

Article 29.

Inspection, Grading and Testing Milk and Dairy Products.

§ 106-267. Inspection, grading and testing dairy products; authority of State Board of Agriculture.

The State Board of Agriculture shall have full power to make and promulgate rules and regulations for the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in its inspection and control of the purchase and sale of milk and other dairy products in North Carolina; to make and establish definitions, not inconsistent with the laws pertaining thereto; to qualify and determine the grade and contents of milk and of other dairy products sold in this State; to regulate the manner of testing the same and the handling, treatment and sale of milk and dairy products, to require processors of fortified milk and milk products to pay all costs for assays of vitamin-fortified products, to provide for the issuance of permits upon compliance with this Article and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder and to promulgate such other rules and regulations not inconsistent with the law as may be necessary in connection with the authority hereby given to the Commissioner of Agriculture on this subject. (1933, c. 550, ss. 1-3; 1951, c. 1121, s. 1; 1981, c. 338; c. 495, s. 5; 1997-261, s. 109.)

§ 106-267.1. License required; fee; term of license; examination required.

Every person who shall test milk or cream in this State by, or sample milk for, the Babcock method or otherwise for the purpose of determining the percentage of butterfat or milk fat contained therein, where such milk or cream is bought and paid for on the basis of the amount of butterfat contained therein, shall first obtain a license from the Commissioner of Agriculture. Any person applying for such license or renewal of license shall make written and signed application on blanks to be furnished by the Commissioner of Agriculture. The granting of a license shall be conditioned upon the passing by the applicant of an examination, to be conducted by or under the direction of the Commissioner of Agriculture. All licenses so issued or renewed shall expire on December 31 of each year, unless sooner revoked, as provided in G.S. 106-267.3. A license fee of five dollars (\$5.00) for each license so granted or renewed shall be paid to the Commissioner of Agriculture by the applicant before any license is granted. (1951, c. 1121, s. 1; 1959, c. 707, s. 5; 1989, c. 544, s. 14.)

§ 106-267.2. Rules and regulations.

The Commissioner of Agriculture shall establish and promulgate rules and regulations not inconsistent with this Article that shall govern the granting of licenses under this Article and shall establish and promulgate rules and regulations not inconsistent with this Article that shall govern the manner of testing, including, but not in limitation thereof, the taking of samples, location where the testing of said samples shall be made and the length of time samples of milk or cream shall be held after testing. (1951, c. 1121, s. 1.)

§ 106-267.3. Revocation of license; hearing.

The Commissioner of Agriculture shall have power to revoke any license granted under the provisions of this Article, upon good and sufficient evidence that the provisions of this Article or the rules and regulations of the Commissioner of Agriculture are not being complied with: Provided, that before any license shall be revoked, an opportunity shall be granted the licensee, upon being confronted with the evidence, to show cause why such license should not be revoked. (1951, c. 1121, s. 1.)

§ 106-267.4. Representative average sample; misdemeanor, what deemed.

In taking samples of milk or cream from any milk can, cream can or any container of milk or cream, the contents of such milk can, cream can, or container of milk and cream shall first be thoroughly mixed either by stirring or otherwise, and the sample shall be taken immediately after mixing or by any other method which gives a representative average sample of the contents, and it is hereby made a Class 2 misdemeanor to take samples by any method or to fraudulently manipulate such samples so as not to give an accurate and representative average sample where milk or cream is bought or sold and where the value of said milk or cream is determined by the butterfat contained therein. (1951, c. 1121, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 755; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

§ 106-267.5. Standard Babcock testing glassware; scales and weights.

In the use of the Babcock test all persons shall use the "standard Babcock testing glassware, scales, and weights." The term "standard Babcock testing glassware, scales and weights" shall apply to glassware, scales and weights. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, company, association, corporation or agent thereof to falsely manipulate, underread or overread the Babcock test or any other contrivance used for determining the quality of value of milk or cream where the value of said milk or cream is determined by the percentage of butterfat contained in the same or to make a false determination by the Babcock test or otherwise, or to falsify the record of such test or to pay on the basis of any test, measurement or weight except the true test, measurement or weight. (1951, c. 1121, s. 1.)

§ 106-268. Definitions; enforcement of Article.

(a) The definitions set forth in this section shall apply to milk, dairy products, ice cream, frozen desserts, frozen confections or any other products which purport to be milk, dairy products or frozen desserts for which a definition and standard of identity has been established and when any of such products heretofore enumerated shall be sold, offered for sale or held with intent to sell by a milk producer, manufacturer or distributor, and insofar as practicable and applicable, the definitions contained in Article 12 of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes, as amended, shall be effective as to the products enumerated in this Article and section.

(b) The term "adulteration" means:

- (1) Failure to meet definitions and standards as established by the Board of Agriculture.
- (2) If any valuable constituent has been in whole or in part omitted or abstracted therefrom.
- (3) If any substance has been substituted wholly or in part thereof.
- (4) If it is adjudged to be unfit for human consumption.

(c) The term "misbranded" means:

- (1) If its labeling is false or misleading in any particular.
- (2) If it is offered for sale under the name of another dairy product or frozen dessert.
- (3) If it is sold in package form unless it bears a prominent label containing the name of the defined product, name and address of the producer, processor or distributor and carries an accurate statement of the quantity of contents in terms of weight or measure.

(d) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, through its agents or inspectors, shall have free access during business hours to all places of business, buildings, vehicles, cars, storage places, containers and vessels used in the production, testing, processing and distribution of milk, cream, butter, cheese, ice cream, frozen dessert or any dairy product for which standards of purity and of identity have been established, as well as any substance which purports to be milk, dairy products, frozen dessert or confection for which a definition and standard of purity has been established; the Department acting through its duly authorized agents and inspectors, may open any box, carton, parcel, package or container holding or containing, or supposed to hold or contain any of the above-enumerated dairy products, as well as related products, and may take therefrom samples for analysis, test or inspection. If it appears that any of the provisions of this Article or of this section have been violated, or whenever a duly authorized agent of the Department has cause to believe that any milk, cream, butter, cheese, ice cream, frozen dessert or any dairy product for which standards of purity and of identity have been established or any substance which purports to be milk, a dairy product or a frozen dessert for which a definition and standard of identity has been established, is adulterated or misbranded or by reason of contamination with microorganisms has become deleterious to health during production, processing or distribution, and such products, or any of them, are in a stage of production, or are being exposed for sale, or are being held for processing or distribution or such products are being held with intent to sell the same, such agent or inspector is hereby authorized to issue a "stop-sale" order which shall prohibit further sale of any of the products above enumerated or which shall prohibit further processing, production or distribution of any of the products above enumerated. The agent or inspector shall affix to such product a tag or other appropriate marking giving notice that such product is, or is suspected of, being adulterated, misbranded or contaminated and that the same has been detained or embargoed, and warning all persons not to remove or dispose of such product, by sale or otherwise, until permission for removal or disposal is given by such agent or inspector, until the law or regulation has been complied with or said violation has otherwise been legally disposed of. It shall be unlawful for any person to remove or dispose of any embargoed product, by sale or otherwise, without such permission: Provided, that if such adulteration or misbranding can be corrected by proper labeling or processing of the products so that the products meet the definitions and standards of purity and identity, then with the approval of such agent or inspector, sale and removal may be made. Any milk, dairy products or any of the products enumerated in this Article or section not in compliance with this Article or section shall be subject to seizure upon complaint of the Commissioner of Agriculture, or any of the agents or inspectors of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, to a court of competent jurisdiction in the area in which said products are located. In the event the court finds said products, or any of them, to be in violation of this Article or of this section, the court may order the condemnation of said products, and the same shall be disposed of in any manner consistent with the rules and regulations of the Board of Agriculture and the laws of the State and in such a manner as to minimize any loss or damage as far as possible: Provided, that in no instance shall the disposition of said products be ordered by the court without first giving the claimant or owner of same an opportunity to apply to the court for the release of said products or for permission to again process or relabel the same so as to bring the product in compliance with this Article or section. In the event any "stop-sale" order shall be issued under the provisions of this Article or section, the agents, inspectors or representatives of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall release the products, or any of them, so withdrawn from sale when the requirements of the provisions of this

Article and section have been complied with and upon payment of all costs and expenses incurred in connection with the withdrawal. (1951, c. 1121, s. 1; 1997-456, s. 27; 1997-261, s. 46.)

§ 106-268.1. Penalties.

Any person, firm or corporation violating any of the provisions of this Article, or any of the rules, regulations or standards promulgated hereunder, shall be deemed guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. (1951, c. 1121, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 756; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)