

REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
LAW
ON VETERINARY ACTIVITIES

17 December 1991, No.I-2110

Vilnius

(As amended by 7 October 1999, No.VIII-1350)

Chapter 1
General Provisions

Article 1. Objective of this Law

This law shall regulate veterinary activities pursuant to international requirements, shall determine the legal status of veterinary structures, and shall establish requirements for veterinary sanitation and the principles of veterinary control.

Article 1¹. Definitions

For the purposes of this Law:

1. “**Veterinary**” means a field of research and productive activities covering care and protection of animals, diagnostics of diseases and therapy of sick animals, disease prevention, state supervision of manufacture and processing of products of animal origin, manufacture and use of veterinary medication and biological preparations, manufacture and use of feeding supplements, protection of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania from the introduction of contagious animal diseases.

2. “**Products of Animal Origin**” means all products and raw materials obtained from mammals, birds, fish, insects, reptiles, crustaceans and other aquatic animals, molluscs, snails used for human consumption, feeding of animals and in production.

3. “**Animal Keeper**” means the owner of an animal or any person in charge of an animal.

4. “**Holding**” means premises, fenced territory, water basins where animals are kept and taken care of.

5. **“Animal Registration”** means entries made in a special book kept on the holding, regarding information on cattle, pigs, sheep, or goats and in particular their trade, slaughter, death, or other loss, or purchase, or the breeding process.

6. **“Animal Ear-tagging”** means the fixing of special ear tags containing coded information enabling identification of the animal onto the animal’s ear or ears.

7. **“Animal Purchase Points, Quarantine Stations”** means temporary premises for the storage of animals before they are sold to another owner.

Article 2. The Main Tasks of the Veterinary Service

The main tasks of veterinary medicine shall be as follows:

- 1) to protect domestic animals and other animals (birds, fur animals, fish, bees, wild animals, animals kept in zoos and vivaria, etc.) against disease by preventive anti-epizootic, sanitation and other veterinary measures;
- 2) to treat sick animals;
- 3) to ensure that animal products and raw materials used in food-processing meet veterinary sanitation quality standards;
- 4) to help to protect the environment from pollution;
- 5) to introduce new technology into veterinary science.

Article 3. The Structure of the Veterinary Service

The veterinary service of the Republic of Lithuania shall be both state-owned and private.

Article 4. The Administration of the Veterinary Service

1. State veterinary policy shall be implemented by the State Veterinary Department.
2. The State Veterinary Department is a Government institution.
3. Any Regulations of the State Veterinary Department shall be approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.
4. The State Veterinary Department shall, in accordance with the procedure established by laws, establish reorganise or liquidate state veterinary institutions financed by the budget and public veterinary institutions, and approve the regulations of both types of institution.

Article 5. The Right to Engage in Veterinary Practice

1. Persons possessing the Lithuanian qualification of veterinary surgeon may engage in veterinary practice. Veterinary assistants (technicians) shall work only under the guidance of a veterinary surgeon.

Veterinary specialists possessing foreign veterinary qualifications who have come from abroad must be certified by the commission appointed in accordance with the procedure established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

2. In the performance of their duties, the State Veterinary Department, veterinary surgeons engaged in private practice, and veterinary assistants shall be guided by this Law and all other laws and executive acts of the Republic of Lithuania relating to veterinary activities.

Chapter 2

State Veterinary Department

Article 6. The Functions of the State Veterinary Department

The State Veterinary Department shall:

1) implement veterinary preventive measures against infectious, invasive and other contagious diseases of domestic and other animals;

2) together with health care agencies, exchange information and eradicate centres of contagious diseases which are dangerous to people and animals;

3) assess the epizootic situation and give obligatory directions to animal breeders concerning the implementation of preventive measures to combat contagious diseases of domestic and other animals, as well as the measures relating to eradication, disinfection or deratization of such diseases and other economic measures;

4) analyse the causes of non-contagious diseases and extinction of domestic and other animals, prepare recommendations for the prevention of these phenomena, and treat sick animals;

5) conduct clinical, laboratory (virusological, bacteriological, biochemical, chemical-toxicological, radiological, histological, parasitological) and other tests for diagnosing diseases of domestic and other animals, and evaluate the quality of fodder and water;

6) conduct supervision of the manufacture, processing, storage, transportation and trade of products of animal origin; determine the suitability of products of animal origin

for human consumption by organoleptic, bacteriological, biochemical and radiological tests; decide whether products considered unsuitable for human consumption may be used for feeding animals;

7) test animal foodstuffs at market places;

8) control the conditions of veterinary sanitation in cattle-breeding facilities, slaughter-houses, plants processing meat, dairy and other animal products, market places and storage facilities, and perform veterinary examinations of the construction or reconstruction of such establishments and of excavations];

9) control the use of veterinary medicinal products, biological, chemical and other preparations in cattle-breeding and veterinary practice, and assess the quality of these products and their impact on the health of animals;

10) ensure that the condition of exported domestic and other animals, animal products and raw materials meets the veterinary requirements of the country to which they are being exported;

11) establish the requirements necessary to match those of the UN, EU, Codex of Zoosanitation, World Trade Organisation to ensure that contagious animal diseases or harmful products of animal origin are not introduced into Lithuania and conduct veterinary checks on imported animals, products of animal origins raw materials and food stuffs;

12) control and co-ordinate the activities of veterinary specialists employed by state and private enterprises or organisations;

13) ensure that animal welfare requirements for cattle, pigs, horses, sheep, goats, rabbits, fur animals, poultry and animals intended for laboratory experiments are observed;

14) within their jurisdiction, adopt orders and legal acts based on orders.

Article 7. The Rights of the State Veterinary Department

The State Veterinary Department shall have the right:

1) to issue obligatory instructions to any natural or legal person, or any establishment not having the status of a legal person, who or which engages in the keeping of animals or the processing, storage, transportation or trade of products and/or raw materials of animal origin, in order to ensure that that person or establishment complies with the established requirements of the State Veterinary Department for the prevention of the spread of animal disease, and to ensure the safety of products of animal origin;

2) to inspect enterprises and organisations subject to veterinary monitoring, obtain any information necessary for the determination of epizootic condition, investigate the causes of diseases of domestic and other animals, and assess the quality of veterinary sanitation of animal products and raw materials;

3) upon diagnosing an animal as infected with a contagious disease of domestic and other animals or suspecting the existence of an especially dangerous disease of domestic and other animals, to specify, in compliance with Articles 15 and 16, the conditions of slaughter or destroying of animals, and the measures of detoxification, processing or utilisation of products of animal origin and raw materials, such measures to be compulsory for all enterprises, organisations, farmers or citizens;

4) to enjoy other rights provided for by laws and other legal acts.

Article 8. State Veterinary Inspectors

1. The Head of the State Veterinary Department shall simultaneously be the Chief State Veterinary Inspector of the Republic of Lithuania. His assistants shall be the assistants of the Chief State Veterinary Inspector. Other specialists of the Department shall be state veterinary inspectors.

2. Territorial divisions of the State Veterinary Department: the heads and assistants of state veterinary services of counties, cities or regions shall be state veterinary inspectors and assistants of those counties, cities and regions respectively.

Article 9. The rights of State Veterinary Inspectors

State Veterinary Inspectors shall have the right:

1) to prohibit the building, reconstruction or use of those cattle breeding establishments, meat processing plants, shops, storehouses and other facilities, which do not meet veterinary sanitation requirements;

2) to prohibit the processing of raw materials or use for food of those animal products which do not meet veterinary sanitation requirements;

3) to control establishments of military units and other militarised subunits, railways, sea and river ports and airports which are subject to veterinary monitoring;

4) in accordance with the procedure established by law, to impose administrative penalties upon officers and persons for violation of this Law the rules of animal quarantine and any other veterinary sanitation requirements as well as the violation of decisions of

the Government of the Republic of Lithuania or local governments relating to epizootic issues.

Article 10. Duties of State Veterinary Inspectors

State Veterinary Inspectors shall control the compliance of owners of domestic and other animals, veterinary specialists, and organisations or persons processing, storing or dealing in animal products, with this Law and with other executive acts or veterinary requirements.

Article 11. Financing of the State Veterinary Department

The State Veterinary Department shall be financed out of the state budget.

Chapter 3

Private Veterinary Practice

Article 12. Private Veterinary Practice

1. Veterinary surgeons may engage in private practice.
2. Veterinary assistants and technicians shall engage in private practice under the supervision of a veterinary surgeon.
3. Veterinary specialists engaged in private practice must have a licence issued in accordance with the procedure established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

Article 13. The Rights of Veterinary Specialists Engaged in Private Practice

Veterinary specialists engaged in private practice shall have the right:

- 1) to diagnose diseases and treat domestic and other animals, with the exception of those who have diseases which require quarantine or other special restrictions;
- 2) to vaccinate domestic and other animals, and advise animal keepers;
- 3) to issue certificates certifying an animal's health condition;

4) when danger of a contagious disease of domestic and other animals arises, to prohibit the bringing in or taking out of the establishment of any domestic or other animal, animal products, raw materials or fodder.

Article 14. Duties of Veterinary Specialists Engaged in Private Practice

Veterinary specialists engaged in private practice must:

1) upon suspecting a contagious disease of domestic and other animals, immediately report this to the nearest state veterinary station and take measures to prevent the spread of the disease;

2) in the event of the epizootic of a contagious animal disease, observe and perform directions given by the State Veterinary Service;

3) in accordance with the procedure established by the State Veterinary Service, report to the State Veterinary Department of the town or district about any work carried out in relation to the prevention and treatment of diseases of domestic and other animals.

Chapter 4

Veterinary Sanitation Requirements for the Prevention of Contagious Diseases

Article 15. Duties of Keepers of Domestic and other Animals, Enterprises Engaged in Manufacture, Processing, Storage, Transportation or Trade of Products and Raw Materials of Animal Origin, other Natural and Legal Persons and Enterprises with no Rights of a Legal Person

1. Keepers of domestic and other animals and enterprises engaged in manufacture, processing, storage or trade of products and raw materials of animal origin shall ensure that veterinary sanitary and economic measures for preventing the spread of contagious diseases of domestic and other animals, and for eradication of their focuses shall be duly taken.

2. Natural and legal persons, as well as enterprises with no rights of a legal person may acquire domestic and other animals from abroad only upon receiving a licence of the State Veterinary Department. Imported animals shall be kept for 24 days separately from other animals of the farm.

3. The import of products and raw materials of animal origin, fodder, medicinal products, or biological preparations from abroad shall only be permitted in accordance with the procedure established by the State Veterinary Department.

4. Keepers of domestic and other animals must immediately report to the territorial state veterinary service about sudden and numerous diseases of domestic and other animals or their loss.

5. Keepers of domestic and other animals must allow veterinary specialists to examine the animals, to make blood or other tests, to vaccinate them, and to carry out anti-epizootic and other veterinary, preventive measures, and must help them in carrying out these measures.

6. Only natural and legal persons, as well as enterprises with no rights of a legal person possessing veterinary certificates of the form established by the State Veterinary Department may trade domestic and other animals, products and raw materials of animal origin.

7. Dead animals, slaughter offal shall be taken, except for the cases indicated in paragraph 10 of Article 16 of this Law, to waste processing plants.

8. Plants processing products of animal origin must introduce the system of internal control.

9. It shall be prohibited to slaughter ill animals, to use their meat for food or to feed animals, to sell their carcasses or the products thereof without a written permission of a veterinary surgeon.

10. Procedure for slaughter of healthy animals to obtain carcasses and by-products for trade shall be established by the State Veterinary Department.

11. The transportation of domestic and other animals and their products shall be permitted only by special transportation means that meet requirements set up by the State Veterinary Department.

12. The State Veterinary Department shall approve the list of contagious animal diseases. Measures necessary for prevention and eradication of such diseases shall be financed from the State budget. Prevention and therapy of other diseases, veterinary supervision of manufacture, processing, storage, transportation, import and export of products of animal origin shall be implemented at owners' expense.

Article 16. Measures of the Prevention of Contagious Animal Diseases, Eradication of Focuses of such Diseases and Epizootic

1. Upon suspicion of a contagious disease, animal keepers shall notify the regional state veterinary service without delay and take the necessary measures to prevent a spread of the disease.

2. Upon receiving information about a suspected outbreak of contagious animal disease, a state veterinary surgeon shall immediately arrive on the spot to confirm the diagnosis, take samples for laboratory tests, take measures to prevent the spread of the disease including a ban on the movement of animals or products of animal origin from the suspected site and a ban on the movement of people from the site.

3. Upon confirmation of a contagious animal disease, the head of the territorial state veterinary service, after taking into account the pathogenic character of the agent, spreading properties, the geographic locality of the area and other natural conditions, shall define:

- 1) the boundaries of the focus area;
- 2) the boundaries of the protection zone in a radius of 3 km around the infected area;
- 3) the boundaries of the surveillance zone in a radius of 10 km from the protection zone;
- 4) veterinary measures and their implementation in the areas specified in subparagraphs 1, 2 and 3 of this paragraph.

4. The State Veterinary Department shall approve the list of contagious diseases of domestic and other animals for which protection and surveillance zones are established.

5. When the area of the focus, protection or surveillance zones cover the territory of two regions, the boundaries of the zones and the eradication measures shall be jointly decided by the heads of the territorial state veterinary services of these regions. When the focuses of diseases of animals or other mammals are confirmed on the territory of several regions, the implementation of disease eradication measures shall be organised by the State Veterinary Department.

6. When the agent of contagious animal disease poses risk to human beings, public health protection measures shall be decided by the Ministry of Health Care or an institution authorised by it.

7. Should a need arise, the head of a territorial state veterinary service shall approach the region or city local authority with a request for additional measures - setting up police posts, changing routs of buses, redirection of transport flows to go round the territories indicated in subparagraphs 1, 2 and 3 of paragraph 10 of this Article,

observation of the population, etc. The region or city local authority shall consider the matter without delay and adopt a decision within 24 hours.

8. Upon confirmation of an outbreak of a contagious disease, instructions of the veterinary surgeons of the state veterinary service on the eradication of the focus of the disease must be fulfilled by all natural and legal persons as well as enterprises without the right of a legal person located in the areas indicated in subparagraphs 1, 2 and 3 of paragraph 10 of this Article.

9. Director or deputy directors of the State Veterinary Department may obligate slaughterhouses or plants processing products of animal origin, regardless of their subordination, to slaughter animals or process products of animal origin in compliance with the veterinary requirements where these measures are necessary for prevention of the contagious animal disease or for eradication of the focus of the disease.

10. If it is necessary in order to eradicate contagious animal disease or to prevent their spread, dead or euthanized animals, aborted fetuses, fur and hides, carcasses and slaughter offal, products of animal origin shall, upon a written instruction of a state veterinary surgeon, be buried, burned by the owners or taken to waste processing plants in compliance with veterinary requirements.

Article 16¹. Registration and Identification of Animals

1. In the Republic of Lithuania, registration of all animal holdings, registering and ear-tagging of cattle, pigs, sheep, goats kept therein shall be mandatory.

2. The procedure for registering holdings, registering and ear-tagging of animals specified in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania or an institution authorised by it.

3. Each keeper of cattle, pigs, sheep and goats shall, in accordance with the procedure established by the Government of the Lithuania or an institution authorised by it, hold a register of animals and be responsible for ear-tagging of the animals possessed and furnishing of information on the change in the number of animals.

4. Heads of animal purchase points, quarantine stations, slaughterhouses and markets shall, in accordance with the procedure established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania or an institution authorised by it, appoint persons who enter information in special books on cattle, pigs, sheep and goats taken to a purchase point, quarantine stations, slaughterhouses, markets; supply reports on sold or slaughtered animals.

5. Expenses incurred by the registration of holdings, registration of cattle, pigs, sheep and cattle, printing of the required forms, register books and animal passports, acquisition of animal identification tags and the equipment necessary for animal ear-tagging, animal ear-tagging, setting up of a data bank for the year 1999-2001, shall be covered from the Rural Support Fund.

Chapter 5

Veterinary Control

Article 17. Control of Veterinary Preparations Used in Cattle-Breeding

1. It shall be permitted to use in cattle-breeding only those imported or domestic Lithuanian medicinal products, feedingstuff (vitamin) additions, micro-elements, vaccines, other biological and diagnostic preparations, reagents which are registered with the State Veterinary Department in accordance with the procedure established by legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.

2. The State Veterinary Service shall control how natural and legal persons use, for domestic and other animals, veterinary preparations provided for in this Law, and shall check how these preparations are being kept and destroyed after their expiration date.

3. It shall be prohibited to use biological stimulators or hormones having thyreostatic, estrogenic, androgenic, or gestagenic effects, to induce animal breeding or to increase productivity (lactation).

Article 18. Veterinary Control in Market places

1. State veterinary control shall obligatory in city, regional, and settlement market-places where domestic and other animals, animal products and raw materials are sold. The market administrations must create conditions for this work.

2. In market places the state veterinary shall have meat stamps and labels to mark the quality of products, which are kept safely and a strict record of which is kept.

3. A doctor of the laboratory of sanitation examination of the market veterinary control shall detain products (production) which are unfit for human consumption and shall send them to be destroyed or processed.

Article 19. Veterinary Control in Hunting

Each hunting club must arrange killed animal processing grounds which conform with the requirements of veterinary sanitation, and must assure the veterinary sanitation examination of game used for food.

Article 20. Settlement of Disputes Arising in Process of Enforcement of this Law

Disputes arising in process of enforcement of this Law shall be solved in accordance with the procedure established by the laws of the Republic of Lithuania.

CHAIRMAN OF
THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF
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VYTAUTAS LANDSBERGIS