



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directorate of Veterinary Public Health

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25 MARCH 2020

TO: PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS (MEAT SAFETY ACT, 2000)

ABATTOIR OWNERS

RED MEAT ABATTOIR ASSOCIATION

SOUTH AFRICAN POULTRY ASSOCIATION

GAME MEAT INDUSTRY FORUM

SOUTH AFRICAN OSTRICH BUSINESS CHAMBER

MEAT INSPECTION SCHEME ASSIGNEES

RE: MEAT PRODUCTION DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD TO COMBAT COVID-19: MIDNIGHT 26 MARCH – MIDNIGHT 16 APRIL 2020

In order to combat the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa, the President of the Republic has announced a lockdown for the period starting midnight 26th March 2020 until midnight 16th April 2020. In order to ensure food security during the period and in future, food production was exempted from the lockdown. This means that abattoirs, cutting plants, cold stores and meat processing facilities may continue operating during the lockdown period.

The exemption of the sector from the lockdown, does not, however, exempt the sector from observance of all directives and measures that have been pronounced to combat the pandemic. This includes the following:

1. Not more than 100 people to gather at one place
2. Washing of hands with potable water and soap or using a sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
3. Social distancing

4. Covering your mouth when coughing and immediately washing hands
5. Approaching a health centre for those who fit the case definition of COVID-19 as pronounced by the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD)

Services to be carried out at abattoirs, cutting plants, cold stores and processing plants must be limited to only those that are essential to ensure food security. No other activities such as support services that can be postponed until the lockdown has been lifted will be allowed to carry on.

In order to facilitate the operations of abattoirs, cutting and processing plants, the supply of inputs and transportation of products will form part of the pronounced essential service. This relates to the transportation of animals from farms to abattoirs, transportation of animal feed as may be required, transportation of meat from abattoirs, cold stores, cutting and processing plants, delivery of cleaning materials, removal of waste and condemned material, removal of skins and hides (to be determined by the PEO).

The number of workers essential for production must be limited to the minimum required to operate and any other worker that is not actively involved in the operations or can work from home must not be at the facility.

Meat inspection services will continue to operate for as long as the abattoirs are operating and to implement the full scope of the meat inspection scheme. This includes the monitoring of dispatch and the disposal of condemned material.

Export facilitation of meat will continue during the lockdown period. Abattoirs, cold stores, cutting and processing plants are required to plan their export activities with PEOs in order to ensure that there is availability of export facilitation service from the province.

Assignees and authorised meat inspection personnel exempted from the scheme must report to the PEOs on a weekly basis on the abattoir operations in line with the provisions of the scheme.

Abattoirs and cutting plants are therefore requested to discuss their operational plans for the duration of the lockdown with the PEOs to ensure that there is compliance to the COVID-19 preventive measures.

This is time for all of us to work together and ensure that we play our roles in combatting the pandemic.

Regards



Dr Mphane Molefe

National Executive Officer (Meat Safety Act, 2000)

Director: Veterinary Public Health

Date: 25/03/2020

cc. Dr Botlhe Modisane – Chief Veterinary Officer - Republic of South Africa
Dr Mpho Maja – Director of Animal Health – Animal Diseases Act, 1984