

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Vietnam Issues National Standard for Chilled Beef and Buffalo Meat

Country: Vietnam

Post: Hanoi

Report Category: Livestock and Products

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Report Highlights:

This report provides an unofficial translation of Vietnam’s National Standard for Chilled Meat - Part 2: Beef and Buffalo Meat (TCVN 12429-2:2020) issued under the Vietnamese Ministry of Science and Technology’s Decision No. 3272/QD-BKHCHN dated November 26, 2020. The objective of the standard is to help improve transparency in the management of food safety and hygiene, provide a legal framework for businesses producing and trading in these products, and ensure that consumers have access to safe beef and buffalo meat.

Summary

Vietnam's Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) issued Decision No. 3272/QD-BKHCHN on November 26, 2020, promulgating the National Standard for Chilled Meat – Part 2: Beef and Buffalo Meat (TCVN 12429-2:2020). The standard was developed by Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)'s National Agro-Forestry-Fisheries Quality Assurance Department (NAFIQAD) and issued by MOST. The objective of the standard is to help improve transparency in the management of food safety and hygiene, provide a legal framework for businesses producing and trading in these products, and ensure that consumers have access to safe beef and buffalo meat. The standard for chilled buffalo meat and beef is expected by Vietnam to be a driving force for the development of the beef/buffalo cattle farming industry and provide the standards for the chilled meat processing industry in Vietnam to develop for both domestic consumption and export.

Vietnam notified these measures to the World Trade Organization (WTO) as G/SPS/N/VNM/108 on November 27, 2019, allowing trading partners and stakeholders to provide comments on the draft standard. The standard entered into force on November 26, 2020. This standard applies to chilled beef and buffalo meat used for human consumption, including boneless meat and carcasses. The standard does not apply to beef and buffalo offal.

TCVN 12429-2: 2020 includes definitions, requirements for raw materials, and technical requirements for each stage of production, including, food safety and quality assurance, testing methodology, labelling, packaging, transportation, storage, shelf life, and traceability.

Background

Chilled meat is a new concept for most of Vietnamese consumers. In 2018, the National Standard on Chilled Meat - Part 1: Pork (TCVN 12429-1:2018) was published by MOST, leading a Vietnamese food processing company to introduce its officially certified chilled meat product to the local market in late 2018.

Vietnamese consumers have a habit of consuming “fresh” or “warm” meat, which is newly slaughtered, un-chilled meat, sold at traditional markets, as their primary source of meat. There is a strong preference of consuming “fresh/warm” meat over imported chilled or frozen cuts due to perceived quality and cooking habits. When African Swine Fever spread in Vietnam, the Government of Vietnam (GVN) and MARD asked localities to restructure their livestock production sector, in order to encourage the farming of cattle and poultry and enhance the proportion of beef and poultry in people's diets.

Since 2018, businesses have started to invest in producing chilled pork, which is now widely sold in the market and gradually becoming popular. Anecdotally, there has been a rising trend among consumers switching from “fresh/warm” meat to chilled meat as their awareness of food safety and quality has increased. Local experts expect that chilled meat will be the new consumer trend leading to increased chilled meat processing. MARD leadership expects local meat production to shift from small-scale to industrial-type production models and meet export criteria.

Definition for Standards and Distinction between Standards and Technical Regulations

According to Vietnam’s Law on Standards and Technical Regulations dated June 09, 2006, a Standard (abbreviated TCVN in Vietnamese) is defined as a regulation of technical characteristics and management requirements used as the standard for classifying and appraising products, goods, services, processes, the environment, and other objects in socio-economic activities with a view to improving the quality and effectiveness of these objects. Technical Regulations (abbreviated QCVN in Vietnamese) are defined as regulations on the limits of technical characteristics and management requirements, which products, goods, services, processes, the environment, and other objects in socio-economic activities must comply with in order to ensure safety, hygiene, and human health; to protect animals, plants, and the environment; to safeguard national interests and security, consumer interests, and other essential requirements.

Under the law, a standard is published in a written form by an organization for voluntary application. The application of part of or the whole specific standard will become mandatory when it is invoked in a legal document or technical regulation. A technical regulation is promulgated in a written form by a competent state agency for mandatory application. What it means in practice is that products that do not meet the requirements of the respective technical regulation will not be allowed to be sold in the market. If a product does not meet the standard it can still be circulated in the market.

TCVN 12429-2:2020

Vietnam’s National Standard for Chilled Beef and Buffalo Meat TCVN 12429-2:2020 includes the following sections:

1. Scope of application
2. References
3. Terminologies and definitions
4. Technical Requirement
5. Test method
6. Labelling
7. Packaging, transportation, storage, expiry/shelf-life marking and traceability.

This national standard includes microbiological requirements, including a zero tolerance for Salmonella on chilled beef and buffalo meat. Post notes that Vietnam has already adopted a zero tolerance for

Salmonella on chilled pork (TCVN 12429-1:2018), and a zero tolerance is included in the forthcoming release of the national standard on chilled poultry.

Vietnam's National Standard TCVN 1242-2:2020 can be found in the attached documents in both English and Vietnamese.

Should exporters have any questions and concerns with the above standard, please contact: aghamoi@fas.usda.gov.

Attachments:

[210108 Chilled buffalo meat and beef standard Stamped version.pdf](#)

[210108-Chilled buffalo meat and beef standard Eng.docx](#)