



STALKING AND CARCASE HANDLING STANDARDS

SCOTTISH QUALITY WILD VENISON (SQWV) ASSURANCE SCHEME

Issue 10

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Glossary of terms

Part 1

1.0 - Introduction

SQWV Ltd is a company limited by guarantee.

SQWV contracts Acoura Certification Ltd to provide independent assessment and certification services as part of SQWV's Certification System.

The Certification System is an independent, third party system for determining conformity with product standards. The Certification System requires examination of product, the production processes, the production environment, and the distribution facilities.

The structure of Acoura, its operating and its certification procedures follow the general criteria for certification bodies operating product certification as defined in the European Standard EN45011 and ISO 17065.

2.0 - The Standards

The Standards set out the conditions of membership of Scottish Quality Wild Venison (SQWV). The definition of 'Wild' applies to "managed populations of deer living within an enclosed territory (such as forests, hills or parkland) under conditions of freedom."

The term does not apply to deer which are bred, reared and slaughtered in captivity.

SQWV standards designed to increase consumer and trade confidence in both home and export markets by:

- Responding pro-actively to consumers about the way wild venison produced
- Improving food safety and meeting the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990 and other relevant food hygiene legislation
- Addressing environmental and animal welfare responsibilities

SQWV is a dynamic Scheme, the standards of which will alter in response to consumer, trade and legislative concerns and requirements. The standards are reviewed annually and members will be kept fully informed of any changes in the standards and conditions that may affect them.

SQWV standards are additional to any statutory requirements and nothing in the standards shall be deemed as providing exemption from legislation.

3.0 - Conditions of membership

Participation in the scheme is voluntary and membership is open to all wild venison producers in Scotland who demonstrate by independent assessment that they operate to SQWV standards.

At the time of application and renewal prospective members and ongoing members sign a declaration that they will abide by the conditions of membership.

This means that they will:

- Follow SQWV standards and conditions and Acoura Certification Regulations as may be amended from time to time.
- Pay membership fee when due.
- Sell as SQWV assured only that venison they know to be eligible.
- Not provide untrue or misleading information to SQWV or to any person acting on behalf of SQWV.

4.0 - How to join

Application for membership should be made on an SQWV application form available from Acoura Certification Ltd.

If an applicant has more than one site to be visited that are some distance apart there may be a need for separate applications or an additional fee depending on circumstances. Every effort will be made to minimise the costs in such cases.

For more information about the scheme or to apply to join please contact:

Sean Jackson
Scheme Manager,
Scottish Quality Wild Venison,
6 Redheughs Rigg,
South Gyle,
Edinburgh
EH12 9DQ.

Tel: 0131 335 6608

5.0 - How the scheme works - The assessment process

Once your application is processed you will be contacted by an Acoura assessor to make an appointment to assess your business. The assessor will assess all aspects of your business relating to the application to see if you comply with the scheme standards. If there are any gaps the assessor will discuss these with you and record them as non-compliances. At the end of the assessment the assessor will leave a record of the visit with you detailing any non-compliances that have been found. These could be minor or major. The assessor will also submit a report to Acoura on the findings of the assessment for consideration and the Certification decision to be made.

If there were no non-compliances found during the assessment you need take no further action and Acoura will write to you confirming that you are now assured. Your details will be made available via the SQWV approved processors to show you are assured.

Non-Conformances:

Minor – where there is evidence that a clause of the standard has not fully been met, but steps are in place to comply.

Major – where there is little or no evidence to verify compliance to any clause of the standard or where there is a major risk to food safety, traceability or animal welfare, or a failure to comply with current relevant legislation.

5.1 - Submitting evidence of corrective action

If non-compliances have been found you must send evidence to Acoura to demonstrate you are complying with the standards. The assessor will explain what format will be acceptable, for example a copy of documents, invoices for work completed or before and after photographs. In some cases, we may require to carry out a revisit to check on specific issues.

Once the details of your corrective action have been received at Acoura this will be reviewed along with the assessment report and if everything is satisfactory Acoura will write to you confirming that you are now assured. Your details will be made available via the SQWV approved processors to show you are assured.

5.2 - Failure to submit satisfactory evidence to Acoura

If satisfactory evidence has not been received within 3 months of the date of assessment your application will not be progressed. You will be advised in writing that your membership has been withdrawn from the scheme.

If you later decide you wish to be a member of the scheme you will have to reapply as a new applicant.

5.3 - Membership renewal

To continue being a member of the scheme you are required to make an annual membership renewal payment by June. If you have chosen to pay by Direct Debit you will be notified in writing prior to this being collected automatically, otherwise you will be invoiced. Failure to pay within the prescribed time limit will mean that your membership will be withdrawn, your certificate will be invalid and your name will be shown as withdrawn. In order to re-join the scheme, you will have to re-apply as a new applicant and will not be assured until satisfactory evidence has been received.

5.4 - Ongoing membership

As part of your ongoing membership you will normally be assessed as a maximum every 18 months. The assessment interval is determined by the outcome of the previous assessment. Where no non-compliances have been found the maximum assessment interval will be 18 months. Where non-compliances have been found the maximum assessment interval will be 12 months. The date of the assessment may vary slightly from year to year to allow your business to be seen at different times of year. The process will be carried out as per section 5.0 – 5.2.

6.0 - Sourcing & traceability of SQWV

Approved members will be supplied with SQWV labels together with recommendations for their use when selling approved venison. Purchasers will use these labels as evidence that venison is of assured status. Where producers have venison that does not meet the requirements of the scheme it should be clearly segregated from SQWV assured venison, declared to the purchasers as not SQWV assured and not marketed using the SQWV mark.

7.0 - Site visits and spot checks

During the year Acoura carry out a number of site visits to follow up after the routine assessment and also a number of spot checks in addition to your routine check. Under certain circumstances, for example, to verify that satisfactory corrective action has been completed and the standards are being maintained, the member will be liable to be charged for the revisit. There may be a requirement that the assessor on the premises is accompanied (by, for example, UKAS or others) to monitor the assessment performance. It is a requirement of the scheme that in these circumstances, members allow access to their premises for the sole purpose of observing the assessment.

8.0 - Complaints

In the event, you wish to complain against any part of the assessment process and resulting decision of your membership status you should put the details of your complaint in writing and post or email to Acoura Certification Ltd.

9.0 - Appeal

In the event, you wish to appeal against any decision made you should write/email to Acoura giving the grounds for your appeal. Any appeal should be received by Acoura within 14 days of the receipt of the decision. Acoura reserves the right to charge the costs of appeal to the appellant should the appeal fail. During the period of the appeal the original Acoura certification decision will stand.

10.0 - Changes of business details

If there are any changes to your business relevant to your membership of the scheme, then you are required to inform Acoura Certification Ltd of the changes by email at productassurance@acoura.com or on 0131 335 6603.

11.0 - Prosecutions

It is a requirement that any prosecutions relating to your business are reported to Acoura. Failure to do this could result in the withdrawal of your SQWV Assurance scheme membership and certificate.

Key to Standard

N – indicates a new standard or significant change to an existing standard or recommendation.

Part 2 - SQWV Stalking and Carcase Handling Standards

1.0 DEER MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.1 Scheme members must produce a written Deer Management Plan which outlines how they comply with the principles detailed below: -

Fig. 1

- a) that deer populations are managed to avoid significant negative impacts on woodlands and other habitats;
- b) that deer control measures are undertaken in an exemplary, humane and legal manner;
- c) that the encouragement of improved standards of deer management and venison handling is supported;

Guidance note:

Further details can be found in Best Practice Guidance 2008 (produced in partnership with a steering group comprising SNH, ADMG, BASC, BDS, FCS, LANTRA and SGA) - Planning – Deer Management Plans or from local Deer Management Groups

2.0 PROFICIENCY OF STALKERS AND KEEPERS, PERMIT STALKERS, UNACCOMPANIED TENANTS, UNACCOMPANIED CONTRACTORS AND ACCOMPANIED TENANTS/GUESTS

All venison supplied under this standard must be culled by, or culling supervised by, a trained hunter according to requirements of current food hygiene legislation. Additionally, these persons must hold a relevant qualification e.g. DMQ Deer Stalker Certificate (DSC) 1 or equivalent and either hold or be working towards a DSC 2 certificate.

Guidance note:

Scheme members are advised to seek more information about wild game hygiene legislation i.e. about trained hunters/persons and this can be found at the Food Standard Agency's website at www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/

Stalkers should be able to demonstrate a thorough and current knowledge of the specific food safety requirements for handling carcasses both in the field and the larder. SQWV recommends that if a stalker has not completed any relevant training since 2011 that they complete a refresher course in food safety and/or attend relevant SNH Best Practice Events to ensure their skills and knowledge are up to date.

2.1 Stalkers & Keepers (the word stalker/s should be read as meaning stalker/s and keeper/s)

2.1.1 Stalkers must be able to demonstrate competence and training, validated by full records retained on site. A record of training for all stalkers must be retained, detailing courses attended and training received. All training must be annually reviewed and updated where appropriate.

2.1.2 **N** All stalkers signing the Trained Hunter declaration must hold a relevant qualification e.g. DMQ Deer Stalker Certificate (DSC) 1 or equivalent and either hold or be working towards a DSC 2 certificate.

Recommendation

2.1.2 **N R** Stalkers should be able to demonstrate a thorough and current knowledge of food safety requirements for handling carcasses both in the field and in the larder. It is recommended that where stalkers have not completed any relevant training in the last 5 years (for example attendance at SNH Best Practice days or specific Food Safety training) this should be completed to ensure current knowledge and best practice is understood and maintained.

2.1.3 Scheme applicants and members must ensure compliance with qualifications, monitoring and training for directly employed stalkers, and retain copies of full records relating to permit stalkers, unaccompanied tenants and contractors, which demonstrate compliance.

2.2 Permit stalkers

2.2.1 Unaccompanied permit stalkers must hold a relevant qualification e.g. DSC 1 and 2.

Recommendation

2.2.1 **N R** Stalkers should be able to demonstrate a thorough and current knowledge of food safety requirements for handling carcasses both in the field and in the larder. It is recommended that where stalkers have not completed any relevant training in the last 5 years (for example attendance at SNH Best Practice days or specific Food Safety training) this should be completed to ensure current knowledge and best practice is understood and maintained.

2.2.2 All permit stalkers must be aware of and sign the owner's/estate's risk assessment.

Guidance note:

The risk assessment must cover issues such as:

a) Awareness of firearms safety issues, b) experience and c) ability to appreciate local public safety

2.2.3 All permit stalkers must agree to comply with the standard by signing a pre-stalking declaration (e.g. contract).

2.2.4 Unaccompanied permit stalkers must hold the appropriate Firearms Certificate and possess a firearm and ammunition of the correct legal specification.

2.2.5 Accompanied permit stalkers who do not hold DSC 1 and 2 must undertake a shooting test with a Stalker(s) to confirm correct rifle settings and shooting ability prior to the first stalk, to comply with best practice guidelines.

2.2.5 **N** R Stalkers should be able to demonstrate a thorough and current knowledge of food safety requirements for handling carcasses both in the field and in the larder. It is recommended that where stalkers have not completed any relevant training in the last 5 years (for example attendance at SNH Best Practice days or specific Food Safety training) this should be completed to ensure current knowledge and best practice is understood and maintained.

2.2.6 **N** Where accompanied permit stalkers who do not hold DSC 1 and 2 carry out the cull the gralloch, examination of the carcass and extraction must be completed or supervised by a Trained Hunter who must hold a relevant qualification e.g. DMQ Deer Stalker Certificate (DSC) 1 or equivalent and either hold or be working towards a DSC 2 certificate.

2.2.6 **N** R Stalkers should be able to demonstrate a thorough and current knowledge of food safety requirements for handling carcasses both in the field and in the larder. It is recommended that where stalkers have not completed any relevant training in the last 5 years (for example attendance at SNH Best Practice days or specific Food Safety training) this should be completed to ensure current knowledge and best practice is understood and maintained.

2.3 Unaccompanied Tenants / Contractors

2.3.1 Unaccompanied tenants/contractors must hold a relevant qualification e.g. DMQ Deer Stalker Certificate (DSC) 1 or equivalent and either hold or be working towards a DSC 2 certificate.

Recommendation

2.3.1 **N** R Stalkers should be able to demonstrate a thorough and current knowledge of food safety requirements for handling carcasses both in the field and in the larder. It is recommended that where stalkers have not completed any relevant training in the last 5 years (for example attendance at SNH Best Practice days or specific Food Safety training) this should be completed to ensure current knowledge and best practice is understood and maintained.

2.3.2 All unaccompanied tenants/contractors must be aware of and sign the owner's/estate's risk assessment.

Guidance note:

The risk assessment must cover issues such as:

a) Awareness of firearms safety issues, b) experience and c) ability to appreciate local public safety.

2.3.3 All unaccompanied tenant/contractor contracts will require the tenant/contractor to have a minimum of £5 million public liability insurance cover.

2.3.4 All unaccompanied tenants/contractors must agree to comply with the standard by signing a pre-stalking declaration (e.g. contract).

2.3.5 All unaccompanied tenants/contractors must hold the appropriate Firearms Certificate and possess a firearm and ammunition of the correct legal specification.

2.4 Accompanied Tenants/Guests

For the avoidance of doubt all accompanied tenants and guests are under the supervision of the trained hunter e.g. the stalker who remains responsible for maintaining carcass hygiene at all times.

2.4.1 All accompanied tenants/guests must be aware of and sign the owner's/estate's risk assessment.

Guidance note:

The risk assessment must cover issues such as:

a) Awareness of firearms safety issues, b) experience, and c) ability to appreciate local public safety.

2.4.2 All accompanied tenants/guests must agree to comply with the standard by signing a pre-stalking declaration (e.g. contract).

2.4.3 All accompanied tenants/guests must have a pre-stalking meeting and must undertake a shooting test with a Stalker(s) to confirm correct rifle settings and shooting ability prior to the first stalk, to comply with best practice guidelines.

3.0 DESPATCH AND TRANSPORT TO LARDER

3.1 Despatch

3.1.1 **N** Stalkers must observe the behaviour of deer prior to culling, record any suspected abnormal behaviour on cull sheets and inform the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) of this information if this is linked to a carcass suspected of being infected with a notifiable disease. Information about deer behaviour must be declared on the Trained Hunter's Declaration.

Contact details for local APHA office are detailed in Appendix 2

Guidance note:

Where the stalker suspects a notifiable disease (e.g. TB or Anthrax), the stalker must immediately contact the local APHA office and take directions from them. The carcass, the gralloch/viscera must not be moved unless under specific instruction from APHA.

3.1.2 Firearms and ammunition must be the correct legal specification. (More advice on this is available in Best Practice Guidance 2008 – Firearms. <http://www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk/>)

3.1.3 Where the stalker inadvertently injures or apparently misses a deer, it must be followed up using the appropriate procedure and if necessary humanely despatched.

Guidance note:

The appropriate procedure must be agreed before the stalk commences. This can be verbal. If an individual is being supervised, then the stalker must explain how a 'miss' must be followed up e.g. the stalker should take over the stalk and be responsible for taking the shot thereafter including humane despatch where required.

3.1.4 Gralloching must be carried out in a hygienic and approved manner, according to Best Practice principles and as soon as possible (1-hour maximum) after despatch. Any evidence of disease, or any other characteristics that may indicate that the meat presents a health risk, must be recorded in the larder record and on the trained person's declaration. Cuts made outside of the larder must be minimal to reduce the risk of contamination

Guidance Note:

If the beast cannot be gralloched immediately after culling, (for example, due to proximity to an area of high public usage) then the gralloch may be performed in the larder as soon as possible and certainly within 1 hour of culling.

3.1.5N Carcasses that are grossly contaminated due to shot damage to any part of the green gralloch and carcasses that are grossly contaminated due to green gralloch spill during evisceration must not be presented for human consumption. The risk is especially heightened with spillage from the rectum as this is the greatest source of E Coli contamination.

Guidance Note:

E Coli 0157 is most commonly found in the last 20cm of the back passage from the rectum. Extreme care should be taken to tie off the back passage and consideration should be given to removing this section and the rectum at the larder, or by means of a double cut allow this section to be carefully lifted backwards from the carcass. At all times, great care must be taken to minimise the risk of contamination.

3.1.6N All field knives used by stalkers must be kept clean and hygienic according to the hygiene hazard assessment plan.

Guidance Note:

Antibacterial wipes should be carried at all times and used as required. For example of hygiene assessment plan see appendix 5.

3.1.7 To help reduce the risk of contamination head and feet must not be removed from the carcass in the field.

Guidance Note:

Where a carcass must be dragged in the field and there is the risk contamination from domestic livestock it is recommended that a drag bag is used to minimise the risk of contamination to the carcass through the open wounds. The bag must be thoroughly cleaned and dried after use.

3.1.8 Carcasses must be transferred to the larder as soon as possible after despatch and actively chilled to a temperature of 7°C or less within a reasonable period after killing and achieve a temperature throughout the meat of not more than 7°C. (Active chilling is not required where the climatic conditions are suitable e.g. ambient temperature is less than 5-7°C). The time of culling time of and time into chill must be recorded for each carcass.

3.1.9 Carcasses must not be left outside overnight, unless, under exceptional circumstances where health and safety is an issue for those involved with retrieval.

Guidance note:

Where carcasses have had to be left outside for an extended period then the member must consider any possible contamination hazards and take steps to control these e.g. if the carcass has been attacked by vermin or the ambient temperature has been too high to prevent active cooling then the carcass must be rendered unfit for human consumption.

3.2 Transport

3.2.1 Vehicles, or pony saddlery, used for transport must be kept clean, hygienic and disinfected where necessary (i.e. when contaminated with blood, faeces or other contaminating material) between loads in compliance with the hygiene hazard assessment plan. They must be designed, constructed and maintained to enable wild game carcasses to be transported in a hygienic condition and to minimise the risk of deterioration of carcasses in transit. The cold chain must be maintained during transport i.e. carcasses must not be allowed to warm up during transit and if destined for despatch to an approved processor they must be transported as soon as possible.

3.2.2 Other game must only be transported in separate compartments from eviscerated deer carcasses.

3.2.3 Dogs, equipment, and anything else that may cause carcass contamination must be kept separately, away from the carcasses.

3.2.4 Appropriate washing/hygiene facilities must be carried in all vehicles and used in compliance with the hygiene hazard assessment plan. All material waste must be stored in an impervious bag and disposed of in an approved manner.

3.2.5 Stacking of carcasses should be avoided from the cull site to the larder.

3.2.6 Blood trays must be used in all vehicles which do not have purpose-built washable floors

4.0 LARDER WORK

For this section 'larder work' relates only to storage of primary products i.e. skin-on carcasses that have been gralloched.

If larders are being used for the commercial skinning of game and cutting of wild game carcasses into meat, members must apply to join the SQWV Primary Processor scheme. Processed venison cannot be sold on as SQWV assured unless the member carrying out the further processing is an assured member of the SQWV Primary Processor Scheme.

4.1 Hygiene and safety requirements

EU and UK hygiene legislation places obligations on all food businesses to apply good hygiene practices and food safety management procedures. These should be based on hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) principles. All scheme members are recommended to seek independent advice on HACCP from food hygiene consultants.

Therefore all carcasses must be handled and stored in the larder, in accordance with current food hygiene legislation.

4.1.1 All members with deer larders must be registered with their Local Authorities as Food Business Operators.

4.1.2 Personal hygiene of stalkers and ALL visitors to the store/larder must be attended to regularly. Routine hygiene must be documented in the hygiene hazard assessment plan. In addition stalkers must ensure that they: wash hands before and after visiting the toilet; keep cuts and sores covered with waterproof dressings; notify management if they are suffering from, or exhibiting, symptoms of any disease or condition likely to be transmitted through food - this includes infected wounds, skin infections, sores or diarrhoea. In this situation they must not be allowed to work on or handle the carcase. In addition smoking, eating or drinking is not permitted in the larders. All visitors will be required to sign a 'visitor's declaration sheet' confirming the points above.

Guidance note:

A sample visitor's declaration sheet is enclosed at Appendix 4 of these Standards and a hygiene hazard assessment template can be seen in Appendix 5 of these standards. Both can be found in the SQWV record book available from Acoura (productassurance@acoura.com or 0131 335 6603).

4.1.3 No live animals must be allowed into the larder or dressing area.

4.1.4 A clean and hygienic apron must be worn when working with carcasses. If chain mail gloves are worn on the free hand, these must have easy-to-clean wristbands.

Guidance note:

It is recommended best practice that a disposable glove is worn over the chainmail glove.

4.1.5 Once the carcasses and pluck have been removed to the chill, the larder and all equipment used must be cleaned and sterilised in compliance with the hygiene hazard assessment plan. Larder premises must always be clean and hygienic before any fresh carcasses are hung. No waste water must be allowed on work surfaces. Carcasses must not be in the larder when cleaning chemicals are being used.

4.1.6 Organic waste must be put in specially provided and identified and labelled waste containers which are leak-proof and covered. They must be kept clean and hygienic at all times e.g. lined with a bin liner for ease of cleaning. Waste must not be stored on the floor.

4.1.7 Disposal of organic and inorganic waste from the larder must comply with current legislation.

4.2 Carcase inspection, notification and storage

4.2.1 Where the pluck is brought back to larder, it must be removed from the carcase and kept separately avoiding contact with the floor and labelled correspondingly to trace it to the relevant carcase.

Guidance Note:

If the trained person is satisfied that there are no diseases or abnormalities present or suspected then the pluck need not accompany the carcase to the game processors (Approved Game Handling Establishment). However the pluck must accompany the carcase if abnormalities are present or suspected and these must be detailed on the trained person declaration.

4.2.2 A general inspection of the carcase must be carried out to ensure suitability for human consumption. Any suspected contamination, disease, abnormality or notifiable infection must be brought to the attention of the processor or the Divisional Veterinary Manager and detailed on the trained person declaration.

Guidance note:

Any suspected notifiable disease e.g. foot and mouth or anthrax, must immediately be reported to the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) (see appendix 2 for contact details). In the case of anthrax, the Medical Officer for Environmental Health must also be informed, and advice sought by mobile phone if possible, on whether or not the carcase should be moved from the point of despatch. In all cases the carcase must be retained outside the larder in secure storage, with the head, pluck and gralloch and away from other carcasses. A grid reference number is required where the deer was shot and the relevant supervisor informed.

4.2.3 Carcasses must be condemned, in part or total, if any of the following apply:

- a) Any notifiable disease is suspected;
- b) the carcass was killed not by the result of shooting activity;
- c) the deer was found moribund or dying;
- d) the meat is fly-blown;
- e) the carcass is not gutted as soon as possible and certainly within 1 hour of being culled; if carcass is bloated to any degree it must be condemned.
- f) where the chiller unit temperature records suggest that the internal temperature of the carcasses may have exceeded 7°C (i.e. a standard setting for an average size chiller is usually 4°C);
- g) they are in extremely poor physical condition;
- h) where a carcass has been scavenged by vermin

Carcasses affected in this way must be disposed of in an approved manner and according to the advice of the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) (see appendix 2 for contact details) if TB is suspected. Condemned carcasses must be recorded in the larder record.

4.2.4**N** If gross contamination is present in the body cavity carcasses must not be washed-out.

Guidance note:

Washing out a carcass is one of the greatest risks to spreading contamination. Very minor contamination may be removed by low pressure light rinsing using potable water. Where paper towels are used, these should be Food Grade quality, preferably blue. Paper towels must be stored and disposed of in a hygienic manner.

4.2.5 Carcasses must be weighed and labelled using the approved labels to ensure traceability and compliance with current Food Hygiene legislation.

4.2.6**N** A numbered Trained Hunter Declaration must be attached by the trained person to each carcass stating the date and time of cull, and also the time into the chill. The Declaration must also state that following an examination the animal both before and after culling has been found to be free of any abnormal characteristics, abnormal behaviour or environmental contamination. If there is evidence of abnormalities etc., but the carcass is still being submitted to the AGHE, abnormalities should be recorded by the trained person on the declaration. Where the Trained Hunter Declaration is a separate document to the approved label the carcass must be clearly identified.

This data must also be recorded as part of the deer cull recorded data and be available for inspection at time of assessment.

Guidance note:

Please note that where abnormality exists and the animal is being submitted to the AGHE the carcass must be accompanied by the head (except for antlers) and the heart, lungs and liver, stomach and intestines are not required.

4.2.7 Carcasses hung in the chiller unit must not touch one another to allow free circulation of air.

4.2.8 A larder must not be used for the storage of other game at the same time as eviscerated deer carcasses, unless using a designated area so designed to prevent cross-contamination which can be clearly monitored.

4.3 Monitoring and Record Keeping

4.3.1 Larder records for all carcasses must be maintained, including records of losses from disease and post mortem reports. Larder records must demonstrate traceability by recording a dedicated label number, where the deer was shot, the date and time of cull and date and time of entry into larder and chiller unit, for each carcass.

4.3.2N The game processor must be notified of the number of new carcasses awaiting collection as soon as they are available:

- Active chilling must begin as soon as possible after killing
- where chillers are not available carcasses must not remain in the larder for more than 18 hours after entry before transfer to a chiller or uplift by the game processor.
- this period must not exceed 12 hours, especially when the outside temperature is >7°C

4.3.3 Carcasses should be stored in a purpose-built chiller unit. Must have access to a unit / have one installed within 1 year of the assessment date

4.3.4 Chiller temperature must be set to ensure that the internal temperature of carcasses does not exceed 7°C (usually requires the air temperature in the chiller to be 4°C or 5°C). The chiller must be vermin and fly-proof. The chiller temperature must be recorded continuously and where carcasses are present temperatures must be monitored at least twice daily. Temperature records must be retained for 2 years.

4.3.5 The larder and chiller must be kept clean and checked by a stalker as soon as possible after the carcasses are uplifted.

4.3.6N All applicants/members must read and retain copies of the key documents given in Appendix 1. Hard copies or downloaded electronic versions must be available for all personnel at all times

5.0 HYGIENE

5.1 Each larder must have a written hygiene hazard assessment plan. This and other hygiene requirements are greater than that required by law but highlights SQWV's requirement for members to demonstrate industry best practice at all times. This plan must be strictly adhered to and must contain as a minimum the following:

- a) hazards that may risk the food hygiene status of venison during the stalking/carcass handling process
- b) whether those hazards are applicable to their operation
- c) what action is required to minimise those hazards including: cleaning and disinfection procedures; handling of waste materials such as packaging, animal waste, used disinfectants; and details of disinfectants (Scottish Government Rural Directorate/food safe-approved only) and detergents used, including safe storage, usage and dilutions;

Guidance note:

A sample plan is enclosed at Appendix 5 of these Standards.

5.2 Adequate facilities must be provided for the cleaning and disinfecting of work tools and equipment. These facilities must be easy to keep clean. Where hot water sterilisation is used these facilities must be constructed of stainless steel. Where alternative means of sterilisation are used, including UV sterilisers, suitable alternative to stainless steel may be used.

Guidance Note:

Adequate sterilising facilities must be provided for the regular disinfection of knives (knife sterilising unit), scabbards, sharpening steels and other tools. Chemical cleaning agents must be available. Fibre ropes must not be used.

5.3N Systems must be in place to control all vermin. Systems include, but are not limited to baiting and trapping. Pesticides, if used, must not be accessible by non-target species and any bait boxes must be tamper-proof. If traps are used they must be inspected daily. An accurate location plan of all bait points must be drawn up and bait points numbered. Records must be kept of bait points, bait used, bait point inspection dates and bait replenishment dates. Safety data sheets for all pesticides used must be available. Insectocutors must be used.

5.4N All chemicals (e.g. floor cleaning, pesticides), other than those in immediate use, must be stored in a secure area outside the larder and in line with manufacturers' recommendations.

5.5N Food grade cleaning materials must be used for the cleaning and disinfection of facilities and equipment. Cleaning tools and equipment must be stored so that they do not come into contact with the floor. Cleaning equipment, for example squeegees, must be replaced when damaged.

6.0 LARDER AND CHILLER DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE

All units must comply with relevant codes of practice and legislation and in addition demonstrate additional compliance with standards outlined below (see Appendix 1).

6.1 Larders must be designed, constructed and maintained to enable all game to be stored in a clean, hygienic condition, free from contamination.

6.2 The building must have a concrete apron in front of the doors for the loading/unloading of vehicles. The apron must be drained into the common effluent system for the larder, allowing wash down of vehicles used for the transport of carcasses.

6.3 Exterior areas around the larder and entranceways must be kept clear of debris and non-essential equipment. Vegetation must be kept short and well managed.

6.4 The size of the enclosed internal larder must be adequate to comfortably store the volume and type of species being brought to the larder; and also to accommodate the number of stalkers who may be working in the larder at any one time.

6.5 All larders must have access to a properly equipped first aid kit.

6.6 The larder and any other entrance rooms must be maintained in a clean and tidy condition.

6.7 Floor surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and must be easy to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials. All drains must be free running and kept clean and all traps must be regularly emptied. Disposal of all washings and effluent must comply with current legislation.

6.8 Wall surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and must be easy to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials and require a smooth surface up to a height appropriate for operations.

6.9 Ceilings and overhead fixtures must be designed, constructed and finished to prevent the accumulation of dirt and reduce condensation, the growth of undesirable moulds, the shedding of particles and access by pests. Ceilings must be high enough to accommodate the largest animals coming through the larder.

6.10N All windows and other openings (for example air inlets and outlets) must be fitted with screens to prevent the entry of birds, insects and rodents. Where open windows would result in contamination of foodstuffs, windows must remain closed and fixed during production.

6.11 Doors must be well fitting to prevent access by pests. They must be easy to clean and disinfect. Doors must be able to be opened from both sides.

6.12 Surfaces (including surfaces of equipment) in contact with food should be made from stainless steel and maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and disinfect. This requires the use of smooth, washable and non-toxic materials.

Guidance Note:

Existing facilities with surfaces such as galvanised steel, aluminium, enamel and hardwood in good condition would be acceptable.

6.13 Food premises must have adequate natural and/or artificial lighting. The larder area must have adequate lighting fitted with protective covers to avoid risk of glass contamination.

6.14N There must be suitable and sufficient means of natural or mechanical ventilation. There must not be contact between hanging carcasses and there must be adequate separation to allow good air circulation for rapid cooling.

6.15N There must be a sufficient supply of potable water for all hand basins and the cleaning of the larder and equipment. If the supply is a private supply the water must be tested at least annually to determine the water is potable. The test must be carried out by an accredited laboratory and the certificate must be available at the time of assessment. If there is a water test failure there must be a retest which, in the event of a second failure an alternative source of water must be made available until remedial action has been taken. There must be an written contingency plan which is implemented in the event of a water test failure.

Guidance note

A list of accredited bodies for water testing can be found at www.ukas.com

6.16 Wash basins for cleaning hands must be provided with hot and cold (or appropriately mixed) running water. Wash basin taps must be arm, knee or foot operated. Materials for cleaning hands and hygienic drying (e.g. paper towels) must be provided. These must be located in the larder.

7.0 Complaints

There must be a system in place for recording, investigating and resolution of any complaints received that are relevant to the requirements of the SQWV staking & carcass standards. The record must include the name of the complainant, the date, the nature of the complaint, results of the investigations into the complaint and details of actions taken to prevent reoccurrence. Examples could include complaints from game dealers or processors about the condition of carcase, including partial condemnation. (e.g.: badly shot or badly gralloched).

APPENDIX 1

Applicants/members must be aware of the following documents:

SSI 2013 No 307 - The Animal By-Products (Scotland) Regulations 2013

SSI 2015 No 393 – The Animal By-Products (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2015

SSI 2009 No 7 - The Animal By Products (Scotland) (amendment) Regulations 2009.

COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations 2002

The Diseases of Animals (Seizure) Order (1993)

The Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991

The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2005/6

The Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended in 2004)

Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974

Waste Management Regulations 1994, as amended

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Regulations (EC) 852/2004; 853/2004 and 178/2002

www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/about_legislation.htm

Key Documents

SQWV Standards

Stalking and Carcase Handling Standards for the Scottish Quality Wild Venison Assurance Scheme – April 2017 – Issue 10.

Best Practice Guidelines

Best Practice Guidance – produced in partnership with a steering group comprising SNH, ADMG, BASC, BDS, FCS, LANTRA and SGA.

<http://www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk/>

The Deer Initiative

http://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk/best_practice/

The Wild Game Guide

<http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/guidance/wild-game-guide.pdf>

Information Note Lyme Disease – Description and Prevention

<http://www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk/people/lyme-disease>

<http://www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk/people/lyme-disease2>

Food Standards Agency & Food Standard Scotland

We would recommend that all scheme members keep up-to-date, and comply, with the rapidly changing legislation available via: www.foodstandards.gov.uk & www.foodstandards.gov.scot

APPENDIX 2

Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) Local Offices:

Regions Covered	Address	Telephone	Nightline	Fax	email
South, East and North Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire	AHDO, Russell House, King Street, Ayr KA8 OBE	01292 291350	07000 780124	01292 291351	AH.Ayr@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk
City of Edinburgh, Falkirk, City of Glasgow, North and South Lanarkshire, East, Mid. and West Lothian, The Scottish Borders	AHDO, Cotgreen Road, Tweedbank, Galashiels TD1 3SG	01896 758806	01896 758806	01896 758803	AH.Galashiels@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk
Highland Unitary Authority, Western Isles	AHDO, Government Buildings, Longman House, 28 Longman Road, Inverness IV1 1SF	01463 728800	07000 780126	01463 711495	AH.Inverness@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk
City of Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Unitary Authorities of Moray, Orkney and Shetland	AHDO, Thainstone Court, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire AB51 5YA	01467 626610	01467 626610	01467 626611	AH.Inverurie@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk
Angus, Argyll, Clackmannanshire, East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, Dundee, Fife, Unitary Authorities of Perth & Kinross, Stirling	AHDO, Strathearn House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth PH1 1RX	01738 602211	07071 506050	01738 602240	AH.Perth@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk

APPENDIX 3

RULES TO BE FOLLOWED BY ALL VISITORS BEFORE AND DURING ENTRY TO LARDERS

Before entry into larder areas all visitors must enter their name, company (if applicable), address and signature in the visitors declaration sheet, which must be countersigned by a member (or member's representative) of the Scottish Quality Wild Venison Scheme.

The Visitors Hygiene Declaration Record will be checked by the SQWV assessor.

Visitors must report to the SQWV member if they:

- Feel ill, especially if you have sickness or diarrhoea, bad cold/flu, sore throat or very bad discharge from ears, nose and mouth
- Have food poisoning or are recovering from food poisoning
- Septic spots/boils or other skin infections

Visitors must:

- wash hands before and after visiting the toilet
- ensure boots are washed and disinfected prior to entering and leaving the larder. Alternatively protective covers may be worn.
- keep cuts and sores covered with waterproof dressings

Please note that smoking is not permitted in the larders at any time

APPENDIX 4

Visitor Hygiene Declaration Record

I have read a copy of the SQWV Stalking & Carcase Handling Assurance Scheme RULES TO BE FOLLOWED BY ALL VISITORS BEFORE, AFTER AND DURING ENTRY TO LARDERS and agree to abide by the rules at all times.

Date	Name	Company	Reason for Visit	Signature	SQWV Scheme member authorisation

APPENDIX 5

HYGIENE HAZARD ASSESSMENT PLAN

Name of Larder:

SQVV Membership number:

Hygiene Hazard	Risk present?	Action taken/ required
Dirty/ contaminated knife at gralloch		
Dirty hands at gralloch		
Dirty/ contaminated hands when handling carcase		
Dirty vehicle/ transporter		
Dirty/ contaminated footwear into larder		
Dirty/ contaminated clothing into larder		
Dirty/ contaminated hands into larder		
Dirty floor		
Dirty work surfaces		
Dirty apron/ gloves		
Drop knife onto floor		

Chemicals in use

Chemical	Where to be used	When to be used	Formulation	Who	Other details

Guidelines for completion:

- Consider whether potential hygiene hazards highlighted apply to your operation. If so describe how these will be minimised
- Consider what other hygiene hazards may be present in your situation and describe action required
- Detail what chemicals you work with and complete as required
- Ensure assessment form is completed/ signed off by responsible person in charge and look to review the plan before next stalking season

Name of person completing hygiene hazard assessment:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Date of next review:

Glossary

SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage	http://www.snh.gov.uk/
ADMG	Association of Deer Management Groups	http://www.deer-management.co.uk/
BASC	British Association for Shooting and Conservation	https://basc.org.uk/
BDS	British Deer Society	https://www.bds.org.uk/
FCS	Forestry Commission Scotland	http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/
Lantra		http://www.lantra.co.uk/
SGA	Scottish Gamekeepers Association	http://www.scottishgamekeepers.co.uk/
DMQ/DSC	Deer Management Qualifications Ltd	https://dmq.org.uk/
HACCP		Hazard analysis and critical control points
AGHE	Approved Game Handling Establishments	https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/approved-premises-official-controls/sectorrules
SVP	Scottish Venison Partnership	http://www.scottish-venison.info/
AHPA	Animal & Plant Health Agency	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency