

Transmittal No. F92-1a
Date: October 4, 2000

INTERPRETATIVE MEMORANDUM

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TO: All Local Health Departments
Attn.: Health Officer/Director of Environmental Health/Chief Sanitarian

FROM: Food Service Sanitation Section
Food and Dairy Division

SUBJECT: Non-Amenable Meats from New Zealand

Background

New inquiries and questions have arisen about the approval of “non-amenable” wild game species from other countries. “Non-amenable meats” means birds or animals, not subject to direct inspection or oversight by the USDA-FSIS under the Federal Meat Inspection Act. Since New Zealand elk is a non-amenable species, the USDA does not provide oversight. However, the USDA does recognize those products which have been approved and stamped by the New Zealand authorities as an equivalent source of approved meats.

Steps in determining approval

Several conversations with both the FDA and the USDA, specifically with their respective import sections, have indicated that this food product is approved for service in the United States.

Both agencies have stated that as long as the meat product (elk) is in CryovacTM packaging and the stamped inspection seal from New Zealand is on the package or on the meat, the product is acceptable for preparation and consumption by consumers. If there is any question about the origin of the product, inform your staff to review the receipt provided to the owner/operator, by the wholesaler.

Currently, there are wholesale suppliers of this meat (elk) in Michigan, and therefore, it is possible that your staff will see this product during their inspections.

NDF:vap:khg