

## 1 Scope

This Standard covers fresh, chilled, or frozen rabbit carcasses intended for markets, direct human consumption, or for further processing. The provisions of this Standard covers food safety and quality requirements and nutritional composition of rabbit meat. This Standard does not cover rabbit carcass with skin and primal cuts.

## 2 Normative References

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their contents constitute the requirements of this document. The latest edition of the referenced documents (including any amendments) applies.

Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS)-Department of Agriculture (DA). (2022). General standard for contaminants and toxins in food and feed (PNS/BAFS 194:2022)

BAFS-DA. (2022). Prepackaged fresh chilled and fresh frozen meat — Product standard — Labeling (PNS/BAFS 339:2022)

BAFS-DA. (2022). Veterinary drug residues in food — Product standard — Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) (PNS/BAFS 48:2022)

BAFS-DA. (2023). Primary and postharvest food and feed — Product standard — Microbiological criteria (PNS/BAFS 372:2023)

National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS)–Department of Agriculture (DA). (2012). Rules and regulations on hygienic handling of chilled, frozen, and thawed meat in meat markets. (DA Administrative Order No. 6, series of 2012).

<https://nmis.gov.ph/images/pdf/ao-06-2012.pdf>

NMIS–DA. (2012). Rules and regulations on hygienic handling of newly slaughtered meat in meat markets. (DA Administrative Order No. 5, series of 2012).

<https://nmis.gov.ph/images/pdf/ao-05-2012.pdf>

### 3 Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this Standard, the following definition shall apply:

#### 3.1

##### **carcass**

body of any slaughtered animal after bleeding and dressing (Department of Agriculture [DA], 2010)

#### 3.2

##### **competent authority**

government authority or official body authorized by the government that is responsible for the setting of regulatory food safety requirements and/or for the organization of official controls including enforcement (Codex Alimentarius Commission [CAC], 2022)

#### 3.3

##### **contusion**

injury to a muscle caused by a direct blow, resulting in disruption of muscle fibers and their blood supply (Lowe and Chaitow, 2009)

#### 3.4

##### **freezer-burn**

characteristics of the surface of the carcass or meat due to loss of moisture during freezing, resulting in dry, grainy-textured white or brown colored spots visible in the meat surface (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], n.d., *modified*)

#### 3.5

##### **labeling**

includes any written, printed or graphic matter that is present on the label, accompanies the food, or is displayed near the food, including that for the purpose of promoting its sale or disposal (CAC, 1991; DA-DOH, 2015)

### 4 Minimum requirements

**4.1.1** All rabbit carcasses shall originate from healthy animals slaughtered in establishments subject to official approval and official control systems applied according to food safety and inspection rules from the competent authority (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe [UNECE], 2013).

**4.1.2** In all classes, rabbit carcasses shall be (UNECE, 2013):

- a) intact, without head, feet, tail, and skin, taking into account the presentation;
- b) free from any visible foreign matter (e.g., dirt, wood, plastic, metal particles);
- c) free of offensive odors;

d) free of contusions; and

e) free of freezer-burn.

## 5 Classification

Rabbit carcasses are classified into three classes as defined below based on the quality attributes (USDA, 2002; Michigan State University, 2017). The quality attributes described in each classification are shown in Annex A (Classification of rabbit carcasses)

### 5.1 Class I

Rabbit carcasses in this class shall have the following quality requirements:

- a) no sign of blood clots due to mishandling prior and during slaughtering; and
- b) the ends of the cut leg bones should be free from sharp edges.

### 5.2 Class II

Rabbit carcasses in this class shall have the following quality requirements:

- a) no sign of incomplete bleeding, except for an occasional and slight clot; and
- b) the ends of the cut leg bones may be broken or with presence of sharp edges due to removal of the feet.

### 5.3 Class III

This class includes rabbit carcasses that do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified in Clause 4. The following, however, may be allowed, provided the rabbit carcasses retain their essential characteristics:

- a) slightly reddened flesh caused by blood clotting in the connective tissues;
- b) moderate bruises, defects and deformities; and
- c) broken ends of leg bones caused by the removal of the feet, but there should be no more than one broken bone in addition to this.

The defects and deformities shall not, in any case, affect the rabbit carcasses.

## 6 Carcass Classification

The classification for rabbit carcasses should be in accordance with Table 1.

**Table 1.** Grading for rabbit carcasses (USDA, 2002; Michigan State University, 2017)

Category	Carcass Weight (kg)	Age	General Description
Fryer	1.1-1.3	12-16 weeks	The flesh is tender with a fine texture and a bright pearly white color.
Roaster	1.3-1.5	17-32 weeks	The flesh is firmer than Fryer. It is also slightly darker with a coarser texture.
Stewer	>1.6	>33 weeks	Carcass is generally firmer, contains more fat and is coarse.

## 7 Contaminants

The rabbit carcasses shall conform to contaminant limits and levels based on the following PNS:

- Microbiological contaminants - limits set in PNS/BAFS 372:2023 (Primary and postharvest food and feed — Product standard — Microbiological criteria);
- Chemical contaminants - Maximum Levels (ML) set in PNS/BAFS 194:2022 (General standard for contaminants and toxins in food and feed); and
- Veterinary drugs - Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) set in PNS/BAFS 48:2022 (Veterinary drug residues in food — Product standard — MRL).

## 8 Labeling

Where applicable, labeling of rabbit carcasses shall meet the requirements of the following standards and regulations:

- PNS/BAFS 339:2022 (Prepackaged fresh chilled and fresh frozen meat — Product standard — Labeling); and
- PNS/BAFS 384:2024 (Packaged primary and postharvest foods — Product standard — Labelling);
- DA Administrative Order (AO) No. 5, series of 2012 (Rules and regulations on hygienic handling of newly slaughtered meat in meat markets); and

- d) DA AO No. 6, series of 2012 (Rules and regulations on hygienic handling of chilled, frozen, and thawed meat in meat markets).

## 9 Nutritional Composition

Information on the nutritional composition is shown in Annex B (Nutritional composition of rabbit meat) based on the Philippine Food Composition Table of 2019.

**Annex A**  
(Informative)

**Classification of Rabbit Carcasses**

**A.1. Class I**



No sign of blood clot



No presence of sharp edges

**A.2 Class II**



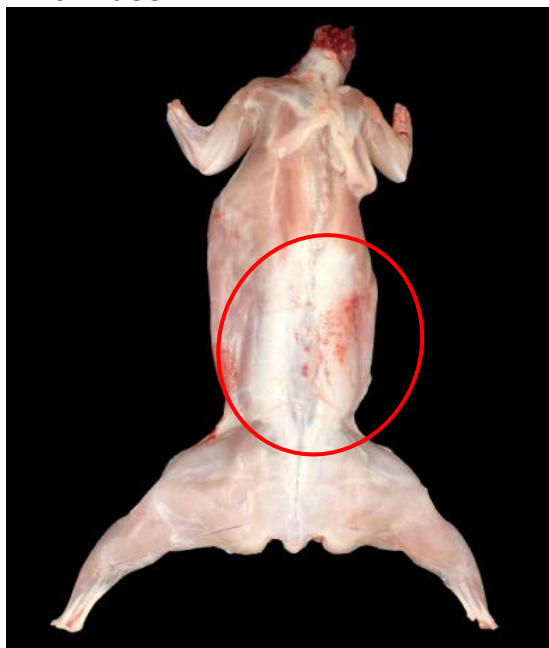
With presence of slight clot



With presence of sharp edges

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A.3 Class III



Slightly reddened flesh



Broken ends of leg bones

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**Annex B**  
(Informative)**Nutritional composition of rabbit meat (DOST-FNRI, 2019)**

Nutrients	Value
<b>Proximate</b>	
Water (g)	78.4
Energy, calculated (kcal)	94
Protein (g)	18.2
Total Fat (g)	2.4
Carbohydrate, total (g)	0.0
Ash, total (g)	1.1
<b>Other Carbohydrates</b>	
Fiber, total dietary (g)	0.0
Sugars, total (g)	0.0
<b>Minerals</b>	
Calcium, Ca (mg)	34
Phosphorus, P (mg)	182
Iron, Fe (mg)	1.4
Sodium, Na (mg)	41
<b>Vitamins</b>	
Retinol (µg)	10
beta-Carotene (µg)	0.0
VIT A, RAE (µg)	10
Thiamin, Vitamin B1 (mg)	0.06
Riboflavin, Vitamin B2 (mg)	0.11



<b>PHILIPPINE NATIONAL STANDARD</b>	<b>PNS/BAFS XXX:2025</b>
<b>Rabbit Carcass — Product Standard —</b>	<b>ICS 65.140</b>
<b>Grading</b>	

Niacin (mg)	8.8
Ascorbic Acid, Vitamin C (mg)	0.0
<b>Lipids</b>	
Fatty acids, saturated, total (g)	0.716
Fatty acids, monounsaturated, total (g)	0.650
Fatty acids, polyunsaturated, total(g)	0.466
Cholesterol (mg)	54
<b>NOTE</b> The values indicated were computed per 100g of edible portion of rabbit meat.	

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