

# RULE

## Department of Health and Hospitals Office of Public Health

### Sanitary Code—Nutra Processing for Human Consumption (Chapter X)

In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq., the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health hereby amends and enacts rules pertaining to the slaughter and processing of nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) for human consumption.

#### **Chapter X. Game Bird and Small Animal Slaughter and Processing**

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##### **10:003**

The inspection of slaughter houses, meat packing plants and sausage kitchens preparing cattle, sheep, swine, goats, equines, chickens and turkeys is vested in the State Department of Agriculture and Forestry under authority of the State Meat and Poultry Inspection Law, LSA - R.S. 40:2271 et seq. The only services the State Department of Health and Hospitals shall provide such establishments will be approval of their water supplies and waste disposal facilities and registration of meat products in accordance with the provisions of LSA - R.S. 40:627, and Chapters XII and XIII of this Code.

##### **10:008**

Permits shall be issued only to the person or persons responsible for the operations of the facility and shall not be transferrable.

##### **10:015**

These records shall be kept on file for one year by the owner or operator of the slaughter house and shall be available for the state health officer's inspection at any time during reasonable working hours.

##### **10:017**

Plans and specifications for new establishments shall be submitted to the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health, Food and Drug Unit for review and approval before construction.

##### **10:018-1**

Slaughter and processing plants shall be well lighted, naturally and/or artificially with at least 40 foot candles of light on all working surfaces.

##### **10:018-2**

Slaughter and processing plants shall be provided with adequate ventilation or control equipment to minimize odors and vapors (including steam and noxious fumes) in areas where they may contaminate food; and locate and operate fans and other air-blowing equipment in a manner that minimizes the potential for contaminating food, food-packaging materials, and food-contact surfaces.

##### **10:019**

Drainage, sewage disposal, and plumbing systems shall comply with Chapters XIII and XIV of this Code. Floor drains shall be provided in the slaughter and packing rooms in accordance with Chapter XIV.

##### **10:020**

Potable water shall be available in all areas of the slaughter house for cleaning and sanitizing utensils and equipment, and for hand washing, as specified in Chapter XIV of the State Sanitary Code, referencing Chapter 12 of the Standard Plumbing Code, 1991 Edition with 1992 Louisiana amendments. A heating facility capable of producing hot water for these purposes shall be provided on the premises. Water samples to verify microbiological quality and potability shall be collected from each plant at least annually.

##### **10:025**

Toilet facilities shall be provided and installed in accordance with Chapter XIV of the State Sanitary Code, referencing Section 922 of the Standard Plumbing Code, 1991 Edition. Facilities shall be conveniently located and shall be accessible to employees at all times.

##### **10:026**

Hand washing lavatories shall be provided and installed in accordance with Chapter XIV of the State Sanitary Code, referencing Section 922 of the Standard Plumbing Code, 1991 Edition. Hand washing lavatories shall be accessible to employees at all times. Hand washing lavatories shall also be located in or immediately adjacent to toilet rooms or vestibules. Sinks used for food preparation or for washing and sanitizing of equipment and utensils shall not be used for hand washing. Each hand washing lavatory shall be provided with hot and cold water tempered by means of a mixing valve or combination faucet. An ample supply of hand cleansing soap or detergent shall be available at each lavatory. An ample supply of sanitary towels or a hand-drying device providing heated air shall be conveniently located near each hand washing

lavatory. The use of common towels is prohibited. If disposable towels are used, easily cleanable waste receptacles shall be conveniently located near the hand washing facilities.

**10:027**

A three-compartment sink constructed of smooth, impervious noncorrosive material such as stainless steel or high density food grade polymer plastic shall be provided in slaughter rooms, packing rooms or other preparation rooms for washing, rinsing and sanitizing utensils and equipment. Sinks constructed of galvanized steel are not acceptable. Sinks shall be adequate in size and number and shall be large enough to accommodate the largest utensil or movable piece of equipment.

Each sink compartment is to be designated and used for a specific purpose as shown in Table 10.1 below:

Table 10.1 Three Compartment Sink Usage

Sink Compartment #1	Sink Compartment #2	Sink Compartment #3
Detergent Wash to remove soil and food residues.	Rinse with potable water to remove detergent solution.	Immersion in hot water or chemical sanitizing solution to destroy harmful microbes not removed by washing process (See 10:028-2).

Each sink compartment shall be provided with hot and cold running water delivered under pressure through a mixer faucet or mixing valve. Sinks are to be properly installed and shall be trapped and vented. Sinks designated for washing or thawing of food or food ingredients shall be designated for that purpose only and shall not be used for cleaning equipment or utensils.

**10:028-1**

Equipment and utensils used for preparing, processing and otherwise handling any meat, meat product or poultry shall be of such material and construction so as to enable ready and thorough cleaning and sanitizing such as will insure strict cleanliness in the preparation and handling of all food products. Trucks and receptacles used for inedible products shall bear some conspicuous and distinct mark and shall not be used for handling edible products.

**10:028-2**

Equipment and utensils used for preparing, processing and otherwise handling any meat, meat product or poultry shall be cleaned as often as necessary to avoid contamination of food, food ingredients and food-packaging materials.

Food-contact surfaces of equipment and utensils used in the processing and packaging of foods subject to contamination by harmful microbes shall be washed with a suitable detergent solution, rinsed with potable water and then sanitized in a manner specified as follows:

A. Hot Water Immersion. Cleaned equipment and utensils shall be immersed in fresh hot water of 170° F (77° C) or above.

B. Chemical Sanitizers. A chemical sanitizer used in a sanitizing solution for a manual or mechanical operation at exposure times specified in 10:028-2 (C) shall be listed in 21 CFR 178.1010, shall be used in accordance with the EPA-approved manufacturer's label use instructions, and shall be used as follows:

1. A chlorine solution shall have a minimum temperature based on the concentration and pH of the solution as listed in the following chart:

Minimum Concentration mg/L	Minimum Temperature pH of 10 or less °F (°C)	Minimum Temperature pH of 8 or less °F (°C)
25	120 (49)	120 (49)
50	100 (38)	75 (24)

100	55 (13)	55 (13)
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2. An iodine solution shall have a:
    - a. minimum temperature of 75° F (24° C),
    - b. pH of 5.0 or less, unless the manufacturer's use directions included in the labeling specify a higher pH limit of effectiveness, and
    - c. concentration between 12.5 mg/L and 25 mg/L.
  3. A quaternary ammonium compound solution shall:
    - a. have a minimum temperature of 75° F (24° C),
    - b. have an effective concentration of not more than 200 mg/L as specified in 21 CFR 178.1010,
    - c. be used only in water with 500 mg/L hardness or less.
  4. Other solutions of the chemicals specified in 10:028-2 (B)(1-3) of this section may be used if demonstrated to the state health officer to achieve sanitization and approved by the state health officer; or
  5. Other chemical sanitizers may be used if they are applied in accordance with the manufacturer's use directions included in the labeling.
- C. Sanitization Exposure Times. Utensils and food-contact surfaces shall be exposed to hot water and chemical compounds for a period of time as specified below:

METHOD	MINIMUM EXPOSURE TIME
Hot Water Immersion	30 seconds
Chlorine solutions	10 seconds
Other Chemical Sanitizing Solutions	30 seconds

**10:031**

Rooms, compartments, places, equipment and utensils used for preparing, storing or otherwise handling any meat, meat products or poultry processed or packed, shall be kept free of steam and vapor to allow for inspections and to insure clean operations. The walls and ceilings of coolers and rooms under refrigeration shall be kept free from moisture so that condensation does not accumulate on walls and ceilings. Fresh meat and poultry shall be stored at 41° F or below.

**10:035**

In addition, all vehicles used to transport meat, meat products or poultry shall be equipped with refrigeration units capable of maintaining 41°F or below for refrigerated products and 0 °F or below for frozen products to insure their cleanliness.

**10:038**

Employee Health. The requirements of Chapter I, Section 1:008 (1-3) and Chapter 2, Sections 2:021-2:024 of this Code shall be met.

**10:040**

Offal shall be properly disposed of in a manner so as not to create nuisances or unsanitary conditions in or around the slaughter and processing plant that would provide a source of contamination. Offal shall be hauled away and properly disposed of daily pursuant to the requirements set forth in Chapters XI and XXVII of the State Sanitary Code.

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**Nutria Program**

**10:043**

In order to protect the health and welfare of consumers and to properly manage the nutria inspection program, an initial pilot program will be established and will include the supervision of a limited number of nutria processing facilities. For the initial pilot program, permits to operate will be issued to a maximum of five qualified applicants. Application for permits to process nutria shall be made on a form provided by the Department of Health and Hospitals. However, no application to process nutria will be accepted after the maximum number of permits have been issued or after the closing of the nutria trapping season. The nutria processing pilot program will commence and cease on dates coinciding with the beginning and ending of the nutria trapping season as promulgated by the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. Permits issued by LDHH

will expire at midnight of the last official day of the nutria trapping season. Only nutria taken by licensed trappers will be considered eligible for processing and inspection under the cooperative inspection program. The number of nutria processing plants that will be approved and permitted for nutria processing in future years will be determined each year after the close of the nutria trapping season and after an evaluation of each year's production has been made.

**10:044**

Persons wanting to process nutria for human consumption must meet certain minimum qualifications in order to be considered for inclusion in the nutria processing pilot program.

**10:044-1**

Permitted facilities shall:

1. have access to an abundant supply of nutria animals for slaughtering and processing in order to keep each processing facility operating at an acceptable capacity in order to best utilize the personnel and resources of all departments;
2. utilize processing facilities that are designed and constructed to meet the minimum standards of Chapter X of the State Sanitary Code;
3. establish and adhere to a HACCP quality control plan approved by LDAF that will render safe nutria meat which is free of harmful microorganisms and of sound, wholesome quality;
4. receive and process only those nutria animals that have been taken by trappers who hold a valid license issued by the LDWF;
5. pre-inspect nutria carcasses upon receipt from licensed trappers to verify suitability for submission for inspection. Carcasses that are deemed unsuitable for processing for human consumption shall be clearly marked or otherwise identified so as not to be subject to inspection or otherwise commingled with nutria deemed suitable for human consumption. Nutria carcasses declared not fit for human consumption shall be rejected from inspection and shall be destroyed and disposed of in a manner approved by LDHH and LDAE and shall not be allowed to create a nuisance and/or a source of contamination.

**10:045**

Each package, container, carton, or case of nutria, nutria meat, or nutria meat products shall be labeled in accordance with Section 49:3.0601 of the meat and meat products regulations. Labels and labeling shall be reviewed and approved by the LDAF. All nutria taken, processed, packaged and distributed under this cooperative program shall be labeled and identified as "certified cajun nutria."

**10:046**

No nutria meat shall be sold in any butcher shop, meat market, grocery store, restaurant or to any wholesale grocer, dealer or distributors unless such nutria meat is clearly identified as having been processed and inspected in an approved processing facility. Nutria meat not clearly identified as having been processed and inspected in an approved processing facility shall be subject to seizure and destruction as provided for by LSA - R.S. 40:632 and 635.

**10:047**

The provisions herein constituting Chapter X of the State Sanitary Code shall apply to the nutria program, as appropriate.

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Section 49:3.0403 of the meat and meat products regulations are hereby amended as follows:

**49:3.0403 (12)**

"Nutria" or "nutria meat" is the edible part of the muscle of nutria which is skeletal and shall not include muscle that is found in the tongue, in the diaphragm, in the heart, or in the esophagus, with or without accompanying and overlying fat, and the portions of bone, skin sinew, nerve and blood vessels which normally accompany the muscle tissue and which are not separated from it in the process of dressing.

**49:3.0403 (13)**

"Nutria meat product" is any article of food, or any article intended or capable of being used as food which is derived or prepared, in whole or in substantial definite part, from the skeletal muscle of nutria.

**49:3.0403 (14)**

"Nutria Sausage" is the coarse or finely comminuted meat food product prepared from nutria meat in combination with one or more kinds of meat or meat and meat by-products, containing various amounts of water and usually seasoned with condimental substances, and frequently cured. Nutria sausage shall contain greater than 50 percent nutria meat in combination with other meat or meat and meat by-products. To facilitate chopping or mixing or to dissolve the usual curing ingredients, water or ice may be used in the preparation of nutria sausage which is not cooked in an amount not to exceed 3 percent of the total ingredients of the formula.

**49:3.0403 (15)**

"Uncooked, Smoked Nutria Sausage" is Nutria Sausage that is smoked with hardwood or other approved nonresinous materials. Smoked nutria sausage shall contain greater than 50 percent nutria meat in combination with beef, pork or poultry meat or beef, pork or poultry meat by-products. To facilitate chopping or mixing, water, or ice may be used in an amount not to exceed 3 percent of the total ingredients used.

Nutria, beef, pork and poultry meat ingredients as well as all other ingredients shall be designated in the ingredient statement on the label of such sausage as required by 49:2.0220 of the food regulations.

“Cooked Nutria Sausage” is nutria frankfurter, nutria frank, nutria furter, nutria hot-dog, nutria wiener and similar products which are comminuted, semisolid sausages prepared from raw skeletal nutria muscle meat alone or in combination with beef meat, pork meat, or poultry meat and seasoned and cured, using one or more of the curing agents in accordance with 9 C.F.R. 318.7(c). They may or may not be smoked. The finished products shall contain not less than 50 percent nutria meat and not more than 30 percent fat. These sausage products may contain only phosphates approved under 9 C.F.R. 318. Such products may contain raw or cooked poultry meat not in excess of 15 percent of the total ingredients, excluding water, in the sausage, and mechanically separated (Species) used in accordance with 9 C.F.R. 319.6. Nutria, beef, pork and poultry meat ingredients as well as all other ingredients shall be designated in the ingredient statement on the label of such sausage as required by 49:2.0220 of the food regulations.

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