

THE MEAT PRODUCTS REGULATIONS 2003 – SUMMARY GUIDANCE NOTES

These Guidance Notes are designed for **bakers** and similar small businesses that make and sell meat products. Comprehensive Guidance Notes covering all aspects of the new Regulations are available from the Food Standards Agency – see *section 5 below*

1. Why have new Regulations?

Although the Meat Products and Spreadable Fish Products Regulations 1984 have been the basis for meat product labelling for some time, there have been several changes in labelling laws which make it necessary to have new regulations. The main change has been a new European definition of meat for labelling purposes, which is different from the definition currently used in the UK. The new definition defines meat as “skeletal muscle with naturally included or attached tissue”, and sets specific limits for the amount of fat and connective tissue (i.e., rind, tendon, sinew, skin etc.) allowed (see table below). The definition specifically *excludes* MRM, feet and trotters, tail, and head meat but includes cheeks (masseters). It also excludes non-muscle cuts such as liver, kidney, heart etc. **Products are still allowed to contain all of these ingredients – they will just need to be described differently, and they cannot count towards the declared meat content.**

	Pork	Birds and Rabbits	Beef, Lamb and other species
Fat:	30%	15%	25%
Connective tissue:	25%	10%	25%

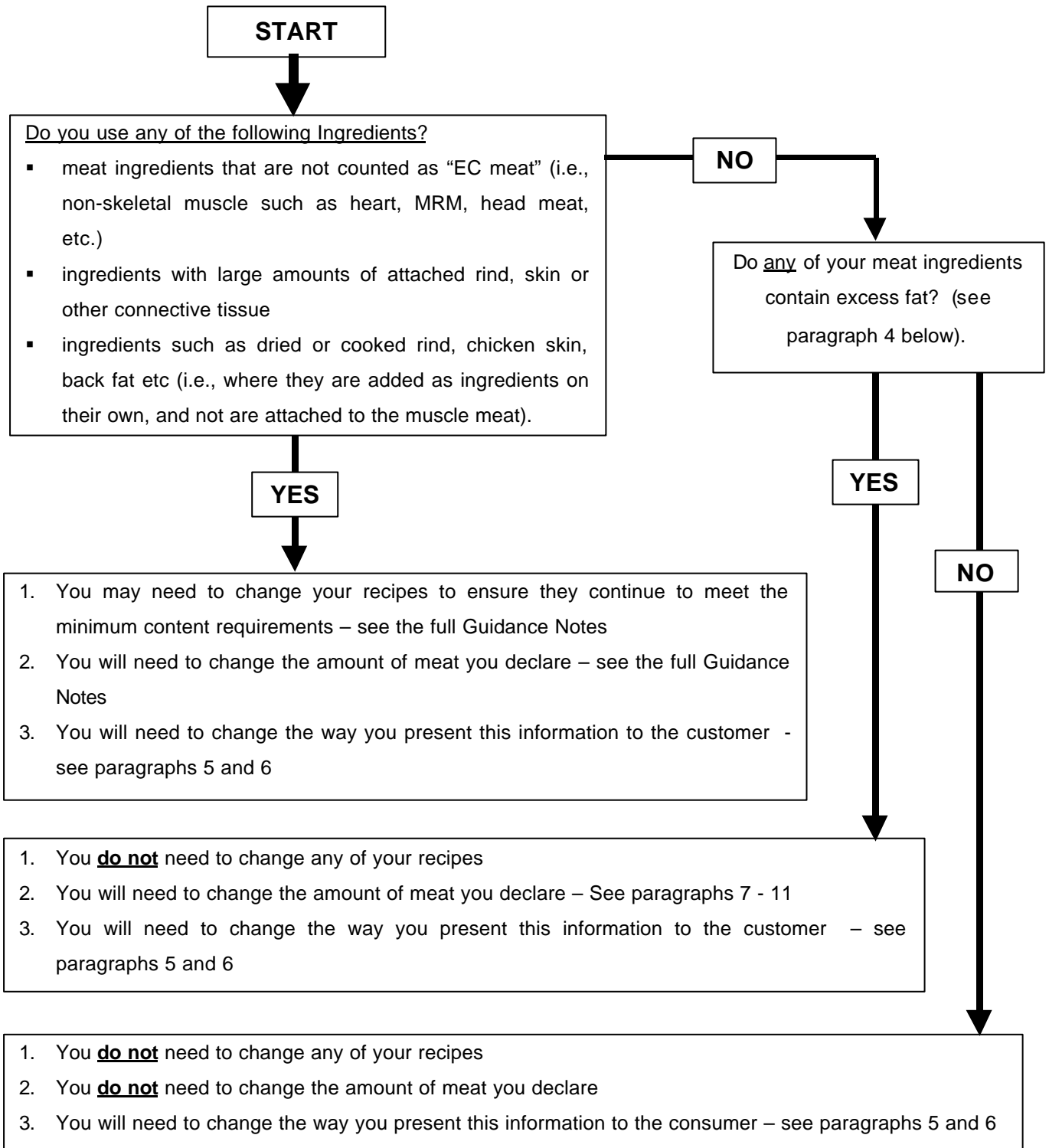
Throughout this Guidance, the phrase “EC meat” is used to mean “meat according to the new European definition”.

2. What are the main changes?

There are two changes that might affect you.

- The minimum meat requirements for products such as pies and sausage rolls are now expressed in terms of the new meat definition. This means that the actual minimums are lower (because of the stricter limits on fat) although the required amount of lean meat remains the same. If you use certain types of ingredients, this may require you to change your recipes (see paragraph 3 below).
- Instead of giving a “minimum meat declaration” for the overall meat content in products, you must now give a QUID declaration for each meat ingredient (based on the new definition). The way in which this declaration is presented to the customer will also change (see paragraph 5 below).

3. Will I have to change anything?



4. **How do I know if my meat ingredients contain excess fat?**

A meat ingredient contains excess fat, if it contains more fat than the percentages in the table above. It is important to note that these ingredients can still be used in products, but the excess fat cannot count towards the QUID declaration for the meat content.

Butchers and other specialists in the meat industry commonly use the visual lean (VL) system to estimate the fat content of cuts of meat (usually to the nearest 5%). Meat also

contains a small proportion of fat that is not readily visible, because it is distributed in small pockets between the muscle fibres. Therefore, the total fat content of a cut of meat will be slightly higher than the amount of visible fat. Your butcher or meat ingredient supplier may be able to provide you with information on the VL content of the ingredients you buy.

In the case of minced ingredients, retailers will need to base their estimation of fat content on the whole cuts or trimmings from which the mince has been prepared.

The following table summarises which meat ingredients have excess fat:

Ingredients <u>without</u> excess fat	Ingredients <u>containing</u> excess fat
Pork	
Cuts with at least 80vl (This will include primal cuts such as neck, hand, loin etc, <u>where the majority of fat has been trimmed off</u>)	Cuts with less than 80vl
Beef and Lamb (and all mammals other than pork and rabbits)	
Cuts with at least 85vl (This will include primal cuts such as hand, flank, fore-quarter, clod & sticking, topside, shoulder hind-quarter etc, <u>where the majority of fat has been trimmed off</u>)	Cuts with less than 85vl
Poultry (including game birds)	
Skinless meat and meat with <u>attached</u> skin only	Additional skin (i.e., that is not attached to the meat)
Rabbits	
Skinless meat and meat with <u>attached</u> skin only	Additional skin (i.e., that is not attached to the meat)

5. **What products require a meat content declaration?**

Note – this paragraph applies to products sold loose, and not prepacked.

Any food that contains “EC meat” needs to be labelled with a QUID declaration. (If the food contains meat-based ingredients such as kidney, liver, heart, offal etc, but no “EC meat”, a QUID is **not** required).

Note that it is the amount of “EC meat” that needs to be QUIDed. Any ingredient that is not “EC meat” does not need to be QUIDed. For example:

Product	QUID required for:	QUID <u>not</u> required for:
Chicken and Mushroom Pie	Chicken	Mushroom
Steak and Kidney Pie	Steak (beef)	Kidney
Chicken and Ham Pie	Chicken	Ham
Corned Beef Pastie	-	Corned Beef

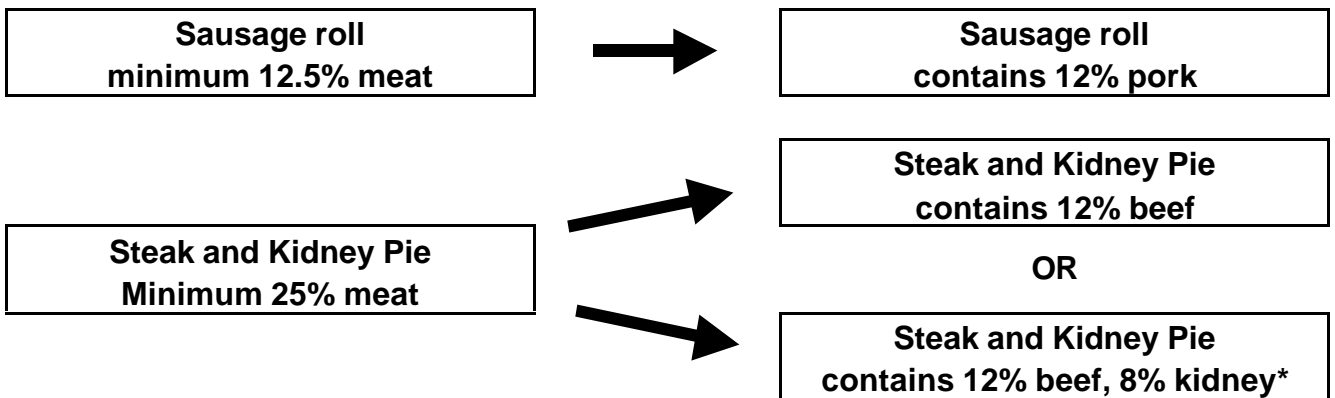
N B Regardless of whether a QUID is required, products must still contain the minimum amount of meat required to meet the compositional requirements. Retailers are free to give QUID declarations for any ingredient if they wish to – but QUID declarations are only **required** for the ingredients that are “EC meat”

However, the following types of foods **do not require** any QUID declaration:

- Sandwiches, filled rolls etc.
- Pizzas and similar products
- Single portion salads containing meat
- Food sold from a catering premises.

6. How do I present the information to the consumer?

Under current rules, you will be declaring the meat content in the form “contains minimum x% meat”, which relates to the *total* meat. Now you will need to give a QUID for each separate meat ingredient. As in the following examples:



* In this example, the baker has chosen to provide a QUID for the kidney on a voluntary basis.

Currently, most businesses will declare the minimum which is lower than the product actually contains, in order to give a “margin for error”, or to take account of the variability in production and the natural variability of the meat ingredients. The new declaration is no longer a *minimum* content, but an *actual* content – and must **accurately reflect** the proportion of ingredients going into the mixing bowl. However, it will still be acceptable to state a percentage that makes allowances for this variation.

Minimum meat content for some reserved descriptions

Name of food	Pig meat %	Bird and/or Rabbit %	Other species or mixed meats %
Meat pie/pudding Inc Melton Mowbray pie/pudding and Game pie/pudding	12.5	12.5	12.5
Meat pie/pudding Inc Melton Mowbray pie/pudding and Game pie/pudding weighing less than 200g & more than 100g	11	11	11
Scottish pie or Scotch pie	10	10	10
pastry, pastie, bridie, sausage roll	6	6	6
Pie/pudding containing another ingredient additional to the meat When other ingredient is listed first,			

e.g. Potato and meat pie	6	6	6
When meat is listed first e.g. Meat and potato pie	7	7	7

7. How do I work out my new meat content percentage (QUID)?

The following explanation assumes that you have followed the flow chart at Paragraph 3.

Up until now, you will have been working out your meat content declaration by simply dividing the weight of the meat ingredients by the total weight of the product. Now, however, there are stricter limits for fat. If your meat ingredient contains excess fat, you will not be able to count all of your ingredient towards the meat content. The method in the Annex shows you how to work out how much of your ingredient you can declare as “EC meat”.

8. How do I account for baking losses?

Your QUID declaration must be based on the weight of the ingoing ingredient, divided by the weight of the finished product. In the case of some cooked products, the final weight of the product may be less than the total weight of all the ingredients. This will be because the food has lost moisture (and possibly some fat) in the cooking process.

Therefore, when determining the QUID declaration for cooked products, it is important to remember to base your calculation on the final cooked weight. The examples in the Annex show this in practice.

It is also possible that some meat ingredients will be cooked more than once during the production process. The filling of meat pie for example might be cooked before it is put in the pastry casing, and then cooked again as part of the whole pie (i.e., to cook the pastry). This “double cooking” does not affect the QUID declaration – again simply divide the weight of the original meat ingredient by the weight of the finished pie.

9. How do I account for fat migration into pastry?

It is quite common in the cooking of pies (and other pastry products containing meat) for some of the fat in the meat to be absorbed into the pastry during cooking. This will not affect the QUID declaration. Again, the QUID declaration is determined by dividing the weight of the original meat ingredient by the weight of the final product (because the weight of the final product will still include all the fat from the meat).

10. How do I QUID compound ingredients such as Ham, Sausage, Bacon etc?

A compound ingredient simply means a food used as an ingredient, which is itself made up of a number of ingredients. Ham for example is made up of pork, curing salt, and possibly water and other ingredients; and is itself used as an ingredient (e.g., in a “chicken and ham pie”). Corned beef is also considered a compound ingredient.

It is not necessary to provide a QUID declaration for compound ingredients containing meat. Businesses are free however to provide a QUID on a voluntary basis if they wish.

Where a QUID is provided for these ingredients, it is calculated by simply dividing the weight of the compound ingredient, by the weight of the final product. It is not necessary to indicate the quantity of meat in the final product, or the quantity of meat in the compound ingredient.

11. What about sausage rolls?

In many cases, where a food contains sausage, that sausage would be considered a compound ingredient. In the case of sausage rolls it is a little more complicated, because the Regulations impose a minimum meat requirement for a “sausage roll” as well as for a “sausage” or “sausage meat”. (Also, the minimum meat content for the filling of a “sausage roll” is lower than that for a “sausage”).

Therefore, in the case of sausage rolls, bakers can choose either:

- to provide a QUID for the pork content (or other species, as appropriate), or
- to treat “sausage” as a compound ingredient (in which case a QUID would only be required if the food was sold pre-packed)

If bakers choose the second option, then the filling of the sausage roll must meet the minimum meat content for “sausage” – i.e., the filling must be at least 32% in the case of a “sausage roll” and at least 42% in the case of a “pork sausage roll”.

12. Where can I get more information?

Comprehensive Guidance Notes covering all aspects of the new Regulations are available from the FSA. They can be downloaded from www.food.gov.uk/etc/etc/etc - or by phoning 020 7276 8154.

Businesses with specific queries may like to contact their Local Trading Standards (or home authority if appropriate). Contact details are available from the FSA website – www.food.gov.uk

MEAT CALCULATION – TABLE AND EXAMPLES

How to use the table

First, you need to know the fat content of your ingredients. This is based on an estimation of the visual lean (VL). **It is very important that the VL is estimated as accurately as possible.**

Read across under the heading for the species of meat you are using. The number is the percentage of your meat ingredient that you can count as meat towards your QUID declaration. If you fall into the shaded area (i.e., where the number is 100%) this means that **all** of your ingredient can count (i.e, because you are within the limit for fat).

Column 1	How much of my ingredient counts as “EC meat”?	
	Visual Lean (VL)	Pork
100	100	100
95	100	100
90	100	100
85	100	100
80	100	96
75	96	90
70	90	84
65	84	78
60	77	72
55	70	66
50	64	60

Poultry, Other Birds, and Rabbits – Where skin or fat is added separately, this does not count towards the meat content. Where a product contains (e.g.,) chicken meat with *attached* skin, as well as chicken skin added separately, the QUID for “chicken” must be based on the weight of the chicken with *attached* skin only.

Method

- If you have one meat ingredient:

Step 1 – [weight of ingredient] x [percentage “EC meat”] = [weight of “EC meat”]

Step 2 - [weight of “EC meat”] / [weight of product] X 100 = meat declaration (%)

- If you have two or more meat ingredients (including ingredients of the same species):

You need to do Step 1 for each ingredient, and then add up the total weight of “EC meat” you have. Then in Step 2 divide this total “EC meat” by the weight of final product (the example on the next page for a pork pie shows this in practice).

Examples

Sausage Roll:

Method - The sausage meat mixture is made up from raw ingredients. It is then wrapped in pastry and oven cooked.

<u>kg</u>	<u>Ingredient</u>	Total ingredients	50kg
6	Pork forequarter 75VL		
15	Rusk	Total weight after cooking*	45kg
2	Water		
1.75	Onion		
0.25	Seasoning		
<hr/>			
25	Pastry		

Step 1 - With 75VL Pork we can count 96% - so: $96\% \times 6\text{kg} = \mathbf{5.76\text{kg}}$

Step 2 - Calculate the QUID: $5.76\text{kg} / 45\text{kg} = \mathbf{12.8\%}$

Minced Beef and Vegetable Pie:

Method - The filling is slow cooked on its own on the hob. The filling is then put into the pastry cases and the whole pie oven cooked to cook the pastry.

<u>kg</u>	<u>Ingredient</u>	Weight of filling ingredients	30.5kg
15	Beef mince (no excess fat)		
5	Beef stock (liquid)	Weight of filling after initial	27kg
10	Vegetables (onion, carrot, swede)	cooking:	
0.5	Seasoning		
<hr/>			
20	Pastry	Weight of uncooked pies	47kg
		Total weight after cooking*	45kg

Step 1 - For Beef with no excess fat we can count 100% - so: $100\% \times 15\text{kg} = \mathbf{15\text{kg}}$

Step 2 - Calculate the QUID: $15\text{kg} / 45\text{kg} = \mathbf{33.3\%}$

Pork Pie:

Method – the filling is made up from raw ingredients, and then filled into the pastry. The whole pie is then oven cooked. After cooling, the pies are jellied.

Makes 50 x 250g pies.

<u>kg</u>	<u>Ingredient</u>		
2	Pork shoulder trim (80vl)	Total weight of ingredients (not including jelly)	12.6kg
2	Pork belly trim (50vl)		
1.5	Rusk		
1	Water	Weight of pies after cooking	12kg
0.1	Seasoning		
6	Pastry	Final product weight (i.e., after addition of jelly)	12.5kg
0.5	Jelly (weight based on 10g in each pie)		

Step 1 –	With 80vl pork we can count 100% -	$100\% \times 2\text{kg} = 2\text{kg}$
	With 50vl pork we can count 64% -	$64\% \times 2\text{kg} = 1.28\text{kg}$
Step 2 -	Calculate the QUID:	$2\text{kg} + 1.28\text{kg} = 3.28\text{kg}$
		$3.28\text{kg} / 12.5 \text{ kg} = \mathbf{26\%}$

* It will usually be impractical to weigh the whole batch of products to determine the cooking loss. Therefore the “weight after cooking” can be determined by weighing a selection of the individual products, and working out the average cooking loss.