

A SPECIFIC HAZARD ANALYSIS CRITICAL CONTROL POINT PLAN FOR THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF PORTUGUESE PORK CHORIZO AS WARRANT TO AN AFRICAN SWINE FEVER VIRUS-FREE CONDITION

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SUMMARY

A comprehensive Quality Assurance HACCP plan is outlined to warrant a African Swine Fever virus - free condition in portuguese chorizo for EEC and international trade.

INTRODUCTION

Portuguese Veterinary Services are preparing a HACCP system for meat and poultry inspection. First objective is to implement a Quality Assurance system by specific HACCP plans for swine meat inspection and processing to warrant a African Swine Fever (ASF) virus-free condition in hot processed Portuguese chorizo in plants adhering to a comprehensive co-operative action.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Composition of the HACCP team

President: Chief veterinary officer.

Chief executive officer: The appointed delegate by the Chief veterinary officer.

Members: Two quality assurance officers of the meat plants joining this co-operative action appointed by the Portuguese Meat Trade Associations;

Two process engineers of the above mentioned plants;

Two veterinarians meat inspectors on duty at the above mentioned plants.

Advisors: Two HACCP experts in the field of meat inspection and processing appointed by the EEC and US Meat Trade Associations.

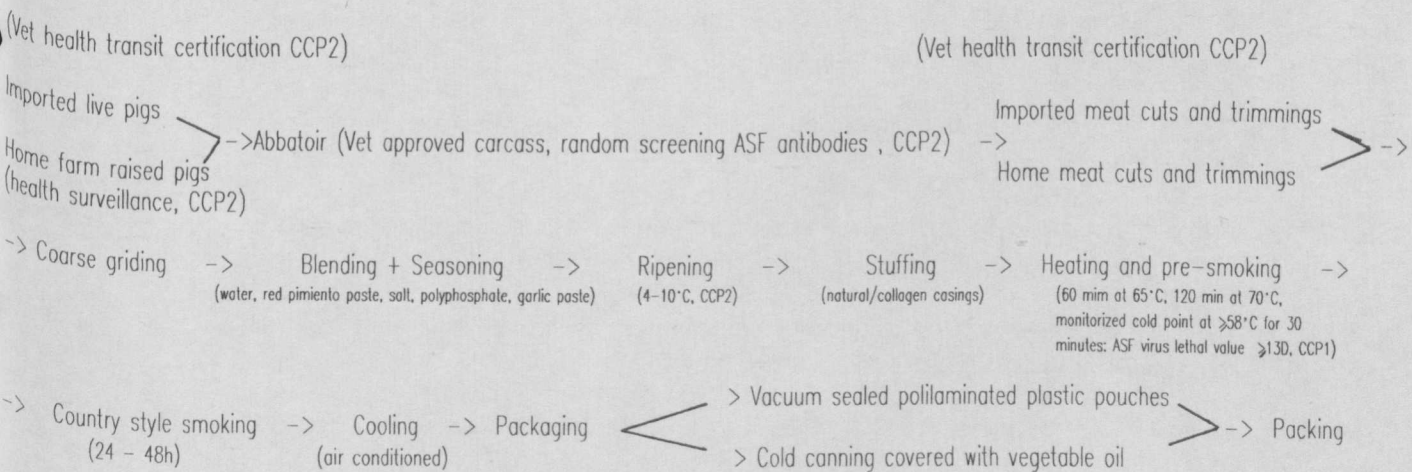
This team will be on duty in Portugal for one full-time year, starting action immediately after appointment of its members.

The specific HACCP plans will be elaborated in 6 months, submitted for approval by the EC Veterinary Permanent Committee and put in operation thereafter.

After 6 months in operation, an independent unannounced audit will be asked to the D. G. 6 of the EEC Commission to evaluate this co-operative action.

Pre-requisites to put the plans in operation

Training of the personnel employed in the Veterinary Regional Services and in the meat plants joining this co-operative action directed and supervised by the appointed HACCP team while working out the specific plans, to provide a full and workable knowledge of the procedures and proceedings summarized in the following flow-sheet:



This plan, fulfilling the seven HACCP principles (USDA-FSIS, 1991), will be submitted for approval and certification by the Veterinary Health Authority.

Situation, Know-How and Field of Application.

Swine Fever was eradicated in Portugal since 1991 (Decision n°91/378/EEC, 1st July 1991). ASF has been stamped out in all Departments of Tagus River. Erratic outbreaks are less and less frequent in the Southern Departments of Alentejo and Algarve, eradication measures immediately applied.

The EEC agreed ASF eradication procedures are in full application in Portugal: tattooing and sanitary surveyance of pigs in the farms, strict control measures for the transit of live pigs, veterinary inspection at the abattoirs including ELISA testing for ASF virus antibodies in randomized samples of sera of the slaughtered pigs.

In outbreaks: sanitary isolation of the infected areas, slaughtering and burning or burying of all pigs, disinfection of premises followed by introduction of sentinel pigs before repopulation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The hazard for animal health concerned with the presence of ASF virus in home produced pig meat will be matched by a Critical Control Point (CCP2) monitored by the systematic application of the approved eradication measures whose data are fully recorded and kept in file for one year by the Veterinary Health Authority.

The HACCP plans should admit failure in putting under control the hazard in the raw swine meat (it is a CCP2). The hazard will be controlled by CCP1 during the hot smoking processing (Plowright and Parker, 1967; Melo *et al.*, 1970; Melo and Vigário, 1979, 1987; Melo, 1982 and EEC, 1992) fully monitored both by the kiln and cold point chorizo temperature records in each processing batch. The respective charts are signed by the kiln operator, counter-signed by the veterinary in charge at the plant and kept in file for one year for inspection in the plant. The thermocouples are tested with a reference thermometer on a daily base.

Occurring deviations (batches underprocessed) will be immediately reprocessed before passing to the second smoking in the country-style smoke house. No tolerances are allowed and verifications are made by the HACCP team and by Government certification.

CONCLUSION

Thermovirology and heat penetration studies of ASF virus in pork meat and meat products provide the scientific assurance of a lethal value > 1.5D hot smoked portuguese chorizo.

The outlined HACCP plans will improve the fulfillment of the eradication measures and warrant a permanent and safe AFS virus-free condition foreign trade of portuguese chorizo.

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