



**STALKING AND CARCASE HANDLING STANDARDS
FOR
SCOTTISH QUALITY WILD VENISON ASSURANCE SCHEME**

Reviewed April 2009

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Part I - About the Scheme

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 These Standards set out the conditions of membership of Scottish Quality Wild Venison (SQWV). The definition of 'Wild' applies to "managed populations of deer living within an enclosed territory (such as forests, hills or parkland) under conditions of freedom."

The term does not apply to deer which are bred, reared and slaughtered in captivity.

1.2 It is intended as a guide to membership for prospective new applicants and as a basis of operation for existing members.

1.3 The SQWV standards are designed to increase consumer and trade confidence in both home and export markets by:

- i) responding pro-actively to consumers about the way wild venison is produced.**
- ii) improving food safety and meeting the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990 and other relevant food hygiene legislation.**
- iii) addressing environmental and animal welfare responsibilities.**

1.4 Participation in the scheme is voluntary and membership is open to all wild venison producers in Scotland and to processors who purchase SQWV product, who demonstrate by independent assessment that they operate to SQWV standards.

1.5 If you have any questions on the content of these Standards, or about the Scheme in general, please contact:

The Scheme Manager, Scottish Quality Wild Venison, Royal Highland Centre, 10th Avenue, Ingliston, Edinburgh, EH28 8NF

Tel: 0131 335 6603 Fax: 0131 335 6601 e-mail: sqvv@sfqc.co.uk

Use of marks.

The SQWV scheme mark may be used on marketing materials by approved scheme members.

It should only be used on product, box labels and invoices where the product meets the requirement of the SQWV scheme.

2.0 STRUCTURE

2.1 SQWV is a company limited by guarantee. SQWV contracts SFQC to provide independent assessment and certification services as part of SQWV's Certification System.

2.2 The Certification System is an independent, third party system for determining conformity with product standards. The Certification System requires examination of

product, the production processes, the production environment, the distribution facilities and assessment of the quality management system. Acceptance after initial assessment is followed by ongoing surveillance. The Certification System is linked to a Certificate of Conformance and the SFQC Certification Mark.

2.3 The structure of SFQC, its operating and its certification procedures follow the general criteria for certification bodies operating product certification as defined in the European Standard EN45011.

2.4 SFQC operates an SQWV Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) under the Certification Council of SFQC. As such it is responsible for advising the Certification Council of SFQC on all matters relating to the Certification Scheme for SQWV.

2.5 A list of current members of the company and the TAC is available from the SFQC office.

3.0 CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

3.1 At the time of application, members and prospective members sign a declaration that they will abide by the conditions of membership. In practice, this means that they will:

- i) Follow SQWV standards and conditions as set out in these Standards and SFQC Scheme Regulations as may be amended from time to time.
- ii) Pay their membership fees when due.
- iii) Sell, as SQWV assured, only that venison which they know to be eligible.
- iv) Not provide untrue or misleading information to SQWV or to any person acting on behalf of SQWV.

3.2 SQWV standards are additional to any statutory requirements and nothing in the standards shall be deemed as providing an exemption from current legislation.

4.0 AMENDMENT OF THE STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS

SQWV is a dynamic Scheme, the standards of which will alter in response to consumer, trade and legislative concerns and requirements. The standards are reviewed annually and members will be kept fully informed of any changes in the standards and conditions that may affect them.

4.2 The TAC is responsible for the maintenance of the standards, subject to endorsement by the SFQC Certification Council.

5.0 HOW TO JOIN

New members

5.1 Application for membership should be made on an SFQC SQWV application form and be accompanied by the appropriate payment. Scheme fees are shown on current application forms and, if necessary, SFQC will be pleased to provide assistance on completing the application process.

5.2 If applicants have more than one site to be visited, especially if the sites are some distance apart, there may be a need for an additional fee. However, every effort will be made to minimise the costs in such cases.

5.3 On receipt of an application form with the membership fee, arrangements will be made for an assessment of the applicants premise(s). The purpose of the visit is to provide a report on the applicant's capability to produce wild venison in a way that conforms to SQWV standards. The decision to approve membership will be made on the basis of the assessment report.

Existing members

5.4 All memberships will be due for renewal annually. SQWV will notify existing members of their renewal fee prior to the renewal date.

5.5 Members' premises will be subject to, as a minimum, re-assessment every 18 months. The timing of the re-assessment will depend on the category of membership awarded at their previous assessment. Any re-assessment dates will be fixed by appointment, and may not necessarily be at the same time of year as the initial assessment.

General

5.6 At the time of the assessment, a check will be made that records and circumstances support the declaration of the calculation of the membership fee.

Part II - SQWV Standards for Stalking and Carcase Handling

6.0 DEER MANAGEMENT POLICY

6.1 Scheme members must produce a written Deer Management Plan which outlines how they comply with the principles detailed below:-

Fig. 1

- a) that deer populations are managed to avoid significant negative impacts on woodlands and other habitats;
- b) that deer control measures are undertaken in an exemplary, humane and legal manner;
- c) that the encouragement of improved standards of deer management and venison handling is supported;

Guidance note:

Further details can be found in [DCS Best Practice Guidance 2008 - Planning – Deer Management Plans](#) or from local Deer Management Groups

7.0 PROFICIENCY OF STALKERS AND KEEPERS, PERMIT STALKERS, UNACCOMPANIED TENANTS, UNACCOMPANIED CONTRACTORS AND ACCOMPANIED TENANTS/GUESTS

All venison supplied under this standard must be culled by, or culling supervised by, a trained hunter according to requirements of current food hygiene legislation. Additionally, these persons must hold a relevant qualification e.g. DMQ Deer Stalker Certificate (DSC) Level 1 and 2.

Guidance note: Scheme members are advised to seek more information about wild game hygiene legislation i.e. about trained hunters/persons and this can be found at the Food Standard Agency's website at www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/

7.1 Stalkers & Keepers (the word stalker/s should be read as meaning stalker/s and keeper/s)

7.1.1 Stalkers must be able to demonstrate competence and training, validated by full records retained on site. A record of training for all stalkers must be retained, detailing courses attended and training received. All training must be annually reviewed and updated where appropriate.

7.1.2 Scheme applicants and members must ensure compliance with qualifications, monitoring and training for directly employed stalkers, and retain copies of full records relating to permit stalkers, unaccompanied tenants and contractors, which demonstrate compliance.

7.2 Permit stalkers

7.2.1 Unaccompanied permit stalkers must hold a relevant qualification e.g. DSC Level 1 and 2.

7.2.2 All permit stalkers must be aware of and sign the owner's/estate's risk assessment.

Guidance note:

The risk assessment must cover issues such as:

a) awareness of firearms safety issues, b) experience and c) ability to appreciate local public safety

7.2.3 All permit stalkers must agree to comply with the standard by signing a pre-stalking declaration (e.g. contract).

7.2.4 Unaccompanied permit stalkers must hold the appropriate Firearms Certificate and possess a firearm and ammunition of the correct legal specification.

7.2.5 Accompanied permit stalkers who do not hold DSC Level 1 and 2 must undertake a shooting test with a Stalker(s) to confirm correct rifle settings and shooting ability prior to the first stalk, to comply with best practice guidelines.

7.3 Unaccompanied Tenants / Contractors

7.3.1 Unaccompanied tenants/**contractors** must hold a relevant qualification e.g. DSC Level 1 and 2

7.3.2 All unaccompanied tenants/**contractors** must be aware of and sign the owner's/estate's risk assessment.

Guidance note:

The risk assessment must cover issues such as:

a) awareness of firearms safety issues, b) experience and c) ability to appreciate local public safety

7.3.3 All unaccompanied tenant/**contractor** contracts will require the tenant/**contractor** to have a minimum of £5 million public liability insurance cover.

7.3.4 All unaccompanied tenants/**contractors** must agree to comply with the standard by signing a pre-stalking declaration (e.g. contract).

7.3.5 All unaccompanied tenants/**contractors** must hold the appropriate Firearms Certificate and possess a firearm and ammunition of the correct legal specification.

7.4 Accompanied Tenants/Guests

For the avoidance of doubt all accompanied tenants and guests are under the supervision of the trained hunter e.g. the stalker who remains responsible for maintaining carcass hygiene at all times.

7.4.1 All accompanied tenants/guests must be aware of and sign the owner's/estate's risk assessment.

Guidance note:

The risk assessment must cover issues such as:

a) awareness of firearms safety issues, b) experience, and c) ability to appreciate local public safety.

7.4.2 All accompanied tenants/guests must agree to comply with the standard by signing a pre-stalking declaration (e.g. contract).

7.4.3 All accompanied tenants/guests must have a pre-stalking meeting and must undertake a shooting test with a Stalker(s) to confirm correct rifle settings and shooting ability prior to the first stalk, to comply with best practice guidelines.

8.0 DESPATCH AND TRANSPORT TO LARDER

8.1 Despatch

8.1.1 Stalkers must observe the behaviour of deer prior to culling, record any suspected abnormal behaviour on cull sheets and inform the Divisional Veterinary Manager of this information if this is linked to a carcass suspected of being infected with a notifiable disease. Information about deer behaviour must be declared on the trained person's declaration.

Guidance note:

Where the stalker suspects a notifiable disease (e.g. TB or Anthrax), the gralloch/viscera must be taken back to the larder in an impervious container, (for example a strong, sealed plastic bag,) and retained with the carcass and pluck outwith the larder in secure storage for inspection by the Divisional Veterinary Manager. It is vital that the viscera and carcass are clearly identifiable as suspected of being diseased.

8.1.2 Firearms and ammunition must be the correct legal specification. (More advice on this is available in [DCS Best Practice Guidance 2008 – Firearms](#).)

8.1.3 Where the stalker inadvertently injures or apparently misses a deer, it must be followed up using the appropriate procedure and if necessary humanely despatched.

Guidance note:

The appropriate procedure must be agreed before the stalk commences. This can be verbal. If an individual is being supervised then the stalker must explain how a 'miss' must be followed up e.g. the stalker should take over the stalk and be responsible for taking the shot thereafter including humane despatch where required.

8.1.4 Gralloching must be carried out in a hygienic and approved manner, according to Best Practice principles.

8.1.5 All field knives used by stalkers must either be one-piece or able to be dismantled for ease of cleaning and carried in a suitable scabbard. They must be kept clean and hygienic according to the hygiene hazard assessment plan.

8.1.6 The beast must be gralloched as soon as possible and certainly within one hour after despatch. Any evidence of disease, or any other characteristics that may indicate that the meat presents a health risk, must be recorded in the larder record and on the trained person's declaration. Cuts made outside of the larder must be minimal to reduce the risk of contamination.

Guidance Note:

If the beast cannot be gralloched immediately after culling, (for example, due to proximity to an area of high public usage) then the gralloch may be performed in the larder as soon as possible and certainly within 1 hour of culling.

8.1.7 Head and feet must not be removed from the carcass in the field, unless a roe sack or washable drag bag is used for transporting the carcass to vehicle.

8.1.8 Carcasses must be transferred to the larder as soon as possible after despatch and actively chilled to a temperature of 7°C or less within a reasonable period of time after killing and achieve a temperature throughout the meat of not more than 7°C. (Active chilling is not required where the climatic conditions are suitable e.g. ambient temperature is less than 5-7°C). Carcasses must not be left outside overnight, unless under exceptional circumstances where safety is an issue.

Guidance note: Where carcasses have had to be left outside overnight then the member must consider any possible contamination hazards and take steps to control these e.g. if the carcass has been attacked by vermin then the carcass should be rendered unfit for human consumption.

8.2 Transport

8.2.1 Vehicles, or pony saddlery, used for transport must be kept clean, hygienic and disinfected where necessary (i.e. when contaminated with blood, faeces or other contaminating material) between loads in compliance with the hygiene hazard assessment plan. They must be designed, constructed and maintained to enable wild game carcasses to be transported in a hygienic condition and to minimise the risk of deterioration of carcasses in transit. The cold chain must be maintained during transport i.e. carcasses must not be allowed to warm up during transit and if destined for despatch to an approved processor they must be transported as soon as possible.

8.2.2 Other game must only be transported in separate compartments from eviscerated deer carcasses.

8.2.3 Dogs, equipment, and anything else that may cause carcass contamination must be kept separately, away from the carcasses.

8.2.4 Appropriate washing/hygiene facilities must be carried in all vehicles and used in compliance with the hygiene hazard assessment plan. All material waste must be stored in an impervious bag and disposed of in an approved manner.

8.2.5 Stacking of carcasses **should** be avoided.

8.2.6 Blood trays must be used in all vehicles which do not have purpose-built washable floors

9.0 LARDER WORK

For the purpose of this section 'larder work' relates only to storage of primary products i.e. skin-on carcasses that have been gralloched.

If larders are being used for the skinning of game and cutting of wild game carcasses into meat, members must apply to join the SQWV Primary Processor scheme.

9.1 Hygiene and safety requirements

EU and UK hygiene legislation places obligations on all food businesses to apply good hygiene practices and food safety management procedures. These should be based on hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) principles. All scheme members are recommended to seek independent advice on HACCP from food hygiene consultants.

Therefore all carcasses must be handled and stored in the larder, in accordance with current food hygiene legislation.

9.1.1 All members with deer larders must be registered with their local authorities as food business operators.

9.1.2 Personal hygiene of stalkers and ALL visitors to the store/larder must be attended to regularly. Routine hygiene must be documented in the hygiene hazard assessment plan. In addition stalkers must ensure that they: wash hands before and after visiting the

toilet; keep cuts and sores covered with waterproof dressings; notify management if they are suffering from, or exhibiting, symptoms of any disease or condition likely to be transmitted through food - this includes infected wounds, skin infections, sores or diarrhoea. In this situation they must not be allowed to work on or handle the carcass. In addition smoking, eating or drinking is not permitted in the larders. All visitors will be required to sign a 'visitor's declaration sheet' confirming the points above.

Guidance note:

A sample visitor's declaration sheet is enclosed at Appendix 2 of these Standards.

9.1.3 Stalkers must be aware of the correct procedure for dealing with tick bites to reduce risk of Lyme disease.

9.1.4 No live animals must be allowed into the larder or dressing area.

9.1.5 A clean and hygienic apron must be worn when working with carcasses. If chain mail gloves are worn on the free hand, these must have easy-to-clean wristbands.

9.1.6 Larder premises must always be clean and hygienic before any fresh carcasses are hung. No waste water must be allowed on work surfaces.

9.1.7 Organic waste must be put in specially provided and identified waste containers which are leak-proof and covered. They must be kept clean and hygienic at all times e.g. lined with a bin liner for ease of cleaning. Waste must not be put on the floor.

9.1.8 Disposal of organic and inorganic waste from the larder must comply with current legislation.

9.1.9 Once the carcasses and pluck have been removed to the chill, the larder and all equipment used must be cleaned and sterilised in compliance with the hygiene hazard assessment plan. No carcasses must be in the larder when cleaning chemicals are being used. If possible, larder premises should be fully cleaned a short time after the processor has uplifted carcasses.

9.2 Carcass inspection, notification and storage

9.2.1 Where the pluck is brought back to larder, it must be removed from the carcass and kept separately avoiding contact with the floor and labelled correspondingly to trace it to the relevant carcass.

Guidance Note: If the trained person is satisfied that there are no diseases or abnormalities present or suspected then the pluck need not accompany the carcass to the game processors (Approved Game Handling Establishment). However the pluck must accompany the carcass if abnormalities are present or suspected and these must be detailed on the trained person declaration.

9.2.2 A general inspection of the carcass must be carried out to ensure suitability for human consumption. Any suspected contamination, disease, abnormality or notifiable infection must be brought to the attention of the processor or the Divisional Veterinary Manager and detailed on the trained person declaration.

Guidance note:

Any suspected notifiable disease e.g. foot and mouth or anthrax, must immediately be reported to the Divisional Veterinary Manager, (the Police, Scottish Government Rural Directorate, the Chief Environmental Health Officer and the Animal Health Inspector). In the case of anthrax, the Medical Officer for Environmental Health must also be informed, and advice sought by mobile phone if possible, on whether or not the carcass should be

moved from the point of despatch. In all cases the carcass must be retained outside the larder in secure storage, with the head, pluck and gralloch and away from other carcasses. A grid reference number is required where the deer was shot and the relevant supervisor informed.

9.2.3 Carcasses must be condemned, in part or total, if any of the following apply:

- a) TB is suspected;
- b) the carcass was killed not by the result of shooting activity;
- c) the deer was found moribund or dying;
- d) the meat is fly-blown;
- e) if tumours are found;
- f) the carcass is not gralloched as soon as possible and certainly within 1 hour of being culled;
- g) where the chiller unit temperature records suggest that the internal temperature of the carcasses may have exceeded 7°C (i.e. a standard setting for an average size chiller is usually 4°C);
- h) they are in extremely poor physical condition;
- i) where a carcass has been scavenged by vermin

and will be disposed of in an approved manner according to the advice of the Divisional Veterinary Manager if TB is suspected. Condemned carcasses must be recorded in the larder record.

9.2.4 If there has been spillage of stomach contents, carcasses may be washed-out internally with low pressure, cold, potable (approved drinking) water. The carcass must be allowed to drain. Paper towels or sponges must not be used to dry out the carcass, as this could spread contamination. Any remaining contamination must be excised.

9.2.5 Carcasses must be weighed and labelled using the approved labels to ensure traceability and compliance with current Food Hygiene legislation.

Guidance note:

A numbered declaration must be attached by the trained person to each carcass stating that following an examination the animal has been found to be free of any abnormal characteristics, abnormal behaviour or environmental contamination. If there is evidence of abnormalities etc, but the carcass is still being submitted to the AGHE, abnormalities should be indicated by the trained person on the declaration. Please note that where abnormality exists and the animal is being submitted to the AGHE the body must be accompanied by the head (except for antlers and horns) and the heart, lungs and liver. Stomach and intestines are not required.

9.2.6 Carcasses hung in the chiller unit must not touch one another to allow free circulation of air.

9.2.7 A larder must not be used for the storage of other game at the same time as eviscerated deer carcasses, unless using a designated area so designed to prevent cross-contamination which can be clearly monitored.

9.3 Monitoring and Record Keeping

9.3.1 Larder records for all carcasses must be maintained, including records of losses from disease and post mortem reports. Larder records must demonstrate traceability by recording a dedicated label number, where the deer was shot, the date and time of cull and date and time of entry into larder and chiller unit, for each carcass.

9.3.2 The game processor must be notified of the number of new carcasses awaiting

collection as soon as they are available. Active chilling must begin as soon as possible after killing and, where chillers are unavailable, carcasses must not remain in the larder for more than 18 hours after entry, and this period must not exceed 12 hours, especially when the outside temperature is >7°C.

9.3.3 Carcasses should be stored in a purpose-built chiller unit. Where this is not possible members must have access to a unit or have one installed within 1 year of the assessment date.

9.3.4 Chiller temperature must be set to ensure that the internal temperature of carcasses does not exceed 7°C (usually requires the air temperature in the chiller to be 4°C or 5°C). The chiller must be vermin and fly-proof. The chiller temperature must be recorded continuously and where carcasses are present temperatures must be monitored at least twice daily. Temperature records must be retained for 2 years.

9.3.5 The chiller must be left clean and checked by a stalker as soon as possible after the carcasses are uplifted.

9.3.6 All applicants/members must read and retain copies of the key documents given in Appendix 1. These will require to be produced during the assessment.

10.0 HYGIENE

10.1 Each larder must have a written hygiene hazard assessment plan. This and other hygiene requirements are greater than that required by law but highlights SQWV's requirement for members to demonstrate industry best practice. This plan must be strictly adhered to and must contain as a minimum the following:

- a) hazards that may risk the food hygiene status of venison during the stalking/carcass handling process
- b) whether those hazards are applicable to their operation
- c) what action is required to minimise those hazards including: cleaning and disinfection procedures; handling of waste materials such as packaging, animal waste, used disinfectants; and details of disinfectants (Scottish Government Rural Directorate/food safe-approved only) and detergents used, including safe storage, usage and dilutions;

Guidance note:

A sample plan is enclosed at Appendix 3 of these Standards.

10.2 Adequate facilities must be provided for the cleaning and disinfecting of work tools and equipment. These facilities must be constructed of stainless steel and must be easy to clean. Knives and steels must be sterilised between operations on each carcass or at times when a risk of cross contamination could ensue. This must be detailed in the hygiene hazard assessment plan.

Guidance Note:

Adequate sterilising facilities must be provided for the regular disinfection of knives (knife sterilising unit), scabbards, sharpening steels and other tools. Chemical cleaning agents must be available. Fibre ropes must not be used.

10.3 Adequate measures must be in place to ensure pests are monitored and controlled (if required). Pest control must make provision for the control of rats, mice and birds. Pesticides, if used, must not be accessible by wild birds and any bait boxes must be tamper-proof. If traps are used they must be inspected daily. An accurate location plan of

all bait points must be drawn up and numbered. Insectocutors must be used.

10.4 All chemicals (e.g. floor cleaning, pesticides), other than those in immediate use, must be stored in a secure area outside the larder and in line with manufacturers' recommendations.

11.0 LARDER DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE

All units must comply with relevant codes of practice and legislation and in addition demonstrate additional compliance with standards outlined below (see Appendix 1).

11.1 Larders must be designed, constructed and maintained to enable all game to be stored in a clean, hygienic condition, free from contamination.

11.2 The building must have a concrete apron in front of the doors for the loading/unloading of vehicles. The apron must be drained into the common effluent system for the larder, allowing wash down of vehicles used for the transport of carcasses.

11.3 Exterior areas around the larder and entranceways must be kept clear of debris and non-essential equipment. Vegetation must be kept short and well managed.

11.4 The size of the enclosed internal larder must be adequate to comfortably store the volume and type of species being brought to the larder; and also to accommodate the number of stalkers who may be working in the larder at any one time.

11.5 All larders must have access to a properly equipped first aid kit.

11.6 The larder and any other entrance rooms must be maintained in a clean and tidy condition.

11.7 Floor surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and must be easy to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials. All drains must be free running and kept clean and all traps must be regularly emptied. Disposal of washings and effluent must comply with current legislation.

11.8 Wall surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and must be easy to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials and require a smooth surface up to a height appropriate for operations.

11.9 Ceilings and overhead fixtures must be designed, constructed and finished to prevent the accumulation of dirt and reduce condensation, the growth of undesirable moulds, the shedding of particles and access by pests. Ceilings must be high enough to accommodate the largest animals coming through the larder.

11.10 If windows and other openings exist, they must be constructed so as to prevent the accumulation of dirt. Those that can be opened to the outside environment must be fitted with insect proof screens which can be easily removed for cleaning. Where open windows would result in contamination of foodstuffs, windows must remain closed and fixed during production.

11.11 Doors must be well fitting to prevent access by pests. They must be easy to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of smooth non-absorbent surfaces. Doors must be able to be opened from both sides and kept closed during work in the larder.

11.12 Surfaces (including surfaces of equipment) in contact with food should be made from stainless steel and maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and

disinfect. This requires the use of smooth, washable and non-toxic materials.

Guidance Note:

Existing facilities with surfaces such as galvanised steel, aluminium, enamel and hardwood in good condition would be acceptable.

11.13 Food premises must have adequate natural and/or artificial lighting. The larder area must have adequate lighting fitted with protective covers to avoid risk of glass contamination.

11.14 There must be suitable and sufficient means of natural or mechanical ventilation. Carcasses must be hung with adequate separation to allow good air circulation for rapid cooling. Mechanical airflow from contaminated area to clean area must be avoided. Air inlets and outlets must be fitted with screens to prevent the entry of birds, insects and rodents.

11.15 An adequate supply of potable water must be available to ensure that foodstuffs are not contaminated. If water is not mains supply then a current water test certificate must be available for inspection.

11.16 Wash basins for cleaning hands must be provided with hot and cold (or appropriately mixed) running water. Wash basin taps must be arm, knee or foot operated. Materials for cleaning hands and hygienic drying (e.g. paper towels) must be provided. These must be located in the larder.

Part III – Assessment and Afterwards

An Assessor will visit each applicant or members premises on behalf of SQWV.

12.0 ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL

12.1 The Assessment

12.1.1 The initial assessment will be by appointment with the applicant and will be carried out during normal working operations with the applicant in attendance. If the member/applicant has to rearrange the time or date of an appointment he/she must notify either the assessor or the SFQC office as soon as possible.

12.1.2 The assessment will include an examination of the systems and the physical features of the premises and equipment as they relate to the SQWV standards.

12.1.3 The assessor will note all points on which the producer/premises meet the SQWV Standards. They will also note any points where the applicant needs to take further action in order to achieve the SQWV standards. The applicant's attention will be drawn to any improvements required, and the applicant will be asked to sign a written declaration of intention to carry out the action required to meet the SQWV Standards.

12.1.4 A copy of the non-compliance report will be given to the applicant. This report will note points on which the premises and the applicant meet the SQWV Standards, further action required to meet the standards, and whether the applicant has signed a declaration that the required action will be carried out.

12.2 Certification decision

12.2.1 The applicant will be notified of the Certification Officer's decision. The decisions are as follows:

Category 1: UNCONDITIONAL APPROVAL - No non-compliances identified during the assessment.

Category 2: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL - Minor non-compliances identified during the assessment. Written confirmation and agreed objective evidence to be sent to the SFQC office within the agreed rectification period.

Category 3: NOT APPROVED - Major non-compliances identified during the assessment and/or no corrective action received for **minor** non-compliances within the rectification period. Applicants/members will be required to supply evidence to the SFQC office to prove that the non-compliances have been rectified. A reassessment visit may be required.

FREQUENCY OF CONTINUAL ASSESSMENTS (DETERMINED AT ASSESSMENT)

Category 1 – one assessment per 18 month period

Category 2 – one assessment per 12 month period

12.2.2 Where a reassessment is required a fee may be charged to the applicant/member.

12.2.3 Whatever the decision on an application, SQWV may recommend appropriate training courses, or appropriate advisory support services, to assist the applicant to achieve or maintain SQWV approval. If appropriate, training or advice could be a condition of acceptance.

12.2.5 SQWV reserves the right to request a random assessment visit to a member's premises and may take appropriate action on the basis of the report. A random assessment may be at short notice but, as far as possible, will avoid periods of peak activity.

12.2.6 Members' premises will be revisited at a frequency relevant to the membership category awarded from the last assessment to check that they maintain the standards required by the Scheme. Re-assessments may take place at any time throughout the year and will focus on specific standards and those identified as requiring attention.

13.0 SOURCING AND TRACEABILITY OF SQWV

13.1 Approved members will be supplied with SQWV labels together with directions for their use when selling approved venison. Purchasers will use these labels as evidence that venison is of assured status. Where exceptionally venison does not meet the requirements of the scheme, it should be declared as such, segregated from SQWV, and not marketed using the SQWV mark.

14.0 WHAT THE ASSESSOR WILL CHECK

14.1 The assessment will cover deer management, stalker, permit stalker, lessee and contractor proficiency, larder work, hygiene and larder design. During the visit, the assessor will make notes about the staff and premises and will complete a checklist. The assessor will maintain in strict confidence any information gathered during the course of the assessment.

14.2 The starting stage of the assessment will depend on the work under way when the assessor arrives, and the sequence from then on depends on what is most practical and convenient.

14.3 At the end of the assessment the assessor will list any non-compliances identified and agreed corrective action in order to achieve SQWV approval and discuss them with the applicant/member. The applicant/member may then be asked to sign an undertaking of intention to carry out the action required, provide evidence that the necessary action has been taken or be subject to a re-assessment to confirm that the improvements have been completed satisfactorily. The prompt provision of a signed declaration or evidence will help to speed the processing of the membership application.

APPENDIX 1

Applicants/members must be aware of the following documents:

The Culling and Processing of Wild Deer - Adams & Dannatt
(Arun District Council, Directorate of Environment and Leisure, The Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF)

The Animal By-Products (Scotland) Regulations 2003
COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations 2002
The Diseases of Animals (Seizure) Order (1993)
The Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991
The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2005/6
The Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended in 2004)
Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974
Waste Management Regulations 1994, as amended
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Regulations (EC) 852/2004; 853/2004 and 178/2002

www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/about_legislation.htm

Best Practice Guidelines
(Deer Commission Scotland: www.dcs.gov.uk)

Key Documents

Information Note Lyme Disease – Description and Prevention

SFQC

We would recommend that all scheme members keep up-to-date, and comply, with the rapidly changing legislation.

FSA Food Standards Agency; www.foodstandards.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2

RULES TO BE FOLLOWED BY ALL VISITORS BEFORE AND DURING ENTRY TO LARDERS

Before entry into larder areas all visitors must enter their name, company (if applicable), address and signature in the visitors declaration sheet, which must be countersigned by a member (or member's representative) of the Scottish Quality Wild Venison Scheme.

The Visitors Hygiene Declaration Record will be checked by the SQWV assessor.

Visitors must report to the SQWV member if they:

- Feel ill, especially if you have sickness or diarrhoea, bad cold/flu, sore throat or very bad discharge from ears, nose and mouth
- Have food poisoning or are recovering from food poisoning
- Septic spots/boils or other skin infections

Visitors must:

- wash hands before and after visiting the toilet
- ensure boots are washed and disinfected prior to entering and leaving the larder. Alternatively protective covers may be worn.
- keep cuts and sores covered with waterproof dressings

Please note that smoking is not permitted in the larders at any time

Appendix 3

HYGIENE HAZARD ASSESSMENT PLAN

Name of Larder:

SQWV Membership number:

Hygiene Hazard	Risk present?	Action taken/ required
Dirty/ contaminated knife at gralloch		
Dirty hands at gralloch		
Dirty/ contaminated hands when handling carcase		
Dirty vehicle/ transporter		
Dirty/ contaminated footwear into larder		
Dirty/ contaminated clothing into larder		
Dirty/ contaminated hands into larder		
Dirty floor		
Dirty work surfaces		
Dirty apron/ gloves		
Drop knife onto floor		

Chemicals in use

Chemical	Where to be used	When to be used	Formulation	Who	Other details

Guidelines for completion:

- Consider whether potential hygiene hazards highlighted apply to your operation. If so describe how these will be minimised
- Consider what other hygiene hazards may be present in your situation and describe action required
- Detail what chemicals you work with and complete as required
- Ensure assessment form is completed/ signed off by responsible person in charge and look to review the plan before next stalking season

Name of person completing hygiene hazard assessment:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Date of next review: