and code products so as to enable them to identify specific food lots affected by contamination, spoilage or by sanitation failure and shall separate each lot from non-affected.

U. Finished products shall be stored and transported under conditions which will preclude all contamination and protect against deterioration of the product and the container.

**VI. LABELING**

A. All packaged products shall bear (a) the common or usual name of the product. (b) ingredients in order of predominance, (c) net weight or numerical count, (d) name and address of manufacturer or distributor and zip code.

**VII. LICENSING**

A. **Application and Fee**. An owner or operator of a food processing and manufacturing establishment used for domesticated deer processing shall annually apply to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Division of Regulations for a license for the establishment. A license fee of $20.00 shall accompany each application. In order to allow for the staggering of license expiration dates, initial licenses may be issued for a period exceeding 12 months. In such cases, the initial license feel shall be increased in proportion to the length of the license period.

B. **Inspection and Issuance**. Before a license is issued or renewed, the Department shall inspect the premises of the applicant.

Following inspection and receipt of the application and required fee, the Commissioner shall within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the application issue a license to operate any domesticated deer processing plant (Food Processing License) which is found to comply with 22 M.R.S.A. 2151 et seq. and the provisions of Chapter 343, Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

C. **Display**. Licenses issued shall be displayed in a place visible to consumers and other persons using a licensed establishment.

D. Any warehouse or warehouse space within the food processing and manufacturing establishments covered by this rule shall comply with 01-001 CMR Chapter 551 (Food Storage Warehouse), but only one license fee need be paid.

**VIII. PERMITS AND GUIDELINES**

A. An Import Permit must be obtained from the Division of Veterinary Services.

B. Guidelines for care and propagation of domesticated deer must be obtained from the Division of Production and Development.

C. Guidelines for controls prior to slaughter must be obtained from the Animal Welfare Board.

The proposed regulations are based on the same standards that existed in Maine under the *Maine Meat Act* (1969-1980) which governed all meat establishments in Maine. The *Maine Meat Act* was equal to the USDA function in 1980.

The state feels that the slaughter standards for domesticated deer be as stringent as past standards for other meats in order to provide adequate protection to consumers or such products.

A letter directed to this office from the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife expressed concern about the prevention of escapes of domestic deer into the wild. The Commissioner found that this concern could best be addressed in the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Rules Chapter 220 governing importation of deer into Maine.

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