

**Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine  
Trader Notice MH 24/2016**

**To: Food Business Operators at Beef Slaughtering Establishments Approved by the Minister for  
Agriculture, Food and the Marine**

**The use of Lactic Acid to reduce microbiological surface contamination on bovine carcasses.**

**Background**

[Commission Regulation \(EU\) No. 101/2013](#) allows the use of lactic acid (E270) for the purpose of reducing microbiological surface contamination of bovine carcasses, half carcasses or quarters.

**Scope**

This VPN covers the controls involved in the use of Lactic Acid to reduce microbiological surface contamination on bovine carcasses, half carcasses and quarters.

**Role of the FBO**

If the FBO opts to use lactic acid as part of their carcass dressing procedure they must:

- Apply to Meat Hygiene Division for approval for its use and provide all necessary information to enable DAFM assess the proposal.
- Validate the system to be used, preferably by an independent authority.
- Carry out a trial of the system under DAFM supervision.

Before the system can be used on the slaughter line the FBO must amend their HACCP based procedures and FSMS to take into account this additional intervention.

A plant specific SOP must be developed and agreed with DAFM.

This SOP must include at a minimum:

1. That the lactic acid (E270) used will comply with [Regulation \(EU\) No. 231/2012](#) on food additive specifications.
2. That the antimicrobial efficacy of lactic acid treatments under the plant's specific processing conditions will be validated. Validation using microbiological sampling and testing must take place ***before*** chilling.
3. That the lactic acid solution will
  - a. Only be applied to carcasses, half carcasses or quarters in the slaughter house.
  - b. Only be applied by either spraying or misting using 2-5% lactic acid dissolved in potable water at a maximum temperature of 55°C.
4. That the use of lactic acid will be under controlled and verifiable conditions.
5. That the concentration of the lactic acid will be monitored, documented and recorded under the plants FSMS.
6. That the temperature of the lactic acid solution will be continuously monitored by instrumental measurements, documented and recorded.
7. That lactic acid will ***not*** be applied to carcasses with visible faecal contamination.
8. That the application of lactic acid will not irreversibly physically modify the meat.

9. That sampling of carcasses under the plant's Regulation 2073/2005 programme will only take place ***before*** the application of lactic acid.
10. That FBOs receiving carcasses, half carcasses and quarters treated with lactic acid will be notified of this fact.

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13<sup>th</sup> December 2016