

**PROTOCOL BETWEEN THE  
FOOD SAFETY AGENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
AND THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF CUSTOMS OF THE  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA  
ON INSPECTION, QUARANTINE AND FOOD SAFETY  
REQUIREMENTS FOR POULTRY MEAT TO BE EXPORTED FROM  
THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF  
CHINA**

The Food Safety Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter referred to as AFSA) and the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as GACC) through friendly negotiations, have agreed on the following inspection and quarantine food safety requirements on poultry meat to be exported from the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter referred to as Azerbaijan) to the People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as China).

**Article 1**

AFSA shall be responsible for the inspection and quarantine of the poultry meat to be exported from Azerbaijan to China and issuance of the Veterinary Health Certificates.

**Article 2**

AFSA shall submit the following information to GACC regularly or irregularly:

1. The laws and regulations governing the slaughtering, cutting, processing and storage establishments of poultry to be exported from Azerbaijan to China including the updates thereof; the annual production and export statistics of the registered establishments for export of poultry meat to China, and the official controls and verification information conducted by the Competent Authority on the establishments for export of poultry meat to China, including but not limited to, serious non-compliances found out and corrective measures applied.
2. The national annual monitoring plan of chemical residue (pesticide, veterinary drugs, and contaminants, etc.), pathogenic microorganisms and animal diseases, which carried out according to Azerbaijan's legislation and including monitoring

substances, laboratory testing methods, standards and procedures applied, as well as annual reports of the above monitoring plan related to poultry meat. As requested by GACC, the monitoring situation of nuclear radiation and other environmental pollutants shall be included;

3. Measures for prevention and control, and zoning management of avian infectious diseases listed in Article 3 of this Protocol, if applicable, including the specific geographical location for zoning, the number of associated animals within the zone, details of the establishments for export of meat and surveillance information, etc.

4. Other animal epidemic situation of infectious diseases related to poultry.

AFSA shall ensure that administrative systems for food safety shall continuously comply with the requirements of China. When necessary, GACC may delegate experts, regularly or randomly, to conduct on site or virtual audits or retrospective inspections for Azerbaijan's food safety management systems for food safety. AFSA shall provide necessary assistance to enable the audit and inspection.

Both parties shall establish an efficient information reporting mechanism and cooperate with each other on investigating and handling issues, taking corrective and preventive actions to ensure that the establishments continuously satisfy the import requirements of China.

### **Article 3**

Azerbaijan is free from high pathogenicity avian influenza and Newcastle disease complying with the requirements of *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* of World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), and recognized by GACC.

### **Article 4**

The live birds from which poultry meat to be exported to China are derived shall:

1. be hatched, raised and slaughtered in Azerbaijan; can be traced back to the farms of origin, and have never housed together with other farmed animals.
2. originate from holdings where there have been no clinical signs of Infectious bursal disease, Avian mycoplasmosis, Avian chlamydiosis, Avian infectious laryngotracheitis, Avian infectious bronchitis, Duck virus hepatitis, Fowl typhoid and pullorum disease, Infection with Low pathogenic avian influenza for the past 12 months prior to slaughter.

3. originate from holdings on where no quarantine, surveillance or movement restriction have been imposed due to other notifiable diseases relevant to poultry listed by the WOA, Azerbaijan's and China's animal health regulations for the past 6 months prior to slaughter.

### **Article 5**

The manufacturing establishments (including slaughtering, cutting, processing and storage, the slaughtering, cutting and processing must be integrated establishment) intending to export poultry meat to China shall be under the supervision of AFSA and be in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations on veterinary health and public health of China and Azerbaijan.

The establishments that export poultry meat to China shall be registered by GACC according to the *Food Safety Law of the People's Republic of China* and the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Entry and Exit Animal and Plant Quarantine*.

Only poultry meat manufactured by the approved establishments after the date of registration shall be allowed to be exported to China. Poultry meat from establishments that are not registered with GACC shall not be allowed to export to China.

### **Article 6**

The authorized Veterinary Officer of Azerbaijan shall attest, through the Veterinary Health Certificate, that:

1. The poultry meat for export to China has been slaughtered, cut, processed and stored at the establishments registered with GACC.
2. The live birds, from which the poultry meat for export to China are derived, have never been administered with veterinary drugs or feed additives prohibited by the Parties.
3. The live birds, from which the poultry meat for export to China are derived, originate from the holdings in conformity with Article 4 of this Protocol and have subjected to ante- and post-mortem inspections complying with relevant Azerbaijan's and China's laws and regulations with favorable results. All the live birds for slaughter are healthy and exhibiting no clinical signs of infectious and/or parasitic diseases and there are no lesions on the carcasses and viscera.

4. The Azerbaijan national residue monitoring plan is implemented and certifies that the residue level of veterinary medicinal products, pesticides, heavy metals, Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and other toxic and undesirable substances in the products is below the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) stipulated by Azerbaijan and China.
5. The products are free from the contamination of pathogenic agents pursuant to laws and regulations stipulated by Azerbaijan, China and international standards.
6. During the major public health epidemic, the establishments shall implement the defense and prophylactic procedures in accordance with the international standards to ensure the products is not cross-contaminated during the whole process of the raw material acceptance, processing, packaging, storage, and transportation.
7. The products are hygienic and safe, fit for human consumption.

#### **Article 7**

During the period of transportation (including transportation from the farm to, and at the place of, slaughterhouse), the birds for slaughter and export to China shall not be allowed to contact with:

1. any live birds which do not comply with the requirements prescribed in Articles 3 and 4 of this Protocol;
2. any live birds or other species of animals belonging to the establishment which has not achieved the registration under Article 5 of this Protocol.

The poultry meat for export to China shall not be allowed to be processed together with:

1. products from animals which are not in conformity with Article 3 and 4 of this Protocol;
2. products which are not produced by this registered establishment;
3. products originate from other animal species.

A specific area with clear identification within the cold store shall be available exclusively for the storage of the poultry meat intended for export to China.

## **Article 8**

The poultry meat to be exported to China must be packed with unused packaging materials in compliance with Azerbaijan's and China's national food safety standards and international hygienic standards.

The poultry meat for export to China shall have independent interior packaging, which is labeled with the commodity name, country of origin, establishment registration number and the batch numbers in Chinese and English languages, or Azerbaijani and Chinese languages.

The exterior packaging shall be labeled in Chinese and English languages, or Azerbaijani and Chinese languages with the country of origin, product name, establishment registration number, batch numbers, specifications, place of origin (specifying to state/province/city), destination (specifying to the People's Republic of China), production date (including year, month, day), shelf life and storage temperature. The packages should bear official inspection and quarantine marks of Azerbaijan.

The labels of prepackaged poultry meat shall comply with Chinese standards and regulatory requirements on pre-packaged food labeling.

## **Article 9**

To prevent from contamination of pathogenic microorganism, and/or toxic and harmful substances, the poultry meat to be exported to China shall meet the sanitary requirements of Azerbaijan and/or China during packaging, storage and transportation.

Storage and transportation of the frozen poultry meat shall be conducted under suitable temperatures and the core temperature of the products shall be maintained at a temperature no warmer than minus 15 degrees Celsius (15°C).

After loading of the consignment and prior to shipment, the container should be sealed under the supervision of Azerbaijan Officials, the seal number should be indicated in the Veterinary Health Certificate. During transportation, the package of the products shall not be opened or changed.

## Article 10

Each container of poultry meat to be exported to China should be accompanied by at least one official and original Veterinary Health Certificate attesting that the products are in conformity with the veterinary and public health rules and regulations of Azerbaijan and China, as well as relevant requirements in this Protocol.

The Veterinary Health Certificates shall be printed or written in Azerbaijani, Chinese and English (English version is compulsory when filling out the Certificate). The format and content of the Certificate shall be mutually agreed upon in advance by the Parties.

For filing purposes, AFSA shall submit GACC with examples of the official inspection stamp or inspection legend/marks, models of the Veterinary Certificate, a list of authorized issuing veterinarians, instructions on the anti-fraud protections of the Certificate and the e-mail address through which the certificates electronic data shall be delivered. If there are any modifications or changes to the above, AFSA shall notify GACC at least one month prior to the changes coming into effect.

To facilitate border inspection in China, AFSA shall deliver the electronic data of each Veterinary Health Certificate issued to GACC through official channels within 48 hours after the issuance of the Veterinary Health Certificate. AFSA shall guarantee the electronic data is correct and safe.

## Article 11

1. If any avian infectious disease(s) stipulated in Article 3 of this Protocol break(s) out in Azerbaijan in poultry, AFSA shall halt the exportation of poultry meat to China, stop signing and issuing the Veterinary Health Certificates of the poultry meat for export to China, recall the affected products and the potentially affected products, inform GACC, and submit to GACC a detailed account on the status of the disease and control measures that have been applied.

2. If there are outbreaks within Azerbaijan:

- i) infectious and parasitic avian disease(s) listed in Point 2, Article 4 of this Protocol;
- ii) defined as *list B diseases* in the *List of Quarantine Diseases for the Animals Imported to the People's Republic of China* by China's national legislation which could be transmitted by poultry meat;

iii) an incident of food contamination of a serious public concern, or a serious public health event, may affect poultry products for export

AFSA shall detain the exportation of poultry meat produced in the relevant containment zone/compartiment immediately, stop signing and issuing the Veterinary Health Certificates of the poultry meat for export to China, recall the affected products and the potentially affected products, inform GACC, and provide GACC with a detailed report containing information on the investigation of the disease and incident, control measures that have been applied.

3. After the aforementioned relevant risks have been eliminated, AFSA may negotiate with GACC the conditions for the resumption of exports, in accordance with international practice.

### **Article 12**

If poultry meat exported to China is found by GACC to be non-compliance with the requirements of this Protocol, GACC shall notify AFSA immediately, and may take measures of the return, destruction or disposal of the products. If poultry meat exported to China is found by GACC that are not manufactured by the approved establishments of Azerbaijan, GACC will revoke the establishment's registration in GACC. If poultry meat exported to China is found by GACC that are non-Azerbaijan poultry products and exported by the approved establishments of Azerbaijan, GACC will revoke the establishment's registration in GACC, and suspend poultry exported to China from Azerbaijan. AFSA shall cooperate with GACC in addressing of non-compliance, and take corrective actions and rectifications to prevent recurrence of the non-compliance.

### **Article 13**

For the purposes of this Protocol, poultry meat refers to the frozen edible poultry carcass and its cuts (from which the feathers, viscera, head and feet are removed following slaughter and bleed) and poultry edible offal.

The poultry and edible poultry offal thereof eligible for export from Azerbaijan to China are listed in Annex I.

### **Article 14**

The eligible edible poultry offal listed in Annex I of this Protocol for export to China should meet the sanitary processing requirements in Annex II. Annex I and

It are indispensable parts of this Protocol and can be amended by the mutual consent of AFSA and GACC by an exchange of formal written letters.

This Protocol is not an international agreement and does not create rights and obligations governed by international law.

### **Article 15**

This Protocol shall take effect on the date of signature and remain valid for five (5) years, which may be amended by mutual consent between the Parties.

At least six (6) month in advance of the due date of this Protocol, if one of the Parties does not notify the other of its intention to amend or terminate it, this Protocol shall be automatically renewed for periods of five (5) years. One Party may terminate this Protocol by giving written notice to the other Party, in which case this Protocol shall become invalid six (6) months after the other Party receives the written notice.

### **Article 16**

The Protocol is signed in Beijing, on 11 June 2026, in duplicate, each in Azerbaijani, Chinese and English. All texts are equally authentic. Any differences about this protocol shall be settled by the two sides through consultation.

**For  
the Food Safety Agency of  
the Republic of  
Azerbaijan**



**For  
the General Administration of  
Customs of  
The People's Republic of  
China**



## **Annex I**

### **List of the Edible Poultry Meat and Poultry Offal thereof for Export from Azerbaijan to China**

1.Frozen poultry meat: frozen chicken meat (whole or in pieces, excluding frozen chicken breasts, frozen chicken legs), frozen chicken breasts, frozen chicken legs, frozen whole chicken (excluding viscera and digestive organs such as stomach and intestine), whole chicken wing and part (chicken drummer, mid-joint-wing, 2-joint-wing, wing tip).

2.Edible poultry offal: frozen chicken feet, chicken neck, chicken cartilage (chicken knee cartilage, breast soft bone), chicken skin, chicken bone, unrefined chicken fat.

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## **Annex II**

### **Sanitary Processing Requirements of Edible Poultry Offal for Export from Azerbaijan to China**

#### **1. Scope**

The requirements in this Annex apply to the eligible edible poultry offal listed in Annex I of this Protocol.

#### **2. General requirements**

2.1 According to the laws and regulations of Azerbaijan and China, the poultry offal defined in this requirement are suitable for human consumption.

2.2 Azerbaijan has established a food safety and health management system especially for edible poultry offal to be exported to China.

2.3 The edible poultry offal for export to China shall be derived from farms, slaughterhouses and establishments which have implemented an effective identification system to trace back to their place of origin.

2.4 Only establishments that have been registered with GACC are allowed to export edible poultry offal into China, and their processing rooms or areas exclusively for edible poultry offal should be registered as well.

2.5 The edible poultry offal for export to China shall be derived from animals that were subjected to Azerbaijan's National Residue Monitoring Plan. Based on the results of this plan, it can be attested that the poultry edible offal contains no medicine, chemical residue substance, and/or other toxic and harmful residue substance that may be hazardous to human health.

2.6 The edible poultry offal for export to China shall be processed and handled as per food safety requirements intended for human consumption. A HACCP based food safety management system shall be applied to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of this Annex.

#### **3. Edible poultry offal processing requirements**

##### **3.1 Processing sites, facilities and equipment**

3.1.1 The edible poultry offal for export to China shall be processed in separate

edible poultry offal processing room(s) or areas which are relatively isolated from the inedible offal processing room(s). The edible poultry offal processing room and its sanitary conditions shall comply with the sanitary standards prescribed for edible poultry offal in Azerbaijan.

3.1.2 The size of the edible poultry offal processing room shall be compatible with processing capacity. The equipment and facilities shall meet the hygiene and sanitation requirements for edible poultry offal. Dirty processing flows and the clean processing flows shall be segregated reasonably to avoid cross contamination.

3.1.3 If the establishment conducts pre-chilling of edible poultry offal, the dedicated pre-chilling facilities and a packaging room shall be available.

### **3.2 Personnel sanitary requirements**

3.2.1 Establishments exporting edible poultry offal shall have competent personnel that have been trained on the relevant processing procedures for poultry offal.

3.2.2 Personnel shall not pass through rooms or areas where the clean status of the products is different from that in their own processing room. They must not move directly between working rooms of different hygienic status without passing through a hygiene facility, wearing protective clothing and changing visibly contaminated clothing.

### **3.3 Temperature requirement**

3.3.1 The temperature of the processing room(s) for poultry edible offal should be maintained at below 12 degrees Celsius (12°C), excluding the room for feet scalding. The temperature of the blast freezer should be below minus 28 degrees Celsius (-28°C). The chiller temperature should be below minus 18 degrees Celsius (-18°C).

3.3.2 Controls on freezing of edible poultry offal shall be consistent with controls prescribed for edible poultry products by China, Azerbaijan and this Protocol.

3.3.3 The temperature of the hot water for cleaning equipment shall be higher than 40 degrees Celsius (40°C). The temperature of the hot water for equipment sterilization shall not be less than 82 degrees Celsius (82°C).

3.3.4 If the establishment conducts pre-chilling of edible poultry viscera, the core temperature shall be maintained at 3 degrees Celsius (3°C) or lower after pre-chilling

3.3.5 Poultry edible offal shall be transported in refrigerated conveyance(s) which meet sanitary requirements.

3.3.6 The core temperature of the exported edible poultry offal shall be not warmer than minus 15 degrees Celsius (-15°C) during transport.

### **3.4 Requirements for finished products**

3.4.1 Any visible fester, effusion, lesion, secretion, gastrointestinal contents or foreign objects (such as plastic, metal and residual feed, etc.), on the edible offal should be removed by trimming or washing prior to packing and freezing. The finished offal should not be processed together with inedible offal within the same room.

3.4.2 The edible poultry offal for export to China must be packed in separate packaging material separately according to different types of products and stored in the specific area with identifiable mark.

### **3.5 Sanitary control of processing**

Each establishment shall implement a microbial monitoring plan depending on various edible poultry offal for export to China in accordance with the table below. The establishment operator shall collect, record and periodically analyze the microbiological results to establish a database.

#### **3.5.1 Sampling**

Five (5) packing boxes or bulk samples should be collected randomly by cutting method. The samples shall be collected from different parts of the package, mixed thoroughly, then merged into one sample weighing at least five hundred grams (500g).

#### **3.5.2 Storage and transportation**

The samples shall be placed in the insulation containers with ice packs or ice water. The sample shall not be frozen or in direct contact with the ice pack. After sampling, the samples shall be handled in the laboratory within one (1) hour, otherwise the sample should be stored between zero degree Celsius (0°C) and 4 degrees Celsius (4°C) for no longer than 24 hours.

### **3.6 Follow up steps**

If the result is determined to be unsatisfactory, the corrective actions as follows should be applied:

3.6.1. Checking the internal quality control records (such as temperature, sanitary and other anomalies) to ascertain the reason.

3.6.2 Taking appropriate corrective actions (such as collecting more samples to verify the effectiveness of corrective actions or rectification measures).

3.6.3 Keeping records of the cause of the non-compliance and the corrective actions for at least two (2) years.

**Table: microbiological monitoring for edible poultry offal process control**

| Micro-organism   | Sampling plan |   | Limit                 |                       | Sampling frequency                                                                          |                                                           | Stage where the sample should be collected |
|------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
|                  | n             | c | m                     | M                     | Original frequency                                                                          | The frequency can be reduced if the results are satisfied |                                            |
| APC              | 5             | 2 | $5 \times 10^5$ CFU/g | $5 \times 10^6$ CFU/g | For each category, collect 5 samples per week, for 6 consecutive weeks                      | For each category, collect 5 samples every 2 weeks        | End of the processing                      |
| Escherichia coli | 5             | 2 | 50 CFU/g              | 500 CFU/g             | For each category, collect 5 samples per week, for 6 consecutive weeks                      | For each category, collect 5 samples every 2 weeks        | Prior to chilling/freezing                 |
| Salmonella       | 50            | 7 | Absence in 25 g       | /                     | For each category, collect 5 samples per week, for 10 consecutive weeks, 30 weeks in total. | For each category, collect 5 samples every 2 weeks        | Following chilling/freezing                |

\*:n = number of units comprising the sample; c = number of sample units giving values between m and M.

**Interpretation of the test results:**

- satisfactory, if all the values observed are  $\leq m$ ,
  - acceptable, if a maximum of c/n values are between m and M, and the rest of the values observed are  $\leq m$ ,
  - unsatisfactory, if one or more of the values observed are  $> M$  or more than the c/n values are between m and M.
- end of the page