STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2025 No. 837

AGRICULTURE, ENGLAND

The Sheep Carcase (Classification and Price Reporting) (England) Regulations 2025

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Coming into force in accordance with regulation 1

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Part 1 — Authorisation Test Process
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The Secretary of State makes these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 23(2), 28(1) and (4), 40(1) and (2) and 50(3)(c) and (d) of the Agriculture Act 2020(**a**) ("the Act").

In accordance with sections 23(8), 28(6), 40(4) and 50(6)(a) of the Act, a draft of this instrument has been laid before, and approved by resolution of, each House of Parliament.

PART 1
Introductory

Citation, commencement, extent and application

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Sheep Carcase (Classification and Price Reporting) (England) Regulations 2025.

(2) These Regulations, other than the provisions specified in paragraph (3), come into force on 12th January 2026.

(**a**) 2020 c. 21.

(3) The following provisions come into force on 12th February 2027—

(a) regulation 5(1)(b) and (6);

(b) regulation 11(2)(g);

(c) regulation 13(b);

(d) regulations 16 and 17;

(e) regulation 18 insofar as it relates to automated classification methods referred to in regulations 16 and 17;

(f) regulations 19 and 20;

(g) regulation 23(2)(b); and

(h) Schedule 2.

(4) These Regulations extend to England and Wales but apply in relation to England only.

Interpretation

2. In these Regulations—

"aged less than 12 months" means, in relation to any sheep, that it—

(a) does not have a permanent incisor erupted through the gum; or

(b) is determined to be less than 12 months by any method of assessment of age approved by the Secretary of State;

"approval number" means the number allocated to a slaughterhouse to indicate that it is an approved slaughterhouse;

"approved slaughterhouse" means an establishment in England which is—

(a) used for slaughtering sheep for meat; and

(b) approved or conditionally approved under Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin(**a**);

"authorised automated classification method" means an automated classification method which is authorised by the Secretary of State in accordance with regulation 19;

"authorised officer" means a person authorised by the Secretary of State to carry out on-the-spot checks under regulation 23 and to exercise powers under regulations 25 and 26;

"automated classification methods" means classification methods which consist of—

(a) a machine or other apparatus; and

(b) a formula,

by which classification of sheep carcases can be carried out automatically;

"carcase" means the whole body of a slaughtered sheep—

(a) as presented in accordance with regulation 7, after bleeding, evisceration and skinning; and

(**a**) EUR 2004/853, amended by S.I. 2019/640; there are other amending instruments but none is relevant.

(b) bearing a health mark provided for in paragraph 4 of Article 18 of the Official Controls Regulation(**a**), and in Article 48 of, and Annex 2 to, the Official Controls Implementing Regulation(**b**);

"carcase specification" means one of the specifications for preparation of a carcase set out in regulation 7(2) and (3);

"classification" means the classification of carcases in accordance with regulation 5(2)(b) and Schedule 1;

"classification record" means the record of the classification containing the information set out in regulation 5(5);

"cold weight" has the meaning given in regulation 10(3);

"compliance notice" has the meaning given in regulation 27(1);

"deadweight" means purchased on the basis that the exact price is to be established once the sheep has been slaughtered, according to the weight, classification or other pre-determined criteria it is subsequently found to meet;

"hanging presentation" means the way that a carcase is hung from hooks and gambrels in a slaughterhouse;

"licensed classifier" means a person to whom a licence has been granted under regulation 14(1);

"monetary penalty notice" has the meaning given in regulation 28(1);

"new season lamb" means a sheep aged less than 12 months which is assessed by a licensed classifier to be from the lamb crop born January to September in the current calendar year or born October to December in the previous calendar year;

"Official Controls Implementing Regulation" means Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption(**c**);

"Official Controls Regulation" means Regulation (EU) No 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products(**d**);

"old season lamb" means a sheep aged less than 12 months which is not a new season lamb;

"on-the-spot checks" has the meaning given in regulation 23;

"operator" means a person or persons who carry on the business of operating an approved slaughterhouse;

"regulated slaughterhouse" has the meaning given in regulation 3(4);

(**a**) "Health mark" is defined in point (51) of Article 3 of EUR 2017/625.
(**b**) Annex 2 of EUR 2019/627 is amended by S.I. 2020/1631.
(**c**) EUR 2019/627. Amended by S.I. 2020/1631.
(**d**) EUR 2017/625.

"rolling annual average" means the mean average calculated for the year preceding any given point in time;

"visual classification" means classification which a licensed classifier carries out by eye and without the aid of an automated classification method;

"warm weight" has the meaning given in regulation 10(2).

Approved slaughterhouses to which these Regulations apply

3.—(1) These Regulations apply to—

(a) an approved slaughterhouse at which at least 2,000 sheep per week are slaughtered as a rolling annual average; and

(b) an approved slaughterhouse at which at least 1,000 but fewer than 2,000 sheep per week are slaughtered as a rolling annual average, in respect of which a notice has been given under paragraph (2) which has not been withdrawn.

(2) The operator of an approved slaughterhouse of the kind described in paragraph (1)(b) may give notice to the Secretary of State requesting that these Regulations apply in relation to that slaughterhouse.

(3) A notice given under paragraph (2) may be withdrawn no earlier than 12 months after that notice has been given, unless the Secretary of State agrees otherwise.

(4) In these Regulations, a "regulated slaughterhouse" is an approved slaughterhouse to which these Regulations apply.

(5) In paragraph (1)—

(a) a "week" means a seven day period from Monday to Sunday inclusive; and

(b) references to "rolling annual average" are to that average calculated by an approved slaughterhouse on a monthly basis.

Notifications by operators

4.—(1) Any person who is an operator of a regulated slaughterhouse on 28th January 2026 must, before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with that date, give notice to the Secretary of State in accordance with paragraph (3).

(2) Any person who becomes an operator of a regulated slaughterhouse after 28th January 2026 must, before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which they become an operator, give notice to the Secretary of State in accordance with paragraph (3).

(3) A notice under this paragraph must be given in writing and include—

(a) the address, telephone number and approval number of the slaughterhouse;

(b) the full name and address of the operator;

(c) where the operator is a partnership or has joint owners, the full names and addresses of all the partners in the partnership or owners of the business; and

(d) where the operator is a body corporate, the registration number of the body corporate.

(4) Where a change occurs to any information included in a notice given under paragraph (3), the operator must, before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which that occurs, give notice to the Secretary of State of the particulars of the change.

(5) Where a slaughterhouse ceases to be a regulated slaughterhouse, the operator of that slaughterhouse must, before the end of the period of ten days beginning with the day on which that occurs, give notice in writing to the Secretary of State of that cessation.

(6) For the purposes of this regulation "partnership" means—

(a) a business which falls within the meaning given in section 1 of the Partnership Act 1890(**a**); or

(b) a limited liability partnership within the meaning given in section 1 of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2000(**b**).

PART 2

Classification etc. of carcases of sheep aged less than 12 months

Requirement and methods for classification of carcases

5.—(1) The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must ensure that the carcase of each sheep aged less than 12 months at the time of its slaughter at that slaughterhouse is classified in accordance with paragraph (2)—

(a) visually by a licensed classifier; or

(b) by use of an authorised automated classification method.

(2) Classifications under this paragraph must—

(a) be carried out at the time that the warm weight of the carcase is being determined in accordance with regulation 10; and

(b) subject to paragraphs (3) and (4), classify the carcase by—

(i) a conformation class from the first column of Table 1 in Schedule 1; and

(ii) a class of fat cover from the first column of Table 2 in that Schedule.

(3) Each of the classes of conformation in the first column of Table 1 in Schedule 1 or, as the case may be, fat cover in the first column of Table 2 in that Schedule, may be subdivided into three subclasses of Low (marked as "-"), Medium (marked as "=") and High (marked as "+").

(4) If the option in paragraph (3) is not exercised in relation to the fat cover classes—

(a) "3. Average"; and

(b) "4. High",

those fat cover classes must be subdivided into the subclasses Low (marked as "L") and High (marked as "H").

(5) The operator must keep a classification record for each carcase classified under paragraph (1), comprising—

(a) the specification of presentation used under regulation 7;

(b) the cold weight of the carcase established in accordance with regulation 10(3); and

(c) the classification determined under paragraphs (2)(b), (3) and (4).

(6) If the operator of a regulated slaughterhouse uses an automated classification method and that method fails to accurately classify a carcase, the operator must ensure that the carcase is visually classified by a licensed classifier as soon as possible after that failure is identified.

Removal of tissue from a carcase

6.—(1) Subject to—

(**a**) 1890 c. 39; section 1 was amended by the Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1998 (c. 43) and S.I. 2009/1941.
(**b**) 2000 c. 12

(a) regulation 7; and

(b) the application of veterinary requirements,

the operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must ensure that no fat, muscle or other tissue is removed from a carcase in that slaughterhouse before weighing and classification.

(2) In this regulation, "veterinary requirements" means the requirements relating to post mortem official checks in—

(a) the Official Controls Regulation; and

(b) the Official Controls Implementing Regulation(**a**).

Presentation of carcases for classification

7.—(1) The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must ensure that each carcase in that slaughterhouse is presented for classification by hanging it and preparing it according to either of the carcase specifications set out in paragraph (2) or (3).

(2) The "reference specification" is presentation of the carcase following removal of—

(a) the head, severed at the atlanto-occipital joint;

(b) the feet, severed at the carpometacarpal or tarsometatarsal joints;

(c) the tail, severed between the sixth and seventh caudal vertebrae;

(d) the udder;

(e) the genitalia;

(f) the liver; and

(g) the pluck.

(3) The "UK standard specification" is presentation of the carcase following removal of all parts set out in paragraph (2)(a) to (g) and additionally removal of the kidney knobs, channel fat and diaphragm.

Identification of carcases

8. The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must ensure that each carcase in that slaughterhouse is allocated a unique kill number which identifies the carcase and the batch of animals from which it was obtained.

Labelling of carcases

9.—(1) The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must ensure that each carcase classified in that slaughterhouse is labelled at the time of classification with a label containing the following information—

(a) the identifying kill number allocated under regulation 8;

(b) the date of slaughter of the animal from which the carcase was obtained;

(c) the approval number(**b**) of the slaughterhouse;

(d) the classification of the carcase determined under regulation 5(2)(b), (3) and (4);

(e) the cold weight of the carcase; and

(f) whether classification was carried out visually or by automated classification method.

(**a**) EUR 2019/627. Amended by S.I. 2020/1631

(**b**) The number allocated by the Food Standards Agency to a slaughterhouse approved or conditionally approved under EUR 2004/853, amended by S.I. 2019/640; there are other amending instruments but none is relevant.

(2) Labels used for the purposes of paragraph (1) must be clearly legible, tamper-proof and firmly attached to the carcase.

Determination of carcase weight

10.—(1) The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must ensure that the cold weight of each carcase classified in that slaughterhouse is determined in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3).

(2) To determine its warm weight, the carcase must be weighed to the nearest 100 grams—

(a) as soon as possible; and

(b) not later than sixty minutes after the animal has been slaughtered.

(3) The cold weight of the carcase is its warm weight reduced by 2%.

Record keeping

11.—(1) The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must compile and keep a record of the information specified in paragraph (2) for each carcase which is classified in that slaughterhouse.

(2) The information which must be recorded under this paragraph is—

(a) the date of slaughter;

(b) the kill number allocated under regulation 8;

(c) the classification record made under regulation 5(5);

(d) whether the animal from which the carcase was obtained belonged to the new season lamb or the old season lamb category;

(e) confirmation that any communication to a supplier required by regulation 13 has been given;

(f) where a classification was carried out visually, the name, signature and classification licence serial number of the licensed classifier who carried out the classification;

(g) where classification was carried out by an automated method, the name, signature and classification licence serial number of the person who oversaw the classification;

(h) where applicable, the market price determined in accordance with regulation 12(2); and

(i) where applicable, any supplementary payment made for the carcase in accordance with regulation 12(3).

(3) The operator must retain each record compiled under paragraph (1) for at least 12 months from the end of the calendar year in which the carcase to which that record relates is classified.

Recording of prices for carcases of sheep aged less than 12 months

12.—(1) The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must ensure that for each sheep purchased on a deadweight basis, which is aged less than 12 months at the time of its slaughter at that slaughterhouse, the market price of the carcase is recorded.

(2) In paragraph (1), "market price" means the price calculated by the regulated slaughterhouse on the basis of classification, weight, or other pre-determined features of the carcase—

(a) expressed in pence per kilo;

(b) excluding VAT; and

(c) before any deductions for costs incurred by the slaughterhouse.

(3) If any supplementary payment is paid for a carcase after its market price has been calculated, the operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must record the amount of that supplementary payment and the reason for that payment, together with the information required under paragraph (1).

Communication to the supplier

13. The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must communicate in writing to the supplier of each sheep purchased on a deadweight basis, which is aged less than 12 months at the time of its slaughter at that slaughterhouse, the following—

(a) the information contained in the records retained under regulation 11(2)(a) to (c); and

(b) where applicable, a statement that classification was carried out using an authorised automated classification method.

PART 3

Licences

Licence to carry out visual classification

14.—(1) The Secretary of State may grant a licence to carry out visual classifications of sheep carcases to any person who applies for such a licence and who the Secretary of State is satisfied—

(a) is suitably qualified; and

(b) is otherwise a fit and proper person,

to carry out this role.

(2) A licence under paragraph (1) may be granted subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary of State considers appropriate for the purposes of carrying out a visual classification of sheep carcases.

Suspension, revocation or alteration of licence to carry out visual classification

15.—(1) Where paragraph (2), (3) or (4) applies, the Secretary of State may, as well as the actions available under Part 7, suspend, revoke or alter the terms and conditions of a licence granted to a person under regulation 14.

(2) This paragraph applies where, as a result of checks carried out under regulation 23 or when exercising powers under regulation 25 or 26, the Secretary of State identifies a significant number of incorrect—

(a) presentations;

(b) classifications;

(c) identifications; or

(d) labellings,

attributable to the person referred to in paragraph (1).

(3) This paragraph applies where the person referred to in paragraph (1) has contravened any of the terms and conditions of a licence granted to them under regulation 14.

(4) This paragraph applies where the Secretary of State is satisfied that the person referred to in paragraph (1) is no longer a fit and proper person to carry out classification of sheep carcases.

(5) Where the Secretary of State makes any decision in relation to a licence under this regulation which gives rise to a right of appeal under regulation 18, the Secretary of State must—

(a) inform the person of the decision in writing;

(b) give reasons for the decision; and

(c) inform the person of the right of appeal under regulation 18,

within a period of 28 days beginning on the day on which the decision is made.

Licence to use authorised automated classification methods

16.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary of State may on application grant to an operator of a regulated slaughterhouse a licence permitting the use of authorised automated classification methods for classification of sheep carcases at that slaughterhouse.

(2) Where an operator applies for a licence described in paragraph (1), the Secretary of State must, before granting any such licence, be satisfied that—

(a) the automated classification method to which the application relates; and

(b) the manner of its operation within the regulated slaughterhouse,

meet the requirements of regulation 19(1) and Schedule 2.

(3) A licence under paragraph (1) may be granted subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

Suspension, revocation or alteration of licence to use authorised automated classification methods

17.—(1) Where paragraph (2), (3) or (4) applies, the Secretary of State may, as well as the actions available under Part 7, suspend, revoke or alter the terms and conditions of a licence granted to an operator of a regulated slaughterhouse under regulation 16.

(2) This paragraph applies where, as a result of checks carried out under regulation 23 or when exercising powers under regulation 25 or 26, the Secretary of State ascertains that the automated classification method, or the manner of its operation within the slaughterhouse, has generated a significant number of incorrect—

(a) presentations;

(b) classifications;

(c) identifications; or

(d) labellings.

(3) This paragraph applies where the operator referred to in paragraph (1) has contravened any of the terms and conditions of a licence granted to them under regulation 16.

(4) This paragraph applies where the Secretary of State considers that the requirements of these Regulations are otherwise no longer met in respect of the automated classification method or the manner of its operation within the slaughterhouse.

(5) Where the Secretary of State makes any decision in relation to a licence under this regulation which gives rise to a right of appeal under regulation 18, the Secretary of State must—

(a) inform the operator of the decision in writing;

(b) give reasons for the decision; and

(c) inform the operator of the right of appeal under regulation 18,

within a period of 28 days beginning on the day on which the decision is made.

Appeals regarding licences

18.—(1) A person may appeal in writing to a person appointed for that purpose by the Secretary of State, within a period of 60 days beginning on the day on which the decision is notified to them, or the term or condition is imposed, against—

(a) a decision by the Secretary of State to reject an application by that person for a licence under regulation 14 or 16;

(b) a term or condition imposed by the Secretary of State on the grant of a licence under regulation 14 or 16; or

(c) a decision by the Secretary of State to suspend, revoke or alter a licence under regulation 15 or 17.

(2) The Secretary of State may also make written representations to the appointed person concerning the decision.

(3) The appointed person must—

(a) consider the appeal and any representations made by the Secretary of State; and

(b) report in writing to the Secretary of State with—

(i) their conclusions on the appeal; and

(ii) a recommendation as to the manner in which the appeal should be finally determined by the Secretary of State.

(4) The Secretary of State must then—

(a) make a final determination; and

(b) notify the appellant in writing of—

(i) that determination; and

(ii) the reasons for it, and

(c) if the appeal has been upheld, ensure that the relevant suspension, revocation or alteration of the licence which has been the subject of the appeal is reversed.

PART 4

Authorisations and other requirements for use of automated classification methods

Authorisation of automated classification methods for carcases

19.—(1) The proprietor of an automated classification method may request that the Secretary of State authorises that method for use in regulated slaughterhouses.

(2) The Secretary of State may grant a request under paragraph (1) if—

(a) the automated classification method has been subjected to the entire authorisation test process set out in Part 1 of Schedule 2; and

(b) analysis of the test results in accordance with Part 2 of Schedule 2 show that it has met the degree of accuracy required under that Part.

(3) The authorisation for an automated classification method must stipulate the carcase specification and hanging presentation used in the test process for that method and require that all future use of the method under regulation 5 replicates the same carcase specification and hanging presentation.

(4) The authorisation for an automated classification method may, in addition to the requirement under paragraph (3), be granted subject to such other terms and conditions as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

(5) The proprietor of an authorised automated classification method, or any operators using it for classification under these Regulations, must ensure to the extent they are able to do so that any requirement under paragraph (3) or (4) is met.

Additional provisions on classification by automated classification methods

20.—(1) If an authorised automated classification method is used in a regulated slaughterhouse pursuant to a licence granted under regulation 16, the operator of that slaughterhouse must keep a daily control record of the functioning of that method, and retain it for at least 12 months from the end of the calendar year in which the record is made.

(2) The daily control record referred to in paragraph (1) must include details of—

(a) any shortcomings encountered in the operation of the automated classification method; and

(b) any actions taken in respect of those shortcomings.

PART 5

Reporting of the market prices and related data of classified carcases

Reporting of market price and related data to a person authorised by the Secretary of State

21. The operator of a regulated slaughterhouse must ensure that for each sheep purchased on a deadweight basis, and aged less than 12 months at the time of its slaughter in that slaughterhouse, information retained for the carcase of that sheep is reported in writing to a person authorised by the Secretary of State for that purpose, as follows—

(a) the information contained in records retained under regulation 11(2)(a) to (d) and (h) must be reported by Monday evening each week for animals slaughtered between the previous Monday and Sunday inclusive; and

(b) the information contained in records retained under regulation 11(2)(i) must be reported within seven days from the end of the financial quarter during which the supplementary payment was made.

PART 6

Processing of information

Processing of information and the purposes for which processing may be carried out

22.—(1) This regulation relates to information notified or reported to the Secretary of State, or a person authorised by the Secretary of State, under regulation 3(2), 4 or 21.

(2) The purposes for which the information referred to in paragraph (1) may be processed(**a**) are—

(a) helping persons in agri-food supply chains(**b**) to manage risks or market volatility;

(b) promoting transparency or fairness in agri-food supply chains; and

(c) monitoring, or analysing, markets connected with agri-food supply chains.

(3) The types of processing which may be carried out with the information referred to in paragraph (1) are—

(a) collection, recording, organisation, structuring or storage;

(b) adaptation or alteration;

(**a**) "Processing" is defined in section 27(10) of the Agriculture Act 2020 (c. 21) as "an operation or set of operations which is performed on information, or on sets of information".

(**b**) See section 24 of the Agriculture Act 2020 (c. 21) (meaning of "agri-food supply chain").

(c) retrieval, consultation or use;

(d) disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available;

(e) alignment or combination; or

(f) restriction, erasure or destruction.

(4) Information provided under regulation 21 may only be disclosed under paragraph (3)(d) in anonymised form.

(5) Information provided under regulations 3(2) or 4 may be disclosed under paragraph (3)(d) in any form.

PART 7

Enforcement

On-the-spot checks

23.—(1) An authorised officer must from time to time carry out checks under this regulation ("on-the-spot checks") in all regulated slaughterhouses.

(2) The authorised officer must carry out the on-the-spot checks required under paragraph (1) without prior warning and must check compliance with these Regulations generally and at least in respect of—

(a) the presentation, classification, weighing, identification and labelling of the carcases; and

(b) where applicable—

(i) the ongoing accuracy of any authorised automated classification method used in the slaughterhouse and the manner of its operation; and

(ii) the daily control records referred to in regulation 20(1).

Minimum requirements of on-the-spot checks

24.—(1) The Secretary of State must determine the minimum requirements for on-the-spot checks for each regulated slaughterhouse.

(2) The minimum requirements referred to in paragraph (1) are requirements relating to—

(a) the frequency of on-the-spot checks which will be carried out; and

(b) the minimum number of carcases to be checked during those on-the-spot checks,

on the basis of the risk assessment referred to in paragraph (3).

(3) For the purposes of paragraph (1), the Secretary of State must carry out a risk assessment which must, in particular, take into account—

(a) the number of sheep slaughtered in the regulated slaughterhouse concerned; and

(b) the findings during any previous on-the-spot checks in that slaughterhouse.

Powers of entry

25.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2), (3) and (6), an authorised officer may, for a purpose described in paragraph (4), enter—

(a) a regulated slaughterhouse; or

(b) any associated premises occupied or owned by that slaughterhouse, its operator(s) or licensed classifier(s), in which carcases of sheep may be handled or records relating to those carcases may be kept.

(2) Unless otherwise permitted by a warrant granted under paragraph (7), an authorised officer may only enter premises under paragraph (1) at a reasonable hour.

(3) Where an authorised officer enters premises under paragraph (1), they must present either—

(a) if entering under a warrant granted under paragraph (7), the warrant; or

(b) if not entering under a warrant granted under paragraph (7), duly authenticated written confirmation of the powers under which they are entering.

(4) An authorised officer may enter premises under paragraph (1) to ascertain whether—

(a) any breach of these Regulations has been committed; or

(b) there is on those premises any evidence of such a breach.

(5) The authorised officer may be accompanied by such other persons as the officer considers necessary.

(6) If the premises referred to in paragraph (1) are a private dwelling, an authorised officer may only enter them if a justice of the peace permits entry to them by warrant in accordance with paragraph (7).

(7) A justice of the peace may by signed warrant permit an authorised officer to enter any premises, if necessary by reasonable force, if satisfied on sworn information in writing that—

(a) there are reasonable grounds for entering into the premises for a purpose described in paragraph (4); and

(b) any of the following conditions are met—

(i) the premises are a private dwelling;

(ii) admission to the premises has been refused, or a refusal is anticipated, and in either case notice of intention to apply for a warrant has been given to the occupier;

(iii) asking for admission, or the giving of such notice, would defeat the object of the entry;

(iv) the case is one of urgency; or

(v) the premises are unoccupied, or the occupier is temporarily absent.

(8) A warrant granted under this regulation continues in force for three months after the date on which it is issued.

(9) An authorised officer who enters any unoccupied premises, or premises from which the occupier is temporarily absent, must leave them as effectively secured against unauthorised entry as they were at the time of entry.

Powers of authorised officers

26. An authorised officer entering premises under regulation 25 may, in particular—

(a) require access to, inspect, photograph or otherwise make a record of a sheep carcase or part of such a carcase;

(b) require access to, inspect, copy or print any documents, records or materials, in whatever form they are held, relevant to these Regulations, which an operator or licensed classifier is known or suspected to have kept, or remove such documents, records or materials to enable them to be copied or retained as evidence;

(c) require access to, inspect, photograph and check the operation of, any machine, computer or apparatus which is or has been in use in connection with these Regulations; or

(d) require that copies of or extracts from any documents, records or materials be produced in a form in which they may be taken away.

Compliance notices

27.—(1) If the Secretary of State has reason to believe that a person has committed a breach of these Regulations, the Secretary of State may serve that person with a notice ("a compliance notice") in accordance with the following paragraph.

(2) A compliance notice must contain the following information—

(a) the Secretary of State's grounds for believing that a breach of these Regulations has been committed;

(b) the matter that constitutes the breach;

(c) the action that the person must take in order to rectify the breach;

(d) a time limit of not less than 14 days within which this action must be taken;

(e) details of the right of appeal conferred by regulation 29; and

(f) the manner in which and the period within which an appeal may be made.

(3) A compliance notice issued under this regulation may be revoked or varied by the Secretary of State in the case that a monetary penalty notice is subsequently issued in respect of the same breach, or in any other case.

Monetary penalty notices

28.—(1) If the Secretary of State is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that a person has committed a breach of these Regulations, the Secretary of State may serve that person with a notice (a "monetary penalty notice") in accordance with paragraph (3).

(2) A penalty imposed by a monetary penalty notice may be of any amount up to a maximum of £50,000.

(3) A monetary penalty notice must contain the following information—

(a) the Secretary of State's grounds for believing that a breach of these Regulations has been committed;

(b) the matter that constitutes the breach;

(c) the amount of the penalty;

(d) the manner in which and the period within which the penalty must be paid;

(e) details of the right of appeal conferred by regulation 29;

(f) the manner in which and the period within which an appeal may be made; and

(g) the consequences of late payment or failure to pay, including liability for interest under paragraph (5).

(4) A monetary penalty notice issued under this regulation may be revoked or varied by the Secretary of State.

(5) Interest is payable on the amount of any monetary penalty for each day beginning with the day after the last day for payment specified in the notice to the day on which the sum specified in the monetary penalty notice is paid in full.

(6) For the purposes of paragraph (5), the rate of interest applicable on any day is one percentage point above the Bank of England base rate.

(7) In paragraph (6) "Bank of England base rate" means—

(a) except where sub-paragraph (b) applies, the rate announced from time to time by the Monetary Policy Committee(**a**) of the Bank of England as the official dealing rate, being the rate at which the Bank is willing to enter into transactions for providing short term liquidity in the money markets; or

(b) if an order under section 19 of the Bank of England Act 1998 (reserve powers) is in force, any equivalent rate determined by the Treasury under that section.

(8) Amounts payable under this regulation are recoverable as a civil debt.

Appeals against compliance notices and monetary penalty notices

29.—(1) The person on whom a compliance notice or a monetary penalty notice is served may appeal against it to the First-tier Tribunal before the end of the period specified in the notice, which must not be less than 28 days.

(2) The grounds of an appeal under paragraph (1) are—

(a) that the decision was based on an error of fact;

(b) that the decision was wrong in law;

(c) that there has been a material procedural error; or

(d) in the case of a monetary penalty notice, that the amount of the penalty was unreasonable.

(3) The First-tier Tribunal may—

(a) uphold the notice;

(b) vary the notice;

(c) revoke the notice;

(d) take such steps as the Secretary of State could take in relation to the notice; or

(e) remit the decision whether to uphold the notice, or any matter relating to that decision, to the Secretary of State.

(4) The operation of any compliance notice or monetary penalty notice to which the appeal relates is suspended pending the outcome of the appeal.

Daniel Zeichner
Minister of State
9th July 2025 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

(**a**) The Monetary Policy Committee is established under section 13 of the Bank of England Act 1998 (c. 11).

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 5

Classes of conformation and fat cover to be used in classification of carcases obtained from sheep aged less than twelve months

Table 1

CONFORMATION CLASSES Descriptions of the essential parts of a sheep carcase (hindquarter, back and shoulder) which indicate the conformation class for that carcase

Conformation class	*Description*
S Superior	Hindquarter: double muscled. Profiles extremely convex. Back: extremely convex, extremely wide, extremely thick. Shoulder: extremely convex and extremely thick.
E Excellent	Hindquarter: very thick. Profiles very convex. Back: very convex, very wide and very thick to the shoulder. Shoulder: very convex and very thick.
U Very good	Hindquarter: thick. Profiles convex. Back: wide and thick to the shoulder. Shoulder: thick and convex.
R Good	Hindquarter: profiles mainly straight. Back: thick, but less wide to the shoulder. Shoulder: good development, but less thick.
O Fair	Hindquarter: profiles tending to slightly concave. Back: lacking width and thickness. Shoulder: tending to narrow. Lacking thickness.
P Poor	Hindquarter: profiles concave to very concave. Back: narrow and concave, with bones apparent. Shoulder: narrow, flat and bones apparent.

Table 2

CLASS OF FAT COVER Descriptions of the degrees of fat coverage of a sheep carcase which indicate the fat cover class for that carcase

Class of fat cover	*Description*	
1. Low	External:	Traces of, or no, fat visible.
	Internal:	Abdominal: Traces of, or no, fat visible on kidneys. Thoracic: Traces of, or no, fat visible between ribs.

Class of fat cover	*Description*	
2. Slight	External:	A slight layer of fat covers part of the carcase, but may be less evident on the limbs.
	Internal:	Abdominal: Traces of fat, or slight layer of fat envelops part of the kidneys. Thoracic: Muscle clearly visible between ribs.
3. Average	External:	A light layer of fat covering most, or all, of the carcase. Slightly thickened fat zones at the base of the tail.
	Internal:	Abdominal: Light layer of fat envelops part, or all, of the kidneys. Thoracic: Muscle still visible between ribs.
4. High	External:	A thick layer of fat covering most, or all, of the carcase; but may be thinner on limbs, and thickening on shoulders.
	Internal:	Abdominal: Kidney is enveloped in fat. Thoracic: Muscle between ribs may be infiltrated with fat. Fat deposits may be visible on the ribs.
5. Very high	External:	Very thick fat cover. Patches of fat sometimes visible.
	Internal:	Abdominal: Kidneys enveloped in thick layer of fat. Thoracic: Muscle between ribs infiltrated with fat. Fat deposits visible on ribs.

SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 19

Authorisation test process for automated classification methods and minimum requirements for test results

PART 1

Authorisation Test Process

1. An automated classification method which has been submitted for authorisation must be tested in the classification of a sample of at least 1200 carcases, each of which must also be visually classified by every member of a panel which has been convened for this purpose by the Secretary of State.

2. The panel convened by the Secretary of State for the authorisation test must be composed of an uneven number of at least five experts in classification of carcases of sheep.

3. During the test process the members of the panel must use the subdivisions of classes of conformation and fat cover referred to in regulation 5(3).

4. The members of the panel must work independently and anonymously of each other.

5. The Secretary of State must also nominate a coordinator of the authorisation test process, who must—

(a) not be part of the panel;

(b) maintain independence with regard to the panel; and

(c) in the opinion of the Secretary of State, have satisfactory technical knowledge to carry out this role.

6. The coordinator nominated under paragraph 5 must—

(a) monitor the work of the panel convened under paragraph 1;

(b) ensure that each panel member carries out the visual classifications of the carcases independently and anonymously from the other panel members;

(c) verify that each carcase classified is—

(i) obtained from a sheep aged less than 12 months at the time of slaughter; and

(ii) presented in the same way as all other carcases used in the test process, that being in accordance with the requirements of regulation 7;

(d) collect—

(i) the classification results of the members of the panel; and

(ii) the classification results obtained by using the automated classification method,

for each carcase;

(e) ensure that, during the entire duration of the authorisation test, the classification results obtained by using the automated classification method are not available to any member of the panel or to any other interested party;

(f) make a decision whether, for objective reasons they must specify, any carcases should be excluded from the sample to be used for the analysis;

(g) ensure that the analysis sample includes a spread of carcases which is representative of the variety of sheep slaughtered in regulated slaughterhouses;

(h) send the results to the Secretary of State and the data analyst-statistician nominated under paragraph 7; and

(i) send to the Secretary of State a report on how the test was conducted, including information on how the carcases were presented during the test process.

7. The Secretary of State must nominate an independent data analyst-statistician for each test, who must—

(a) analyse the results of the test collected by the coordinator to determine the accuracy of the automated classification method in accordance with Part 2 of this Schedule; and

(b) communicate the results of the analysis conducted under sub-paragraph (a) to the Secretary of State.

PART 2

Minimum requirements for test results

8. If the automated classification method fails to generate any classification result for 5% or more of the carcases within the test sample, it must be considered to have failed the authorisation test process.

9. If paragraph 8 does not apply, the accuracy of the automated classification method must be assessed according to the following paragraphs in this Part.

10. For each carcase within the test sample, the median of the visual results of all the members of the panel must be considered as the correct classification result for that carcase.

11. Results generated by the automated classification method must, for each carcase, be compared to the correct classification result.

12. The accuracy of the automated classification method must be established by allocating points to each classification result generated by that method, based on its degree of deviation from the correct classification result for both conformation and fat cover in accordance with Table 1 below.

Table 1

Deviation from correct classification result	*Conformation*	*Fat cover*
No deviation	10	10
Deviation of 1 class subdivision (up or down)	6	9
Deviation of 2 class subdivisions (up or down)	-9	0
Deviation of 3 class subdivisions (up or down)	-27	-13
Deviation of more than 3 class subdivisions (up or down)	-48	-30

13. To pass the authorisation test, the automated classification method must achieve at least 60% of the maximum number of points under Table 1 for both conformation and fat cover.

14. In addition to the requirement under paragraph 13, the classifications by the automated classification method must be within the limits specified in Table 2 below.

Table 2

	Conformation	*Fat cover*
Bias	± 0.30	± 0.60
Slope of the regression line	1 ± 0.15	1 ± 0.30

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations are made under powers in the Agriculture Act 2020 (c. 21), and provide for mandatory classification and price reporting of sheep carcases by larger approved slaughterhouses.

Regulation 3 sets out the approved slaughterhouses to which these Regulations apply ("regulated slaughterhouses"), and regulation 4 provides that those slaughterhouses must give notice to the Secretary of State to that effect.

Regulation 5 and Schedule 1 stipulate the classification requirements which must be met by regulated slaughterhouses in respect of most of the carcases which they process. Classification requirements are to be carried out at the time that the carcases are being weighed as set out in regulation 10, once the carcases have been allocated a kill number under regulation 8, and have been presented in accordance with regulation 7.

Regulation 9 requires that each classified carcase is to be labelled with the information set out in that regulation.

Regulations 11 and 12 set out all the information which must be recorded by regulated slaughterhouses for each carcase which is classified, and regulation 13 provides that the information contained in specified records must be communicated to the supplier of the animal from which the carcase was obtained.

Part 3 sets out a system of control of classification through licences and authorisations.

Part 4 and Schedule 2 set out the procedure by which the Secretary of State authorises the use of "automated" classification methods for use in regulated slaughterhouses.

Part 5 requires the operator of a slaughterhouse to ensure that market price information is reported to a person authorised by the Secretary of State.

Part 6 contains provisions which restrict how those who handle the market data provided by slaughterhouses can process and disclose that information.

Part 7 contains enforcement provisions. Regulations 25 and 26 give authorised officers powers of entry and associated powers to allow them to check for, and gather evidence of, breaches of these Regulations. Under regulations 27 and 28 compliance notices and monetary penalty notices may be served in respect of breaches identified, and an appeal mechanism to the First-tier Tribunal is put in place by regulation 29.

An impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private, voluntary or public sector is foreseen.

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