



**NEW YORK STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS  
DIVISION OF FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION  
10B AIRLINE DRIVE  
ALBANY, NY 12235**

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## **CIRCULAR 914**

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**Article 5-B of the Agriculture and Markets Law  
Relating to the Sale of Meat**

**Article 5-D of the Agriculture and Markets Law  
Relating to the Sale of Poultry and Poultry Products**

Revised as of January 22, 2003

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## ARTICLE 5-B--SALE OF MEAT

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### Section 96-g. Definitions

As used in this article, unless otherwise expressly stated, or unless the content or subject matter otherwise requires;

1. "Department" means the department of agriculture and markets.
2. "Commissioner" means the commissioner of agriculture and markets.
3. "Person" means any person, firm, corporation, or association.
4. "Inspection legend" means a mark or a statement authorized by the provisions of the federal law, on a carcass, meat, meat by-product, or meat food product indicating the product has been inspected and passed.
5. "Meat label" means a display of written, printed, or graphic matter authorized by the provisions of the federal law on a container indicating the meat, meat by-products, or meat food products contained therein have been inspected and passed.
6. "Meat" means the edible part of the muscle of cattle, swine, sheep, goats, horses and other large domesticated animals which is skeletal or which is found in the tongue, in the diaphragm, in the heart or in the esophagus, with or without the accompanying or overlying fat, and the portions of bone, skin, nerve and blood vessels which normally accompany the muscle tissue and which are not separated from it in the process of dressing. It does not include the muscle found in the lips, snout or ears. Any edible part of the carcass which has been manufactured, cured, smoked, processed or otherwise treated shall not be considered meat.

7. “Meat by-product” means any edible part other than meat which has been derived from cattle, swine, sheep, goats, horses and other large domesticated animals. This term shall apply only to those parts which have not been manufactured, cured, smoked, processed or otherwise treated.

8. “Meat food product” means any product capable of use as human food which is made wholly or in part from any meat or other portion of the carcass of any animal, excepting products which contain meat or other portions of such carcasses only in a relatively small proportion or historically have not been considered by consumers as products of the meat food industry, and which are exempted from definition as a meat food product by the commissioner under such conditions as he may prescribe to assure that the meat or other portions of such carcasses contained in such product are not adulterated and that such products are not represented as meat food products.

9. “Custom slaughterer” means a person, firm, corporation or association who or which operates a place or establishment where animals are delivered by the owner thereof for slaughter exclusively for use, in the household of such owner, by him and members of his household and his non-paying guests and employees, provided, that such custom slaughterer does not engage in the business of buying or selling any carcasses, parts of carcasses, meat or meat products of any animal.

10. “Custom slaughtered meat” means meat from animals which have been slaughtered by a custom slaughterer for the owner exclusively for use, in the household of such owner, by him and members of his household and his non-paying guests and employees.

11. “Farm dressed meat” means meat from animals slaughtered by a bona fide farmer who, as an incident of such farm operation, slaughters his own domestic animals on his own premises exclusively for use, in his household, by him and members of his household and his non-paying guests and employees.

12. “Edible” and “for human consumption” shall apply to any carcass, or part or product of a carcass, of any animal, unless it is denatured or otherwise identified as required by regulations prescribed by the commissioner to deter its use as human food, or is naturally inedible by humans.

13. “Animal” means cattle, swine, sheep, goats, horses and other large domesticated mammals.

14. “Carcass” means all parts, including viscera of a slaughtered animal, that are capable of being used for human food.

15. “Federal inspection” means the meat inspection maintained by the United States department of agriculture.

16. “Federal law” means the federal meat inspection act and all acts amendatory thereof and supplementary thereto.

17. “Game or wild game” means any deer or big game, or portions thereof, as defined in section 11-0103 of the environmental conservation law, taken by lawful hunting.

## **Section 96-h. Application of Article**

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this article, the knowing sale, exposure for sale, exchange or transportation at any and all places within the state of the fur, hair, skin or flesh of domesticated dog (*canis familiaris*) or domesticated cat (*felis catus* or *domesticus*) as food, meat, custom slaughtered meat, farm dressed meat, meat by-product or meat food product edible by humans or animals is hereby prohibited. A violation of this section shall subject the offender to a civil penalty of up to one thousand dollars for an individual and up to five thousand dollars for a corporation for the first violation. Any subsequent violation shall be subject to a civil penalty of up to twenty-five thousand dollars. Any civil penalties collected pursuant to this section shall be paid to the animal population control fund established by section ninety-seven-xx of the state finance law. Any authorization given by or pursuant to the provisions of this article to handle, sell, expose for sale, exchange or transport the carcasses of animals, parts thereof, meat, meat by-products and meat food products within the state and any exclusion from the application of this article applicable to custom slaughtered meat or contained in section ninety-six-j or another provision of this article shall not apply to the knowing sale, exposure for sale, exchange or transportation of the fur, hair, skin or flesh of domesticated dog or domesticated cat as food, meat, custom slaughtered meat, farm dressed meat, meat by-product or meat food product edible by humans or animals which is prohibited by the provisions of this section. In the case of any conflict with another provision of this article, the provisions of this section shall prevail over such other provision of this article.

## **Section 96-i. General powers**

The department, through the commissioner, is hereby vested with the power to administer and enforce the provisions of this article.

## **Section 96-j. Farmer and custom processors**

This article shall not apply to any bona fide farmer who butchers his own domestic animals on his own farm exclusively for use by him and members of his household and his non-paying guests and employees, custom slaughterers, custom slaughtered meat, farm dressed meat, custom meat by-products, custom meat food products, and establishments where only such products are prepared, produced, processed or packaged, provided, however, that custom slaughtered meat, farm dressed meat, custom meat by-products and custom meat food products shall be identified as such in such manner as may be required by the commissioner by duly promulgated rules and regulations.

## **[Sections 96-k to 96-k-2. Repealed]**

## **Section 96-l. Inspection legend required**

Except as exempted by the provisions of this article no carcasses of animals, parts thereof, meat, meat by-product or meat food product for human consumption, shall be sold, exposed for sale, exchanged or transported within the state unless the same shall bear an official inspection legend or a meat label affixed pursuant to a federal inspection.

## **Section 96-m. Sale of inspected meat**

All carcasses of animals, parts thereof, meat, meat by-products, and meat food products bearing an inspection legend or meat label affixed after a federal inspection may be sold, exposed for sale,

exchanged or transported at all places within the state, except that dressed carcasses of equines or other large domesticated animals, parts, meat, meat by-products and meat food products thereof may be sold, exposed for sale, exchanged or transported only in accordance with such rules and regulations as may be enacted by the commissioner.

**[Sections 96-n to 96-p-1. Repealed]**

**Section 96-p-2. Mishandling and improper transportation of meat, meat by-products and meat food products**

(1) No person, firm, association, partnership or corporation engaged in carrying or transporting meat, meat by-products or meat food products shall transport such products except in an enclosed vehicle in such a manner as to assure delivery of the aforesaid products so that frozen products remain frozen and such other products do not rise above forty degrees Fahrenheit, provided, however, that this section shall not apply to establishments engaging in meat handling operations at retail stores and restaurants, when conducted at any retail store or restaurant or similar retail-type establishment for sale in normal retail quantities or service of such articles to consumers at such establishments, nor to household consumers. This section shall not apply to meat food products which because of their method of manufacture, processing, and packaging, require no special handling temperatures to prevent adulteration or unwholesomeness including, but not limited to, commercially sterile meat food products in hermetically sealed containers.

(2) The commissioner may promulgate rules and regulations to further define standards for the transportation of meat, meat by-products or meat food products to further ensure that they are delivered in an unadulterated and wholesome condition.

(3) A violation of the provisions of this section shall be a violation as defined in subdivision three of section 10.00 of the penal law.

**Section 96-q. Unmarked and unlabeled meat**

Inasmuch as it cannot be determined for certain by any presently known method of inspection whether meat is unsound, unhealthful, unwholesome, or otherwise unfit or unsafe for food unless the organs and other tissues of an animal are inspected when slaughtered, or whether meat, meat by-products or meat food products are unsound, unhealthful and unwholesome or contain dyes, chemicals, preservatives or ingredients which render such products adulterated unless inspected where processed, and as uninspected meat, meat by-products and meat food products may be unfit or unsafe for human consumption, the commissioner shall seize and destroy for food purposes any meat, meat by-product or meat food product that does not bear an official inspection legend affixed pursuant to a federal inspection; provided nothing herein shall affect the possession by a custom slaughterer or custom processor, or the possession and transportation by the owner of custom slaughtered meat or farm dressed meat when meats are identified as such in accordance with rules and regulations duly promulgated pursuant to the federal meat inspection act and all acts amendatory thereof; and provided, further, nothing herein shall affect the transportation of dead animals, properly identified, condemned carcasses and parts of carcasses, and other condemned or inedible product or material to rendering plants.

### **Section 96-r. Unlawful possession of inspection legend and meat label**

It shall be unlawful for any person to possess, keep, or use an inspection legend or meat label or to possess, keep or use any stamp or label simulating the inspection legend and meat label unless authorized pursuant to the federal meat inspection act.

### **Section 96-s. Rules and regulations**

The commissioner is hereby authorized to enact, amend and repeal rules and regulations necessary to carry out and give full force and effect to the provisions of this article.

The commissioner is hereby authorized to adopt, insofar as appropriate, the regulations, from time to time promulgated under such federal act or acts, and to change or amend the regulations promulgated under this chapter so as to conform, insofar as appropriate, to those promulgated under the federal meat inspection act and all acts amendatory thereof and supplementary thereto, particularly the wholesome meat act.

The commissioner shall hold a public hearing upon a proposal to promulgate any new or amended regulations under this article, except in the case of a proposal to adopt applicable regulations promulgated under the federal act or acts.

### **Section 96-t. Enforcement**

1. The commissioner may institute such action at law or in equity as may appear necessary to enforce compliance with any provision of this article and the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated hereunder and, in addition to any other remedy under article three of this chapter or otherwise, may apply for relief by injunction if necessary to protect the public interest without being compelled to allege or prove that an adequate remedy at law does not exist. Such application may be made to the supreme court in any county pursuant to the civil practice law and rules or to the supreme court in any county of the third judicial district.

2. Whenever the commissioner is authorized or directed hereunder to render unfit for food or seize and destroy any meat, meat by-product, or meat food product, the destruction and disposition of such meat, meat by-product, or meat food product, as well as any necessary storage, handling or other incidentals, shall be the responsibility both financially and otherwise, of the owner of the establishment or other person having custody or possession of such meat, meat by-product, or meat food product; provided, however, that such destruction or disposition shall be carried out only under the direction and supervision of the commissioner. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed as preventing the commissioner from destroying or disposing of meat, meat by-products, or meat food products found to be unfit or unsafe for use as food where such action is necessary for the protection of public health.

**[Section 96-u. Repealed.]**

**[Section 96-v. Repealed.]**

### **Section 96-w. Severability**

If any provision of this article or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the article which can be

given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this article are declared to be severable.

## **ARTICLE 5-D--SALE OF POULTRY AND POULTRY PRODUCTS**

### **Section**

**[96-z-19, 96-z-20. Repealed.]**

**96-z-21. Definitions**

**[96-z-22 to 96-z-27. Repealed.]**

**96-z-28. Inspection legend required.**

**[96-z-29. Repealed.]**

**96-z-29a. Mishandling and improper transportation of poultry products.**

**[96-z-30, 96-z-31. Repealed.]**

**96-z-32. Uninspected poultry and poultry products.**

**96-z-33. Unlawful possession of official devices.**

**96-z-34. Rules and regulations.**

**96-z-35. Enforcement.**

**96-z-36. Severability.**

**[Sections 96-z-19, 96-z-20. Repealed.]**

### **Section 96-z-21. Definitions**

As used in this article, unless otherwise expressly stated, or unless the content or subject matter otherwise requires:

1. "Person" means any person, firm, corporation, or association.
2. "Adulterated" means the same as set forth in section two hundred of this chapter.
3. "Poultry" means any domesticated bird, whether live or dead.

4. "Poultry product" means any poultry carcass, or part thereof; or any product which is made wholly or in part from any poultry carcass or part thereof, excepting products which contain poultry ingredients only in a relative small portion or historically have not been considered by consumers as products of the poultry food industry, and which are exempted by the commissioner from definition as a poultry product under such conditions as the commissioner may prescribe to assure that the poultry ingredients in such products are not adulterated and that such products are not represented as poultry products.

5. "Federal inspection" means the poultry and poultry products inspection maintained by the United States department of agriculture.

**[Sections 96-z-22 to 96-z-27. Repealed.]**

### **Section 96-z-28. Inspection legend required**

Except as exempted by the provisions of the Federal Poultry Products Inspection Act, no poultry

or poultry product for human consumption, shall be sold, exposed for sale, exchanged or transported within the state unless the same shall bear an official inspection mark affixed pursuant to a federal inspection.

**[Section 96-z-29. Repealed.]**

**Section 96-z-29a. Mishandling and improper transportation of poultry products**

(1) No person, firm, association, partnership, or corporation engaged in carrying or transporting poultry products shall transport such poultry products except in an enclosed vehicle in such a manner as to assure delivery of the aforesaid products so that frozen products remain frozen and such other products do not rise above forty degrees Fahrenheit, provided, however, that this section shall not apply to (a) household consumers; (b) retail dealers with respect to poultry products sold directly to consumers in retail stores; (c) poultry products derived from either the slaughter by any person of poultry of his own raising, or the custom slaughter by another person of poultry delivered by the owner thereof for such slaughter, when such poultry products are used exclusively by such owner and members of his household and his non-paying guests and employees. This section shall not apply to poultry products which because of their method of manufacture, processing, and packaging, require no special handling temperatures to prevent adulteration or unwholesomeness including, but not limited to, commercially sterile poultry products in hermetically sealed containers.

(2) The commissioner may promulgate rules and regulations to further define standards for the transportation of poultry products to further ensure that they are delivered in an unadulterated and wholesome condition.

(3) A violation of the provisions of this section shall be a violation as defined in subdivision three of section 10.00 of the penal law.

**[Sections 96-z-30, 96-z-31. Repealed.]**

**Section 96-z-32. Uninspected poultry and poultry products**

The commissioner shall seize and destroy for food purposes any poultry or poultry product subject to federal inspection that does not bear the official inspection legend affixed pursuant to federal inspection.

**Section 96-z-33. Unlawful possession of official devices**

It shall be unlawful for any person:

1. To forge any official federal device or mark.
2. Knowingly to possess, without authority granted by the United States department of agriculture, any official federal device or any counterfeit, simulated, forged or improperly altered official federal device, mark or label, or any carcass of any poultry, or part or product thereof, bearing any counterfeit, simulated, forged or improperly altered official federal mark.
3. Knowingly to represent that any article has been federally inspected and passed, or exempted, when it has not been so inspected and passed, or exempted.

### **Section 96-z-34. Rules and regulations**

The commissioner is hereby authorized to enact, amend and repeal rules and regulations necessary to carry out and give full force and effect to the provisions of this article. This chapter and the regulations promulgated thereunder shall be so interpreted and construed as to effectuate a general purpose to enact state legislation uniform with and at least equal to the federal wholesome poultry products act and all acts amendatory thereof and supplementary thereto.

The commissioner is hereby authorized to adopt, insofar as appropriate, the regulations from time to time promulgated under such federal act or acts, and to change or amend the regulations promulgated under this chapter so as to conform, insofar as appropriate, to those promulgated under the federal act or acts.

The commissioner shall hold a public hearing upon a proposal to promulgate any new or amended regulations under this article, except in the case of a proposal to adopt applicable regulations promulgated under such federal act or acts.

### **Section 96-z-35. Enforcement**

The commissioner may institute such action at law or in equity as may appear necessary to enforce compliance with any provision of this article and the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated hereunder and, in addition to any other remedy under article three of this chapter or otherwise, may apply for relief by injunction if necessary to protect the public interest without being compelled to allege or prove that an adequate remedy at law does not exist. Such application may be made to the supreme court in any county pursuant to the civil practice law and rules or to the supreme court in any county of the third judicial district.

### **Section 96-z-36. Severability**

If any provision of this article or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the article which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this article are declared to be severable.