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States' Farm Animal Welfare Statutes: *California*



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Cal. Health & Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 13.8

*Added by Initiative Measure (Prop. 2, § 3, approved Nov. 5, 2008, operative Jan. 1, 2015).
Amended by Initiative Measure (Prop. 12, § 3, approved Nov. 6, 2018, eff. Dec. 19, 2018).
Current with urgency legislation through Ch. 43 of 2022 Reg. Sess*

25990. Prohibitions

In addition to other applicable provisions of law:

- (a) A farm owner or operator within the state shall not knowingly cause any covered animal to be confined in a cruel manner.
- (b) A business owner or operator shall not knowingly engage in the sale within the state of any of the following:
 - (1) Whole veal meat that the business owner or operator knows or should know is the meat of a covered animal who was confined in a cruel manner.
 - (2) Whole pork meat that the business owner or operator knows or should know is the meat of a covered animal who was confined in a cruel manner, or is the meat of immediate offspring of a covered animal who was confined in a cruel manner.
 - (3) Shell egg that the business owner or operator knows or should know is the product of a covered animal who was confined in a cruel manner.
 - (4) Liquid eggs that the business owner or operator knows or should know are the product of a covered animal who was confined in a cruel manner.

(Amended November 6, 2018, by initiative Proposition 12, Sec. 3. Effective December 19, 2018.)

25991. Definitions

For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms have the following meanings:

- (a) "Breeding pig" means any female pig of the porcine species kept for the purpose of commercial breeding who is six months or older or pregnant.
- (b) "Business owner or operator" means any person who owns or controls the operations of a business.
- (c) "Cage-free housing system" means an indoor or outdoor controlled environment for egg-laying hens within which hens are free to roam unrestricted; are provided enrichments that allow them to exhibit natural behaviors, including, at a minimum, scratch areas, perches, nest boxes, and dust bathing areas; and within which



farm employees can provide care while standing within the hens' usable floorspace. Cage-free housing systems include, to the extent they comply with the requirements of this subdivision, the following:

- (1) Multitiered aviaries, in which hens have access to multiple elevated platforms that provide hens with usable floorspace both on top of and underneath the platforms.
- (2) Partially slatted systems, in which hens have access to elevated flat platforms under which manure drops through the flooring to a pit or litter removal belt below.
- (3) Single-level all-litter floor systems bedded with litter, in which hens have limited or no access to elevated flat platforms.
- (4) Any future systems that comply with the requirements of this subdivision.

(d) "Calf raised for veal" means any calf of the bovine species kept for the purpose of producing the food product described as veal.

(e) "Confined in a cruel manner" means any one of the following acts:

- (1) Confining a covered animal in a manner that prevents the animal from lying down, standing up, fully extending the animal's limbs, or turning around freely.
- (2) After December 31, 2019, confining a calf raised for veal with less than 43 square feet of usable floorspace per calf.
- (3) After December 31, 2021, confining a breeding pig with less than 24 square feet of usable floorspace per pig.
- (4) After December 31, 2019, confining an egg-laying hen with less than 144 square inches of usable floorspace per hen.
- (5) After December 31, 2021, confining an egg-laying hen with less than the amount of usable floorspace per hen required by the 2017 edition of the United Egg Producers' Animal Husbandry Guidelines for U.S. Egg-Laying Flocks: Guidelines for Cage-Free Housing or in an enclosure other than a cage-free housing system.

(f) "Covered animal" means any calf raised for veal, breeding pig, or egg-laying hen who is kept on a farm.

(g) "Egg-laying hen" means any female domesticated chicken, turkey, duck, goose, or guineafowl kept for the purpose of egg production.

(h) "Enclosure" means a structure used to confine a covered animal or animals.

(i) "Farm" means the land, building, support facilities, and other equipment that are wholly or partially used for the commercial production of animals or animal products used for food or fiber; and does not include live animal markets, establishments at which mandatory inspection is provided under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. Sec. 601 et seq.), or official plants at which mandatory inspection is maintained under the federal Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. Sec. 1031 et seq.).



(j) “Farm owner or operator” means any person who owns or controls the operations of a farm.

(k) “Fully extending the animal’s limbs” means fully extending all limbs without touching the side of an enclosure, or another animal.

(l) “Liquid eggs” means eggs of an egg-laying hen broken from the shells, intended for human food, with the yolks and whites in their natural proportions, or with the yolks and whites separated, mixed, or mixed and strained. Liquid eggs do not include combination food products, including pancake mixes, cake mixes, cookies, pizzas, cookie dough, ice cream, or similar processed or prepared food products, that are comprised of more than liquid eggs, sugar, salt, water, seasoning, coloring, flavoring, preservatives, stabilizers, and similar food additives.

(m) “Person” means any individual, firm, partnership, joint venture, association, limited liability company, corporation, estate, trust, receiver, or syndicate.

(n) “Pork meat” means meat, as defined in Section 900 of Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations as of August 2017, of a pig of the porcine species, intended for use as human food.

(o) “Sale” means a commercial sale by a business that sells any item covered by this chapter, but does not include any sale undertaken at an establishment at which mandatory inspection is provided under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. Sec. 601 et seq.), or any sale undertaken at an official plant at which mandatory inspection is maintained under the federal Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. Sec. 1031 et seq.). For purposes of this section, a sale shall be deemed to occur at the location where the buyer takes physical possession of an item covered by Section 25990.

(p) “Shell egg” means a whole egg of an egg-laying hen in its shell form, intended for use as human food.

(q) “Turning around freely” means turning in a complete circle without any impediment, including a tether, and without touching the side of an enclosure or another animal.

(r) “Uncooked” means requiring cooking prior to human consumption.

(s) “Usable floorspace” means the total square footage of floorspace provided to each covered animal, as calculated by dividing the total square footage of floorspace provided to the animals in an enclosure by the number of animals in that enclosure. In the case of egg-laying hens, usable floorspace shall include both groundspace and elevated level flat platforms upon which hens can roost, but shall not include perches or ramps.

(t) “Veal meat” means meat, as defined in Section 900 of Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations as of August 2017, of a calf raised for veal intended for use as human food.

(u) “Whole pork meat” means any uncooked cut of pork, including bacon, ham, chop, ribs, riblet, loin, shank, leg, roast, brisket, steak, sirloin, or cutlet, that is comprised entirely of pork meat, except for seasoning, curing agents, coloring, flavoring, preservatives, and similar meat additives. Whole pork meat does not include combination food products, including soups, sandwiches, pizzas, hotdogs, or similar processed or prepared food products, that are comprised of more than pork meat, seasoning, curing agents, coloring, flavoring, preservatives, and similar meat



additives.

(v) "Whole veal meat" means any uncooked cut of veal, including chop, ribs, riblet, loin, shank, leg, roast, brisket, steak, sirloin, or cutlet, that is comprised entirely of veal meat, except for seasoning, curing agents, coloring, flavoring, preservatives, and similar meat additives. Whole veal meat does not include combination food products, including soups, sandwiches, pizzas, hotdogs, or similar processed or prepared food products, that are comprised of more than veal meat, seasoning, curing agents, coloring, flavoring, preservatives, and similar meat additives.

(Amended November 6, 2018, by initiative Proposition 12, Sec. 4. Effective December 19, 2018.)

25992. Exceptions

This chapter shall not apply:

- (a) During medical research.
- (b) During examination, testing, individual treatment, or operation for veterinary purposes.
- (c) During transportation.
- (d) During rodeo exhibitions, state or county fair exhibitions, 4-H programs, and similar exhibitions.
- (e) During the slaughter of a covered animal in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 19501) of Part 3 of Division 9 of the Food and Agricultural Code, relating to humane methods of slaughter, and other applicable law and regulations.
- (f) To a breeding pig during the five-day period prior to the breeding pig's expected date of giving birth, and any day that the breeding pig is nursing piglets.
- (g) During temporary periods for animal husbandry purposes for no more than six hours in any 24-hour period, and no more than 24 hours total in any 30-day period.

(Amended November 6, 2018, by initiative Proposition 12, Sec. 5. Effective December 19, 2018.)

25993. Enforcement

- (a) The Department of Food and Agriculture and the State Department of Public Health shall jointly promulgate rules and regulations for the implementation of this act by September 1, 2019.
- (b) Any person who violates any of the provisions of this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment in the county jail for a period not to exceed 180 days or by both such fine and imprisonment. In addition, a violation of



subdivision (b) of Section 25990 constitutes unfair competition, as defined in Section 17200 of the Business and Professions Code, and is punishable as prescribed in Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 17200) of Part 2 of Division 7 of the Business and Professions Code.

(c) The provisions of this chapter relating to cruel confinement of covered animals and sale of products shall supersede any conflicting regulations, including conflicting regulations in Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 40601) of Subdivision 6 of Division 2 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.

(Amended November 6, 2018, by initiative Proposition 12, Sec. 6. Effective December 19, 2018.)

25993.1. Defense of good faith reliance on supplier certification

It shall be a defense to any action to enforce subdivision (b) of Section 25990 that a business owner or operator relied in good faith upon a written certification by the supplier that the whole veal meat, whole pork meat, shell egg, or liquid eggs at issue was not derived from a covered animal who was confined in a cruel manner, or from the immediate offspring of a breeding pig who was confined in a cruel manner.

(Added November 6, 2018, by initiative Proposition 12, Sec. 7. Effective December 19, 2018.)

25994. Construction of Chapter

The provisions of this chapter are in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other laws protecting animal welfare, including the California Penal Code. This chapter shall not be construed to limit any state law or regulations protecting the welfare of animals, nor shall anything in this chapter prevent a local governing body from adopting and enforcing its own animal welfare laws and regulations.

(Added November 4, 2008, by initiative Proposition 2, Sec. 3. Operative January 1, 2015, by Sec. 5 of Prop. 2.)

CHAPTER 14. Shelled Eggs [25995 - 25996.3] (Chapter 14 added by Stats. 2010, Ch. 51, Sec. 1.)

25995. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) According to the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Production, food animals that are treated well and provided with at least minimum accommodation of their natural behaviors and physical needs are healthier and safer for human consumption.

(b) A key finding from the World Health Organization and Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations Salmonella Risk Assessment was that reducing flock prevalence results in a directly proportional reduction in human health risk.

(c) Egg-laying hens subjected to stress are more likely to have higher levels of pathogens in their intestines and the conditions increase the likelihood that



consumers will be exposed to higher levels of food-borne pathogens.

(d) Salmonella is the most commonly diagnosed food-borne illness in the United States.

(e) It is the intent of the Legislature to protect California consumers from the deleterious, health, safety, and welfare effects of the sale and consumption of eggs derived from egg-laying hens that are exposed to significant stress and may result in increased exposure to disease pathogens including salmonella.

(Added by Stats. 2010, Ch. 51, Sec. 1. (AB 1437) Effective January 1, 2011.)

25996.

Commencing January 1, 2015, a shelled egg shall not be sold or contracted for sale for human consumption in California if the seller knows or should have known that the egg is the product of an egg-laying hen that was confined on a farm or place that is not in compliance with animal care standards set forth in Chapter 13.8 (commencing with Section 25990).

(Amended by Stats. 2013, Ch. 625, Sec. 1. (SB 667) Effective January 1, 2014.)

25996.1.

A person who violates this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment in the county jail for a period not to exceed 180 days or by both that fine and imprisonment.

(Added by renumbering Section 25997 (as added by Stats. 2010, Ch. 51, Sec. 1) by Stats. 2015, Ch. 303, Sec. 317. (AB 731) Effective January 1, 2016.)

25996.3.

The provisions of this chapter are in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other laws protecting animal welfare, including the Penal Code. This chapter shall not be construed to limit any state law or regulation protecting the welfare of animals, nor shall anything in this chapter prevent a local governing body from adopting and enforcing its own animal welfare laws and regulations.

(Added by renumbering Section 25997.1 by Stats. 2015, Ch. 303, Sec. 318. (AB 731) Effective January 1, 2016.)

