



**TOGETHER**  
*for a sustainable future*

## OCCASION

This publication has been made available to the public on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.



**TOGETHER**  
*for a sustainable future*

## DISCLAIMER

This document has been produced without formal United Nations editing. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries, or its economic system or degree of development. Designations such as “developed”, “industrialized” and “developing” are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgment about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process. Mention of firm names or commercial products does not constitute an endorsement by UNIDO.

## FAIR USE POLICY

Any part of this publication may be quoted and referenced for educational and research purposes without additional permission from UNIDO. However, those who make use of quoting and referencing this publication are requested to follow the Fair Use Policy of giving due credit to UNIDO.

## CONTACT

Please contact [publications@unido.org](mailto:publications@unido.org) for further information concerning UNIDO publications.

For more information about UNIDO, please visit us at [www.unido.org](http://www.unido.org)



06485



Distr.  
LIMITED

ID/WO. 212/4  
15 July 1975

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Symposium on the Prospects for  
Industrial Meat Processing in  
Developing Countries

Vienna, 14-17 October 1975

THE REGULATION OF MEAT IMPORTATION  
INTO THE UNITED STATES<sup>1/</sup>

H. M. Steinmetz<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> Director, Foreign Programs Staff, Meat and Poultry Inspection Program,  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
Washington, D.C.

<sup>1/</sup> The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not  
necessarily reflect the views of the secretariat of UNIDO. This document has been  
reproduced without formal editing.



06485



Distr.  
LIMITED  
ID/WC. 212/4 Summary  
15 July 1975  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**United Nations Industrial Development Organization**

Symposium on the Prospects for Industrial  
Meat Processing in Developing Countries  
Vienna, 13 - 17 October 1975

Summary 1/

**THE REGULATION OF MEAT IMPORTATION  
INTO THE UNITED STATES**

H. M. Steinmetz\*

Director, Foreign Programs Staff, Meat and Poultry Inspection Program,  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
Washington, D.C.

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and do not  
necessarily represent those of the United Nations. This document has been  
introduced without formal action.



06485



Distr. LIMITEE

ID/WG.212/4 RESUME  
15 juillet 1975

FRANCAIS

Original : ANGLAIS

Organisation des Nations Unies pour le développement industriel

Colloque sur les perspectives du traitement industriel  
de la viande dans les pays en voie de développement

Vienne (Autriche), 13-17 octobre 1975

LA REGLEMENTATION DES IMPORTATIONS DE VIANDE  
AUX ETATS-UNIS

Résumé<sup>1/</sup>

H.M. Steinmetz\*

L'auteur fait l'historique de la réglementation adoptée aux Etats-Unis en ce qui concerne les importations de viande depuis les origines jusqu'à ce jour. Avant de décider de l'éligibilité d'un pays à exporter vers les Etats-Unis, il est procédé à une étude du système d'inspection, des autorités compétentes, de la réglementation, de l'organisation et des effectifs afin de déterminer si ce pays applique des normes "équivalentes" à celles de l'inspection fédérale.

Une fois le système d'inspection du pays en question approuvé, les installations dont il est certifié qu'elles répondent aux normes américaines font l'objet de visites et d'inspections régulières par des vétérinaires du Foreign Programs Staff du Service de l'inspection sanitaire et phytosanitaire du Département de l'agriculture des Etats-Unis.

\* Directeur, Foreign Programs Staff, Meat and Poultry Inspection Program, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

1/ Les vues et opinions exprimées dans le présent document sont celles de l'auteur et ne reflètent pas nécessairement celles du Secrétariat de l'ONUDI. Le présent document est la traduction d'un texte anglais qui n'a pas fait l'objet d'une mise au point rédactionnelle.

id.75-6458

The historical development of United States regulation of imported meats to the present time is outlined. The initial steps toward establishing the eligibility of a country to export to the United States involve the study of the country's inspection system, legal authorities, regulations, organization and staffing to determine whether standards "equal to" the U.S. Federal inspection system are applied.

Following approval of a country's inspection system, plants certified to the United States as meeting U.S. standards are regularly visited and reviewed by veterinarians assigned to the Foreign Programs Staff of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

All meat products offered for entry from approved plants are subject to inspection by import inspectors before entry is permitted. Samples from the lot are taken and inspected for compliance. Lots failing the port of entry inspection are refused entry and must be reexported or destroyed for human food purposes if not reexported.

Additionally, the type of meat product that may be imported from a given country may be affected by the animal disease situation in the foreign country. The animal diseases of concern to the United States and the type of product restrictions are discussed.

Technical and consultative interchange with respect to U.S. inspection policies and import requirements may be arranged for with counterpart officials of countries seeking information on meat and/or poultry export to the United States. Program publications both technical and general are available on request.

Tous les produits de la viande provenant d'installations homologuées font l'objet, avant leur entrée dans le territoire des Etats-Unis, d'une inspection de la part d'inspecteurs aux importations. Il est procédé à des prélèvements d'échantillons qui sont inspectés en vue de déterminer s'ils répondent aux normes. Les envois qui ne satisfont pas à inspection sont refusés et doivent être réexportés ou rendus impropres à la consommation humaine s'ils ne sont pas réexportés.

En outre, il se peut que le genre de produits dont l'importation est autorisée en provenance d'un pays donné soit affecté par la situation sanitaire du pays en question. L'auteur passe en revue les maladies épizootiques présentant de l'intérêt pour les Etats-Unis et le genre de restrictions qui peuvent être imposées au produit.

Il est possible d'arranger des échanges de renseignements techniques et des consultations au sujet des politiques suivies par les Etats-Unis en matière d'inspection et des conditions pratiquées à l'importation avec des fonctionnaires des pays qui souhaitent obtenir des renseignements sur les exportations de viande et/ou de volaille vers les Etats-Unis. Il est possible de se procurer des publications techniques et générales sur toutes ces questions.

-----

We regret that some of the pages in the microfiche copy of this report may not be up to the proper legibility standards even though the best possible copy was used for preparing the master fiche

CONTENTS

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction.....	
I. Historical Background - Introduction.....	1
II. Basic Criteria for United States Approval of a Country's Inspection System.....	3
III. Approved Export Plants.....	5
IV. Operations of the Foreign Review Team - On-Site Reviews of Certified Plants.....	6
V. Inspection of Meat Products on Entry into the United States.....	7
VI. Animal Health Restrictions Governing Meat Exports to the United States.....	8
VII. Consultation and Training Available to Foreign Countries.....	10
VIII. Program Publications.....	11



## I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND - INTRODUCTION

The United States keeps a close check on foreign meat plants exporting to this country. But it was the foreign countries themselves, over ninety years ago, that prompted the United States to develop its own plan of inspecting meat which would be shipped overseas. Acts passed by Congress in 1880 and 1891 provided for the inspection of meat and meat animals, before and after slaughter, bound for foreign countries. These laws largely satisfied European questions as to the wholesomeness of meat being shipped from the United States.

Inspection on our foreign imports began with a comprehensive law, the Meat Inspection Act, covering all meat sold across State lines. It was passed by Congress in 1906. This was the same year that Congress passed the Food and Drug Act, which contained authority for inspection of all imported foods, including meat. In 1910, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued regulations which called for a certificate from an official of the exporting country stating that the meat shipped here was free from disease. This certificate was not the final test, however, since the regulations also required the meat to be inspected at its U.S. port of entry. This inspection would determine whether the shipment on arrival was fit to be eaten and whether it contained any substances which were forbidden in meats produced in the United States.

The public continued to demand even stronger controls over imported meats. As a result, a tariff law passed in 1913 made the standards of

- 2 -

wholesomeness for imported meat more stringent and directed that the port of entry inspection program be incorporated into the domestic inspection program. The Tariff Act of 1930 adopted these earlier provisions. Through regulations issued under this tariff law, a country could export meat only if it had a national meat inspection program substantially equal to the U.S. program with regulations comparable to those applied to domestic plants. Evaluation of the foreign program was normally handled by U.S. officials already stationed overseas.

In 1963, controls over foreign products were tightened further. For the first time provisions were made for visits by USDA meat inspection representatives to foreign plants. In 1966, a comprehensive program was established for these reviews and a permanent staff of Foreign Programs Officers was organized. The Wholesome Meat Act of 1967 provided that no meat or meat products can be imported from a country unless that country complies with all the inspection, building construction, and other standards and regulations which apply to meat in interstate commerce within the United States.

The Poultry Products Inspection Act, passed by Congress in 1957, and the Wholesome Poultry Product Act, passed in 1968, extended to poultry import requirements similar to those applied to meat imports.

USDA's responsibility for the administration of the Federal meat and poultry inspection program is assigned to the Department's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The Foreign Programs Staff, Meat and Poultry Inspection Program, APHIS, has the responsibility to determine which foreign countries should be officially recognized, reviews operations in

certified foreign meat plants, and coordinates import and export inspection activities in the United States.

## II. BASIC CRITERIA FOR UNITED STATES APPROVAL OF A COUNTRY'S INSPECTION SYSTEM

A meat or poultry inspection system officially recognized as equal to the U.S. inspection system is the key to eligibility for exporting to the United States. The first step toward eligibility is taken through diplomatic channels when the foreign country asks the United States to review its inspection system.

Once this request is received, USDA begins discussing technical issues with the foreign country. These initial procedures include an extensive review by USDA of the country's inspection laws and regulations. Once any changes in the regulations required by USDA have been completed, other aspects of the foreign inspection system are examined.

The United States requirements mandate that the inspection system of the foreign country must be an inspection program organized, administered and controlled by the national government of the country. The system as implemented must provide standards at least equal to those of the Federal system of meat inspection in the United States with respect to:

(a) Organizational structure and staffing, so as to insure uniform enforcement of the requisite laws and regulations in all establishments throughout the system at which products are prepared for export to the United States.

(b) Ultimate control and supervision by the national government over the official activities of all employees or licensees of the system.

- (c) The assignment of competent, qualified inspectors.
- (d) Authority and responsibility of national inspection officials to enforce the requisite laws and regulations governing meat inspection and to certify or refuse to certify products intended for export.
- (e) Adequate administrative and technical support.
- (f) Other requirements of adequate inspection service as required by the U.S. regulations.

Additionally, the legal authority of the system and the system's inspection regulations must impose requirements at least "equal" to the United States inspection system at plants preparing product for export to the United States with respect to:

- (a) Ante-mortem inspection of animals for slaughter, which shall be performed by veterinarians or by other employees or licensees of the system under the direct supervision of veterinarians.
- (b) Post-mortem inspection of carcasses and parts thereof at time of slaughter, performed by veterinarians or other employees or licensees of the system under the direct supervision of veterinarians.
- (c) Official controls by the national government over establishment construction, facilities, and equipment.
- (d) Direct and continuous official supervision of slaughtering and preparation of product, by the assignment of inspectors to establishments certified, to assure that adulterated or misbranded product is not prepared for export to the United States.
- (e) Complete separation of establishments certified from establishments not certified and the maintenance of a single standard of inspection and sanitation throughout all certified establishments.

(f) Requirements for sanitation at certified establishments and for sanitary handling of product.

(g) Official controls over condemned material until destroyed or removed and thereafter excluded from the establishment.

(h) Other matters for which requirements are contained in the U.S. Act or regulations.

As of January 1, 1975, these 45 countries were eligible to export into the United States:

Argentina	France	Northern Ireland
Australia	Germany (Federal Republic)	Norway
Austria	Guatemala	Panama
Belgium	Haiti	Paraguay
Belize	Honduras	Poland
Brazil	Hungary	Romania
Bulgaria	Iceland	Scotland
Canada	Ireland (Eire)	Spain
Colombia	Italy	Sweden
Costa Rica	Japan	Switzerland
Czechoslovakia	Luxembourg	Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands
Denmark	Mexico	Uruguay
Dominican Republic	Netherlands	Venezuela
El Salvador	New Zealand	Yugoslavia
England and Wales	Nicaragua	
Finland		

Of these 45 countries, Canada and France are eligible to export poultry to the United States. Hong Kong is eligible to export poultry only.

### III. APPROVED EXPORT PLANTS

Once a country's inspection system has been approved, individual plants must be cleared, or certified, as eligible to export to the United States. Certification is accomplished by the responsible official of the approved country's inspection system and is transmitted to the Foreign Programs Staff of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Plant certifications affirm that the establishment(s) certified

comply with United States requirements under the Federal Meat Inspection Act and U.S. Meat Inspection Regulations. Currently, on a worldwide basis, there are approximately 1,100 plants eligible to export to the United States. The identity of certified plants is continually updated and furnished to port of entry inspectors where product may be presented for importation.

#### IV. OPERATIONS OF THE FOREIGN REVIEW TEAM - ON-SITE REVIEW OF CERTIFIED PLANTS

Veterinarians assigned to the Foreign Programs Staff visit and review each foreign plant certified for the export of meat or poultry to the United States. These veterinary reviewers have a background of extensive experience in inspecting meat and poultry plants in the United States. There currently is a total of 22 reviewers conducting foreign plants reviews - 12 are stationed overseas with the balance traveling to their assigned countries from Washington, D.C.

Plants exporting large volumes and other plants of special concern are visited at least four times annually. All other certified plants are visited at least twice a year. Detailed schedules for review are arranged with the official of the foreign government. The U.S. reviewer conducts an independent, indepth survey of every feature requiring inspection in the plant. In doing this, they check the same items that supervisory inspectors look for in U.S. plants. For example, the reviewer insists on careful examination of the animals both before and after slaughter, clean operative practices, sanitary maintenance and construction of facilities, necessary sampling for laboratory analysis, accurate labeling, inspectional controls over materials leaving and entering the plant, safe water supplies

and effective supervision of inspectors. Reviewers are accompanied by representatives of the foreign inspection service and the two parties have a free exchange of technical information.

After completing a survey of a country's plants and inspection system, the Foreign Programs reviewer drafts a report of his findings. This report is discussed and evaluated in the foreign country itself and by officials in Washington. The foreign country is then advised of any changes in individual plants or the inspection system itself that may be necessary to keep its export authorization. A broad range of sanctions--from warnings or removal of authorization for given plants, to removal of export authorization for an entire country--is available when deficiencies are identified.

#### V. INSPECTION OF MEAT PRODUCTS ON ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES

Each shipment of meat arriving in the United States must be accompanied by a certificate issued by the responsible official of the exporting country. The certificate identifies the product by origin, destination, shipping marks and amounts. It certifies that the meat comes from animals that received ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection; that it is wholesome, not adulterated or misbranded; and that it is otherwise in compliance with U.S. requirements. In addition, each shipment of imported meat must pass a part of entry examination by U.S. inspectors before the product is permitted to enter United States commerce. Statistical sampling plans are applied to each lot and random samples are selected for examination. The samples are visually inspected and analysed in the laboratory for wholesomeness and conformity with U.S. standards in accordance with specific criteria. Inspectors check the condition of canned meat containers and open sample cans

for inspection of content. Labels are verified for prior approval. Net weight checks are conducted. Compositional standards may be verified by laboratory analysis. Sample cans of shelf stable product are incubated. Meat imports are also monitored for residues, such as pesticides, hormones, heavy metals, and antibiotics and special control measures are effected for meats from countries when excessive residues are detected.

The reconditioning or partial entry of a shipment that has not passed the port of entry inspection is not generally permitted. Exceptions are made for damaged containers or dented canned products which may be sorted and reoffered for entry or for the correction of slight labeling irregularities. Products that fail to qualify for entry are designated "refused entry" and held under U.S. Customs bond until reexported or destroyed for human food purposes. During calendar year 1974, approximately 1.6 billion pounds of meat were passed for entry while 14.5 million pounds or just under one percent were refused entry.

#### VI. ANIMAL HEALTH RESTRICTIONS GOVERNING MEAT EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES

U.S. certification of a foreign country's inspection system as equal to the U.S. system is the basic requirement for U.S. importation of foreign meat products. However, the type of meat that may be imported from a given country may be affected by the animal disease situation in the origin country.

USDA's Veterinary Services, APHIS, has the responsibility of regulating the importation of animals (including poultry) and animal products, including meat, to prevent the introduction or dissemination of livestock or poultry diseases into the United States. The diseases of concern are



those considered to be exotic to the United States and posing a serious threat to the U.S. livestock population through possible introduction by means of imported products. Diseases currently identified with prohibited and restricted importation of meats and poultry are Rinderpest, Foot and Mouth Disease, African Swine Fever, Hog Cholera, Swine Vesicular Disease, and Velogenic Newcastle Disease of poultry.

The regulation applicable to each disease restriction identifies countries considered to be free of the disease and the type of meat import restriction for meat originating in countries where the disease exists. The type of restriction that must be applied to a particular country will vary depending on the disease or diseases that may be involved and also depending, in some cases, on the species of animals from which the meat being exported is derived.

In any case, an animal disease restriction applicable to a country eligible to export meat into the United States will govern the type of product eligible for importation. Port of entry inspectors, as a routine part of their import inspection, also examine foreign product for satisfaction of any additional certification and processing requirements that may apply to countries subject to animal disease restrictions.

Although the detailed meat import restrictions for each animal disease are specifically expressed in regulation, certain generalization as to the type of restriction applied to foreign countries can be expressed. In all instances, a disease restriction eliminates the eligibility of the export of fresh, chilled or frozen meats to the United States. In all instances, canned meats--cooked after chilling and sealing to produce a sterilized product that is shelf stable without refrigeration--are eligible for export.

Depending on the disease(s) and animal species involved, other possible types of processing may include specified types of cured and dried meats, perishable canned products heated to an internal temperature of 156° F., and cooked meats.

#### VII. CONSULTATION AND TRAINING AVAILABLE TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Technical and general questions with respect to U.S. meat import requirements may be directed by any interested party to the Foreign Programs Staff, APHIS, USDA, Washington, D.C. In the case of countries wishing to achieve approval to export to the U.S., it is recommended that communication be established through the Agricultural Attache of the United States Embassy to assure the most rapid and effective communication possible. Consultative meetings with the various scientific and technical staffs of the Meat and Poultry Inspection Program also may be arranged on inspection program policies and practices involving chemistry, microbiology, residues, pathology, toxicology, and epidemiology, labels and packaging, inspection regulations, sanitation, plant facilities and equipment, and product standards for composition.

The Meat and Poultry Inspection Program also operates training centers. These centers, on a continuing basis, train U.S. employees - veterinarians and meat inspectors - in all phases of meat and poultry inspection including ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection, processing inspection, etc. On a space available basis, it is possible to accommodate limited numbers of people sponsored by the inspection agency of a foreign country for participation in regular training curricula. A number of foreign countries have taken advantage of this opportunity.

### VIII. PROGRAM PUBLICATIONS

There are a number of program publications available on request that would be of assistance to countries interested in exporting to the United States. They are:

**Meat and Poultry Inspection Regulations**

**Meat and Poultry Inspection Manual**

**Report of the Secretary of Agriculture on Foreign Meat Inspection - Annual report on foreign operations including approved countries, foreign plant listings, and statistical information on types and volume of products imported**

**Guidebook - For use in evaluating comparability of foreign legal authority and regulations—with counterpart U.S. requirements as related to the inspection of meat prepared for export to the United States**

**Handbook No. 191 - U.S. Inspected Meat Packing Plants - A guide to construction, equipment, layout**

**Microbiology Laboratory Guidebook**

**Chemistry Laboratory Guidebook**

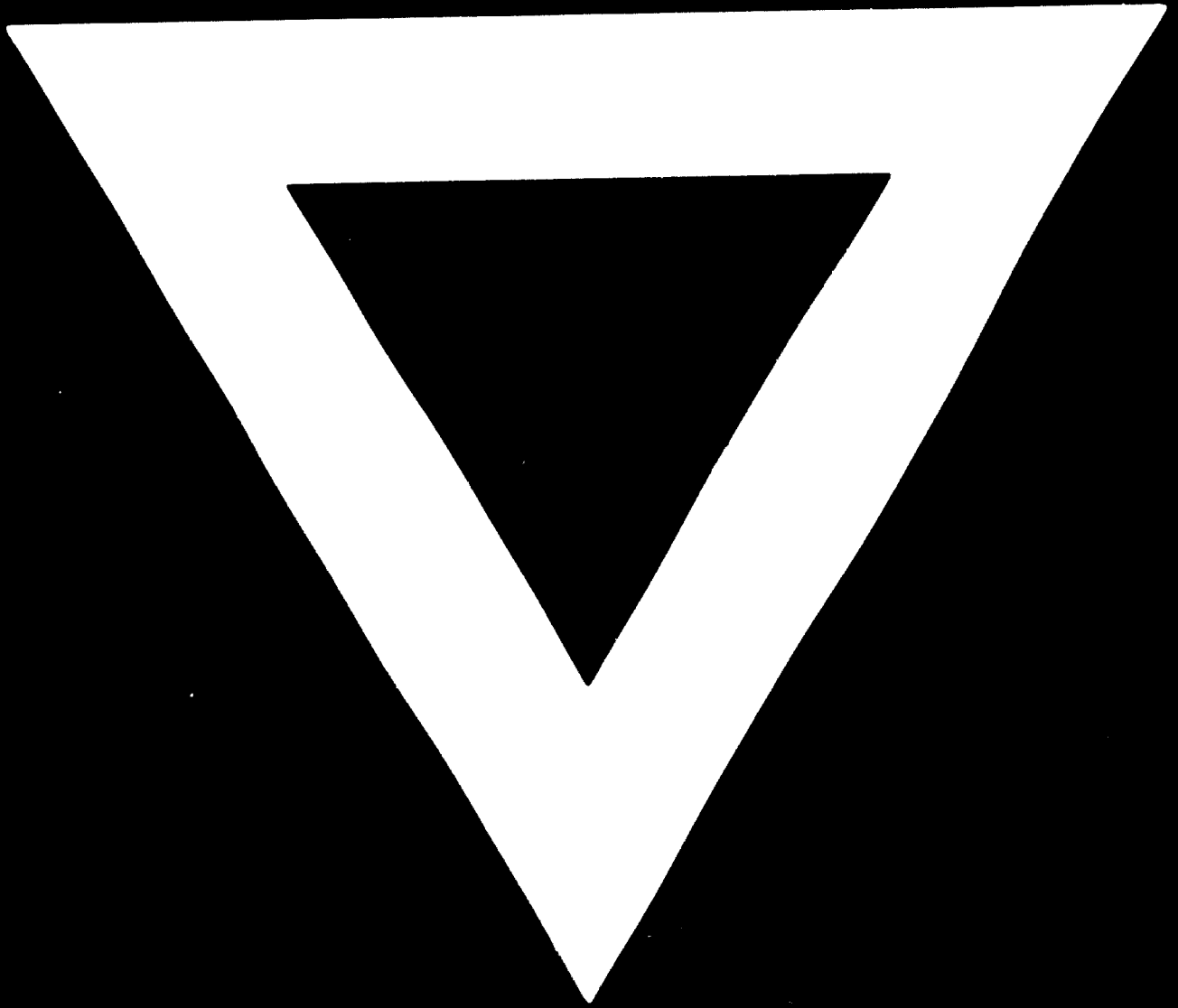
**Sanitation Handbook**

**The Federal Meat Inspection Act**

**The Poultry Products Inspection Act**

**Title 9, Part 94 - Exportation and Importation of Animals (including poultry) and Animal Products**





**75. II. 20**