

Commonwealth of Puerto Rico  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

MARKET REGULATION NO. 8

TO REGULATE THE QUALITY AND THE MARKETING OF POULTRY MEAT IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO AND TO REPEAL THE REGULATION ON THE SAME SUBJECT PROMULGATED BY THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE ON APRIL 28, 1961, AS AMENDED.

Section I – Public Policy

It is public policy of great importance that the poultry meat marketed in Puerto Rico be of adequate quality for human consumption; that it complies with the sanitation norms as well as with all the requirements established by the Poultry Products Inspection Act, its regulations and other acts and/or regulations applicable thereto; that such meat be stored and handled adequately; that the same is not adulterated and/or misbranded outside the official establishments; and that the advertisements and promotion of such meat does not construe misleading advertisements. Such public policy pretends to impede the practice, occurred in the past, of thawing the poultry in order to sell them as fresh poultry and to sell products with labeling that does not respond to the product offered for sale. It is also public policy of great importance that the consumer receives the adequate information that allows him to choose the product he wishes. It is an essential part of this public policy to provide the maximum information to the consumer in order to make a well informed decision on the product to be bought.

Section II – Legal Base

This Regulation is adopted by virtue of the authority vested by Act No. 241 of May 8, 1950, as amended (5 L.P.R.A. 121, et seq.), as well as Reorganization Plan No. 1 of the Department of Agriculture of May 4, 1994 (3 L.P.R.A. Appendix 5, Article 1 et seq.) Moreover, the provisions of the Poultry Products Inspection Act (P.P.I.A.), especially section 467(e) have been considered.

### Section III – Terms used in this Regulation

The following terms shall have the meaning herein below indicated, wherever used or referred to in this Regulation, except as otherwise indicated by the text thereof:

1. Secretary – means the Secretary of Agriculture of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
2. Adulterated – means any adulterated poultry meat, as defined in Section 381.1 (b) (4) of the Federal Regulation for the Mandatory Meat Inspection. It shall also include any poultry meat kept, stored or handled in violation to any provision of said Federal Regulation, the Poultry Products Inspection Act (P.P.I.A.) or this Regulation.
3. Poultry – means birds of the species of the hen and the turkey.
4. Ready-to-Cook-Poultry – means any slaughtered poultry intended for human consumption that has been drained and from which the feet, head, entrails or viscera, trachea, esophagus, maws, lungs, reproductive organs and oil glands have been removed and are free from protruding pinfeathers, vestigial feathers and any other incipient feathers; suitable for cooking without the need for further processing.
5. Cooler – means a cooler or any other closed container, with its own refrigerating system or by means of an external refrigerating system, capable of keeping fresh poultry meat in adequate wholesomeness condition in accordance with all the requirements of this Regulation, and to keep the internal temperature of the fresh poultry meat between 26° F and 36° F at every moment.
6. Freezer – means a cooler or any other closed container, with its own refrigerating system or by means of an external refrigerating system, capable of keeping frozen poultry meat strictly frozen at every moment, with an internal temperature of 0° F, without exceeding the variations authorized by law or regulation, and capable of keeping frozen poultry meat in adequate wholesomeness condition and in accordance with all the requirements of this Regulation.
7. Poultry meat or Product – means ready-to-cook poultry, poultry parts and/or giblets. Such term does not include the product known in the market as “canner’s fowl” that is frozen mature hens to be used exclusively for the manufacture of a product in which the same does not constitute the main product but one of the ingredients of

the manufactured product. Said term includes poultry meat or further processed poultry, such as cooked or pre-cooked products, boned, seasoned, stuffed, or breaded.

8. Official Certificate – means any certificate issued by officials of the United States Department of Agriculture pursuant to the Federal Regulation for Meat Inspection and/or Federal Regulation for the Grading of Poultry Meat.
9. Wholesaler – means any person that possess poultry meat to be sold in Puerto Rico, and any person engaged to the storage of poultry meat belonging to another person other than commercial establishments, a retailer or final user.
10. Department – means the Department of Agriculture of Puerto Rico.
11. Retailer – means any person who possesses poultry meat to sell or offer for sale directly to the consumer, and that is not qualified as wholesaler.
12. Shipping Container – means any container used or intended for use for packing poultry meat.
13. Consumer package or container – means any container in which poultry meat is enclosed for the purpose of display and sale to consumers.
14. Official establishment – means any establishment, according to Federal Regulation for slaughtering or processing poultry meat, in which inspection of the slaughter or processing of poultry meat is maintained.
15. Label – means any written, printed or graphic matter upon any article or the consumer package.
16. Misbranded – means any poultry meat falsely labeled, as defined in section 381.1(b) (31) of the Federal Regulation for Poultry Products Inspection. It shall be considered misbranded any poultry meat that at any moment prior to its sale to a consumer, does not possess the qualities indicated in the label or that it is offered for sale in violation of any provision of this Regulation. In addition, it shall be considered misbranded any poultry meat classified by grades that at any moment prior to its sale to a consumer does not comply with the applicable regulations established in the Federal Regulation for the Grading of Poultry Meat.

17. Official – means any agent and/or employee of the Department in charge of carrying out the purposes of the applicable laws and enforces the regulations and standards promulgated and established thereto.
18. Poultry Products Inspection Act – means the Poultry Products Inspection Act, Public Act No. 85-172, of August 28, 1957, as amended, 71 stat 441; and Public Act No. 90-492 of August 18, 1968, as amended, 82 stat 791; 22 U.S.C. 451.
19. Lot – means one or more containers bearing poultry meat that is distinguished from other containers bearing poultry meat.
20. Giblets – mean those edible internal organs, properly processed and washed such as the liver without the bile sac, the heart without pericardial sac and the gizzard without lining and the contents.
21. Institutional Market – means any market that does not include retail marketing of poultry meat, included but not limited to hotels, restaurants and institutions.
22. Puerto Rico – means the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
23. Federal Regulation for the Classification of Poultry Meat - means the Regulation that regulates the classification of the poultry meat products and rabbit products and the types, standards and grades of the United States and that ---- in 7 Code of Federal Regulation 77 Federal Regulation for the ----- of Poultry Meat (7 CFR 70), as amended from time to time.
24. Federal Regulation for the Mandatory Inspection of Poultry Meat – means the federal regulation that regulates the mandatory inspection of poultry meat, its wholesomeness, its manipulation, transportation, handling and any other aspect included in such regulation and that appears in 9 Code of Federal Regulations, sections three hundred eighty one point one to three hundred eighty one point three hundred eleven (9 CFR 381.1 to 381.311), as amended from time to time.
25. Market Regulation No. 8 – means all the provisions of this Regulation.
26. Agent or Representative – means any person representing a wholesaler in Puerto Rico.
27. Final User – means the person, other than the consumer, which is the last to use the poultry meat to be processed or prepared for his use. It includes further processing

operations, restaurants, fast-food establishments, cafeterias, institutional market and others similar.

Any other term used in this Regulation that has not been defined shall have the common meaning usually given in Puerto Rico to such term. Any technical term used in this Regulation and that has not been defined in the same shall have the meaning given thereto by Federal Regulation for the Mandatory Inspection of Poultry Meat or Federal Regulation for the ----- of Poultry Meat, or ----, the meaning usually given in the industry.

For the purposes and enforcement of this Regulation, any word used in the singular form shall also import the plural and vice versa, when its use thus justifies it. The words in masculine form shall also import the feminine, or vice versa, when its use thus justifies it.

#### Section IV – Licenses

- A. Every wholesaler or his agent, shall provide himself with a license issued by the Secretary in order to operate as such. Such license shall expire on June 30, of each year.
- B. A new application for license shall be filled within at least thirty (30) days prior to its expiration date.
- C. The license holders shall be responsible for any violation to this Regulation committed in their business or while the poultry meat is found under their possession or physical or legal domain. Likewise, any or all of their representatives, agents or employees participating in the commission of the same shall be responsible therefor, as provided in Section XV of this Regulation.
- D. As a condition for the granting or renewal of licenses, the wholesaler or his agent, shall comply with the following requirements:
  1. Have a place of business with the adequate facilities for handling and keeping the product pursuant to this Regulation. Such facilities shall be carefully inspected by an official of the Department, authorized by the Secretary or his representative, in order to verify that the same meets the minimum requirements for such activities. Such official shall submit to his superiors a report on the results of such inspection within the next five days following to such inspection's date.

2. Provide authentic evidence of the legal tenancy or possession of the place of business.
  3. If it is a corporation, to submit a copy of the incorporation certificate issued by the Department of State of Puerto Rico or the state of the United States where it is incorporated, and to submit the certifications that verify that it has complied with the requirements of law to do business in Puerto Rico.
  4. Have up-to-date the payment of municipal business licenses and taxes established by law. It shall submit a certification for such purposes.
  5. If it is a Corporation, it shall submit a Certification of the Department of State of Puerto Rico, verifying that it is complying with the Puerto Rico's Corporations Act (in good standing).
  6. To possess certificates or licenses of the Department of Health of Puerto Rico and health certificates of those employees that handle directly poultry meat; or as a substitution of the same, a certification of the United States Department of Agriculture that the establishment complies with sanitation norms required by the Federal Act for Poultry Inspection and its products and the Regulation for Mandatory Inspection of Poultry Meat.
  7. Have up date all payments of administrative fines;
  8. Submit to the Department a penal record certificate of the Puerto Rico Police; Provided that, in case of foreigners with less than five years of residence in Puerto Rico, the applicant shall submit a penal record certificate issued by the governmental authorities of his country of origin.
  9. Submit the Employer's Social Security Number.
  10. Submit financial statements certified by a Certified Public Accountant.
  11. Submit an affidavit on the business volume for the last fiscal year immediately prior to the date of application.
- E. Once the license is approved, but prior to the issuance of the same, the applicant shall pay by certified check in favor of the Secretary of the Treasury the amount of the license fee as they are fixed by act, regulation or administrative order, as the case may be. The payment for such fee shall be *sine qua non* condition for the issuance of the license.

Section V – Requirements for Marketing Poultry Meat in Puerto Rico.

- A. Every poultry meat that is marketed in Puerto Rico shall be fit for human consumption at every moment. It shall also have complied with the requirements of the Poultry Products Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Regulation and this Regulation. It shall comply at every moment, prior to its sale to the consumer, with all the applicable requirements of the Act and above mentioned regulations.
- B. Every poultry meat that is marketed in Puerto Rico as fresh poultry meat (not frozen) shall be kept, at every moment, at an internal temperature between 26° F and 36° F, without being frozen.
- C. Every poultry meat that is marketed in Puerto Rico frozen shall be kept at every moment strictly frozen. Its internal temperature shall be kept constant without exceeding 0° F, allowing a tolerance of 5° F (or that one permitted by law or regulation) with the purpose of taking into consideration the incidental variations in the handling of the frozen product.
- D. Every poultry meat that is marketed in Puerto Rico, classified in grades shall comply at every moment, until its sale to the consumer, with the requirements for the grade established in the Regulation for the Grading of Poultry Meat or any requirement established thereto by applicable laws or regulations.
- E. Every wholesaler, representative or agent that markets poultry meat in Puerto Rico, shall provided himself with certificates certifying the date in which the product in each lot was inspected for wholesomeness. Such certificates shall be issued at the official establishments that operate under the Poultry Products Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture pursuant to the provisions of Sections 381.108 and 381.109 of the Poultry Meat Federal Regulation (9 CFR 381.1 et seq.) In the case of imported poultry meat to be marketed as fresh (not frozen), the inspection for wholesomeness shall have been made within one hundred ninety-nine (199) hours prior to its unloading at any port or airport in Puerto Rico.
- F. Every ready-to-cook poultry and poultry parts or giblets that are marketed in Puerto Rico, shall be packed in wraps or direct sale to consumers package. The content of the consumer package may neither be subdivided in lower units nor be detailed

alone. The provisions of this subsection shall not be applicable to poultry meat destined to be sold in the institutional market.

- G. Every lot of poultry meat that is displayed for sale to consumers shall have been consumer packed in an official establishment that operates under the Poultry Products Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. These provisions shall not apply to poultry meat displayed for sale to the consumer when the same has been packed in a poultry stand in which live poultry is offered for sale, and that are chosen by the consumer for its slaughtering and preparation in such stand.
- H. In the containers for direct sale to the consumer and the shipping containers shall appear a label indicating that the product was inspected for wholesomeness with its respective plant number.
- I. Every lot of poultry meat marketed in Puerto Rico may be subject to inspection once it has left the official establishment, by an officer of the Department in order to verify that the same complies with the requirements of this Regulation.
- J. It shall be the responsibility of all wholesalers and air or shipping company, its representatives, agents or employees, to notify the Department, through the Market Inspections Office, the arrival to Puerto Rico of every lot of poultry meat, informing the airplane or ship that transports it and the place and time of unloading of the same.
- K. No lot of poultry meat arriving to Puerto Rico may be removed from the port, airport, or place of unloading without authorization from the Secretary; Provided, that not only the wholesaler but also the air or shipping company which transports it shall be responsible for the compliance of this provision. Every inspection work carried out of regular working hours shall be paid by the wholesaler to the Department of Agriculture.
- L. Every poultry meat offered for sale in Puerto Rico shall be inspected by the inspectors of the Department thirty (30) days after its processing and every thirty (30) days from that date on until its sale to the consumer with the purpose of guaranteeing that the same complies with the norms established in this Regulation. It shall be the responsibility of the wholesaler, retailer, or final user who physically

or legally possesses poultry meat to take the steps in order that the inspectors of the Department carry out the corresponding inspection within the established term and to have available at every moment the certificates of the inspections performed.

M. The marketing in Puerto Rico of poultry meat after the expiration date shall not be allowed. If poultry meat failing to comply with the requirements of this Regulation is found, the Secretary shall proceed, pursuant to the powers vested in him by Act No. 241 of May 8, 1950, as amended.

N. No poultry meat in violation of any of the provisions of this Regulation shall be allowed to be marketed in Puerto Rico.

#### Section VI – Certificates

- A. The certificates required in Subsection E of Section V shall indicate all the information established in Sections 381.108 and 381.109 of the Federal Regulation approved by virtue of the Poultry Products Inspection Act. (PPIA)
- B. The certificates shall be official certificates of the United States Department of Agriculture.
- C. One copy of the original of each certificate shall be rendered by the wholesaler to the Department of Agriculture of Puerto Rico at the moment of the inspection. The original shall be kept in the file of the wholesaler during a term of not less than twenty-four (24) months and shall be available when required by an officer.

#### Section VII – Transportation

- A. The transportation from the place of origin to Puerto Rico, of all poultry meat to be marketed in Puerto Rico as fresh poultry meat (not frozen), shall be done in coolers, in such way that the internal temperature of the product is maintained between 26° F and 36° F, but without freezing, during the journey. Likewise, the transportation of poultry meat to be marketed as frozen shall be done in freezers, which maintain internal temperature of the product at 0° F at all times. Provided that, with the purpose of taking into consideration variations incidental to the handling of the frozen product, a tolerance of up to 5° F (or the temperature allowed by law or regulation) of the temperature required for frozen poultry meat.
- B. Both the wholesaler and the air or shipping company transporting the product shall be responsible for its removal from the port or place of unloading, immediately after the

authorization of the Secretary or his authorized representative, to establishments with adequate cooling or freezing facilities, as the case may be.

- C. While being transported, the internal temperature of the poultry meat to be marketed as fresh (not frozen) shall not be lower than 26° F nor higher than 36° F. In the case of frozen poultry meat, it shall be transported rigidly frozen at a temperature of 0° F with a variation of up to 5° F (or that temperature allowed by law or regulation.)

#### Section VIII – Storage

- A. The storage of any poultry meat to be marketed in Puerto Rico as fresh poultry meat (not frozen), shall be done in coolers in such way that the internal temperature of the product be maintained between 26° F and 36° F. The storage of poultry meat to be marketed in Puerto Rico as frozen shall be done in freezers, which maintain internal temperature of the product at 0° F. Provided that, with the purpose of taking into consideration variations incidental to the handling of the frozen product, a tolerance of up to 5° F (or the temperature allowed by law or regulation) of the temperature required for frozen poultry meat.
- B. The product shall be kept under sanitary conditions, protected from the sun and the heat produced by engines, stoves, and other artifacts, as well as gaseous emanations and protected from any possibility of being contaminated.

#### Section IX – Inspection

- A. The officials of the Department shall have free access to the dependencies of every establishment or to every transportation vehicle in Puerto Rico in which poultry meat is stored, transported, handled, purchased, sold or displayed for sale.
- B. Every wholesaler or his agent shall possess adequate facilities to perform the aforesaid inspections. Every lot of poultry meat arriving to Puerto Rico shall be inspected at the port or place of arrival in Puerto Rico. Upon arrival an officer of the Department shall be present at the moment of opening and unloading a van or other container with poultry meat.

#### Section X – Packing and Packing Materials

The shipping containers and their liners as well as the consumer packages used to pack poultry meat marketed in Puerto Rico, shall comply with the specifications for packing and packing materials for poultry meat and poultry by-products, established by the USDA.

Section XI – Information for the Consumer in the Market Place; Handling of Meat; Prevention from Misleading Labeling and Adulteration

A. Every poultry meat that is offered for sale to the consumer shall bear on the label of the consumer packed container all the information required by the Federal Regulation for the Mandatory Meat Inspection, specially, but not limited to, sections 381.115 to 381.144 of said regulation.

Poultry meat that is offered for sale shall not bear on its label any misleading or false information, and the container in which it is offered for sale shall not be made, formed or filled in a false or misleading manner. Poultry meat that is offered for sale shall comply with the description indicated in the labeling and the advertisements under which such product is offered for sale.

B. Poultry meat that is offered for sale shall not be packed, separated, handled, or in any way altered outside the commercial establishment. Further processed products such as: cooked or pre-cooked products, boned, seasoned, stuffed or breaded, shall have been further processed in compliance with the specific requirements established in the Federal Regulation for the Poultry Meat Mandatory Inspection, especially but not limited to, sections 381.145 to 381.171 of said regulation; it shall also comply with any other applicable legislation or regulation.

C. No person may sell or offer for sale adulterated poultry meat, unwholesome, or that has been or is, in any way, in violation of this Regulation. For the purposes of this Regulation, any poultry meat with one or more of the following defects, shall be considered adulterated or unwholesome:

1. That bears or contains any poisonous or deleterious substance.
2. That has hidden in any way any damage or defect.
3. If it has been packed in such manner or if it has been added any substance that affects the weight, the quality and/or wholesomeness.
4. It is in whole or part decomposed, filthy or putrid or that has been handled in such way that affects its appearance or wholesomeness.
5. If it has been prepared or packed under unsanitary conditions or it is found under unsanitary conditions.

6. If it has been prepared or packed at non-authorized places or where it may be exposed to contamination or deterioration.
  7. If it is the product of any poultry which has died otherwise than by slaughter.
  8. If it has been packed in containers impregnated with any poisonous or deleterious substance that may render the poultry meat injurious to health.
- D. Every additive that is used for the preparation of poultry meat must have been approved by the USDA and/or by the Health Department of Puerto Rico and shall be in amounts within the limits established therefor.

#### Article XII – Storing, Handling and Use of Poultry Meat by the Final User

- A. All the operations of the final user for the receipt, inspection, transportation, preparation, manufacture, storing and packing shall be carried out according to adequate sanitary practices. The final user and his agents shall take the necessary and adequate quality control measures in order to assure that the food is not under the risk of being contaminated, is fit for human consumption and that the materials in contact with the food are adequate and safe. All necessary precautions should be taken to assure that the procedures for the preparation and production of the food do not present a risk of contamination from any source.
- B. Ready-to-serve food shall not be touched with the hands. The same shall be handled with clean utensils or using gloves that are properly cleaned.
- C. Poultry meat ready to be cooked shall be separated from that one ready to be served, and both from the raw poultry meat.
- D. Every final user that uses frozen poultry meat, shall keep the same in a freezer different to the one used to maintain fresh poultry meat. Should a cooler be used for thawing frozen poultry meat to be cooked, such cooler shall be different to the one used to keep the frozen product or to keep the fresh product.
- E. The final user that uses a frozen product shall do so in such way that prevents the meat and/or other ingredients from contamination. It is hereby prohibit to thaw the product by introducing it into a recipient filled with water. The authorized thawing methods are the following:
  1. In a cooler destined thereto.

2. In continuous cold water at a temperature of not less than 70° F and in a way that the water that has contact with a piece of meat does not has contact with any other separated from it. The use of recirculated water shall not be allowed.
  3. In a microwave oven.
  4. In order to use any other thawing method the final user shall obtain a previous authorization from the Secretary.
- F. The final user shall maintain the cooked product hot at a temperature of 140° F or higher. Shall adopt the necessary measures that assure that the food is at room temperature the least time possible.

Section XIII – Determination and Disposal of Lots of Poultry Meat in Violation of this Regulation.

- A. When a lot of poultry meat or any part of the same is in violation of any of the provisions of this Regulation, the Secretary shall proceed pursuant to the powers vested in him by act No. 241 of May 8, 1950, as amended (5 LPRA 121 et seq.)
- B. The Secretary or an authorized officer shall issue a detention order to any lot of poultry meat or part of the same found in violation of this Regulation. No person shall move, hide, or in any way dispose of poultry meat against which a detention order has been issued, without the authorization of the Secretary.
- C. The penalties for violations to this Regulation shall be those prescribed by Act No. 241, of May 8, 1950, as amended. Likewise, the Secretary may deny, cancel or suspend any license pursuant to the provisions of Section XIV of this Regulation.

Section XIV – Cancellation of Licenses

- A. The Secretary may, upon notice to the interested person and giving him the opportunity to be heard, suspend for a determined term, deny or cancel any license issued for any of the following reasons:
  1. Failure to pay, within thirty (30) days following the date of imposition of any administrative fine imposed for violation of any provision of this Regulation;
  2. Marketing any lot of poultry meat without submitting the same to the inspection required ;
  3. Disposing without written authorization of the Secretary, of any lot of poultry meat against which a detention order has been issued;

4. Failure to comply with the requirements set forth in this Regulation;
5. Whenever the person to whom a license has been granted, uses force, assaults, resists, opposes, impedes, intimidates, interferes, obstructs or hinders any official while said official is performing his official duties under this Regulation, or on account of the performance of his duties..
6. When the person incurs in three violations to this Regulation adjudicated as such.

B. In cases of suspension, revocation or denial of a license, the procedures established therefor in the Regulation for Administrative Procedures of the Department of Agriculture shall be followed.

#### Section XV – Penalties for Violations to this Regulation

A. Any violation to Act No. 241 of May 8, 1950, as amended (5 LPRA 121 to 127), or to this Regulation, may be penalized by the Secretary by imposition of an administrative fine that shall not exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for the first violation and a ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) fine for each subsequent violation.

B. In every case of violation to the cited Act or this Regulation the procedures established therefor in the Regulation for Administrative Procedures of the Department of Agriculture shall be followed.

C. The administrative procedures under this Section are different from the other procedures established in the law or in this Regulation. These procedures shall not impede the Procedures for the Determination and Disposal of Lots of Poultry Meat established in Section XIII, or the penal procedures for the commission of any offence under the law.

#### Section XVI – Procedures Under this Regulation

All the procedures established by this Regulation shall be carried out in strict compliance with the provisions of the Poultry Products Inspection Act and specifically on section 467e, which establishes joint jurisdiction in order to avoid the distribution of adulterated or misbranded products intended for human consumption, outside from the official establishment; and the provision which establishes that such section does not impedes the establishment of the requirements pursuant to the law with respect to any other matter regulated by the same.

Section XVII – Separability Clause

Should any part of this Regulation or its application thereof to any person or circumstance, be declared invalid, null, such declaration shall not affect the remaining provisions of this Regulation or its application.

Section XVIII – Repeal

This Regulation hereby repeals the Regulation on the same subject promulgated by the Secretary of Agriculture on April 28, 1961, as amended.

Section XIX – Effectiveness

This Regulation is promulgated by virtue of the faculties vested in the Secretary of Agriculture by Act No. 241 of May 8, 1950, as amended. The same shall take effect thirty days (30) after its publication in two newspapers of general circulation in Puerto Rico and filing, in the Office of the Secretary of State of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and in the Legislative Library, the original and two copies of its Spanish and English texts pursuant to the provisions of Act No. 170 of August 12, 1988, as amended.

Approved in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on \_\_\_\_\_ 2003.

LUIS RIVERO CUBANO  
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE