



Legislative framework for meat inspection system in Croatia



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INTRODUCTION

In the last 30 years, before and after 2013, when Croatia joined EU, the legislative framework of the meat inspection system in Croatia has changed several times, mostly because of harmonization with European Union (EU) legislation.

1997 The Veterinary Act (OG 70/1997)

- veterinary health inspection in slaughterhouses is carried out by authorized veterinarians (AV)

Authorized veterinarian (AV)

- employed in veterinary organizations to which state authorities have been delegated
- perform the veterinary examinations to determine the safety of products of animal origin
- responsible in case of any non-compliances (not the food business operators (FBOs))

at least three years

- ❑ a diploma from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
- ❑ a certificate of completion of the State Professional Examination (SPE) for Veterinary Inspector
- ❑ professional experience after the SPE

Veterinary inspector county/republic

- employed by government
- have a broader spectre of duties than AV
- supervise the work of AV and veterinary organizations to which state authorities have been delegated

at least five/ten years

2007 The Veterinary Act (OG 41/2007)

- dividing regulations between this Act and the Food Act (OG 46/2007)
- introduced a term “control bodies” for veterinary organizations with delegated state authorities
- the Food Act introduced a shift of responsibility in the case of non-compliances to FBOs, at all stages of production, processing and distribution

Authorized veterinarian (AV) #same as in 1997#

at least two years

- ❑ a license (issued by the Croatian Veterinary Chamber)
- ❑ certificate of SPE (issued by the Minister of Agriculture).

Official veterinarian (OV) #same as in 1997#

at least three years

2013 The Veterinary Act (OG 82/2013)

- implemented the Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 in the Croatian legislative framework
- did not bring any changes related to meat inspection.

2018 The State Inspectorate Act (OG 115/2018)

- introduced significant changes in the organization, as all inspections involved in the food safety system were merged, with the exception of fisheries inspections.

2021 The Act 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 (OG 52/2021)

- implemented the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2017/625
- the State Inspectorate was introduced as Competent Authority for official controls
- “delegated bodies” as local competent authorities performing meat inspection.

The Law on Amendments to the Veterinary Act (OG 52/2021)

Necessary changes and harmonization with Regulation (EU) 2017/625

CONCLUSION

The development of the legal framework over the years had less impact on the methodology of meat inspection. However, since 2013, in cooperation with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and the Croatian Veterinary Chamber, continuous training programs have been organized for AV, based on the EFSA scientific opinions (2011-2013) on public health hazards posed by meat and its control in meat chain, going towards risk-based meat inspection.