

FIFTEEN CHARTER ARTICLES DEDICATED TO THE SPECIFIC REARING OF FOIE GRAS-PRODUCING PALMIPEDS

This Charter, in agreement and in addition to European Union regulations, is the result of advances made by the CIFOG for **preserving traditions**, for example:

- > Reserving **the name duck "Foie Gras"** to foie gras from male force-fed ducks in order to preserve tradition and to improve quality (1995).
- > Limiting new force-feeding workshops to **1000 places** (1995). This Charter testifies to these seven professional families' will to **respect the ethic** of an ancestral profession and to ensure **irreproachable production methods**.

These regulations are closely followed with the permanent goal of offering consumers quality products with meticulous care to respect the farm animal. The strict application of these regulations results in products of noble precision defined by Appellations.

Article I - Palmipeds according to the French tradition

Keeping in line with French regional traditions, the palmipeds reared for Foie Gras production are geese (*Anser-anser*), muscovy ducks (*Cairina Moschata*) or mulard ducks, a hybrid of common Peking ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and muscovy ducks.

Article II – Farm animals controlled in number

As experience has shown, it is important to seek harmonious development for animals, with respect for the environment and for regulated site capacity.

Article III – Young subjects from approved hatcheries

Only ducklings and goslings from hatcheries that are approved and controlled by competent sanitary authorities are placed in conform buildings which have undergone sanitary inspection.

Article IV – Ample individual living space

Young palmipeds receive daily attentive care as well as health and prophylactic monitoring. They live in the comfort of well-maintained vast spaces, which benefit from ventilation and controlled levels of moisture and are rich in light, warmth and calm; food and water are fully available.

Article V – Access to an outdoors track

The animals' well-being is closely observed throughout all stages of their growth, and, once their protective feathers appear, they may use an outdoor track, which is well-maintained and spacious. They are protected from predators and are provided with shelter against the elements.

Article VI – Rigorous veterinary care

Strict respect for legislation is a determining factor in ensuring both the animals' good health and quality products for consumers. All foie gras producing animal farmers should scrupulously follow regulations concerning veterinary care; they should only use authorised substances.

Article VII – Healthful, natural nutrition

The animals are fed a diet based on grains and proteins which can be produced on the farm itself; if the farmer uses an outside supplier, he must ensure the exact composition of the feed supplied.

Article VIII – Healthy, robust animals

When they are around three years old, healthy, robust adult animals are admitted for fattening to produce quality Foie Gras. They are progressively prepared from the age of 9 weeks.

Article IX – Experienced farmers in sufficient numbers

Order 95-625 of 6 May 1995 sets a limit of 1000 force-feeding places per producer, above which authorisation must be obtained from the Public Authorities.

To ensure good monitoring, the trade organisation recommends keeping a reasonable number of animals per responsible person.

Article X – Force-feeding: progressive feeding

This practice comes from the ancestral observation of animals' behaviour before migration.

With respect for the animal's physiology, experience and tradition confirm that, during the fattening period, it is essential to follow a very progressive feeding curve.

Article XI – Good Foie Gras calls for top quality corn

Corn is distributed in order to obtain a fine Foie Gras in around two weeks, depending on the species, and whose colour will vary according to the pigmentation of the corn consumed.

In conformance with regulations, any administration of medicinal substances is strictly forbidden during this period.

Article XII – Attentive care and monitoring

Feed is given gently and carefully in impeccable, well lit and well ventilated premises by a farmer who scrupulously observes animals individually, all throughout this period, for two or three meals per 24-hour period according to the species, in order to ensure that they live in good conditions.

Article XIII – The transport of living animals

All transfer-related animal handling is carefully carried out by those responsible. During transport, animals are placed in perfectly ventilated vehicles equipped with separations to ensure that they enjoy a comfortable journey.

Article XIV – Traceability: Identity, tracking sheet and animal reception

During transfer, each group of animals comes with a document that specifies the place of production, the person in charge, the week they arrived at the farm, the rearing batch number, etc.

Upon arrival, the animals are transferred in a clean, well ventilated environment.

Article XV – Slaughtering according to strict rules

Slaughtering is performed in CEE-approved slaughterhouses or farms. Anaesthesia, by electronarcosis before bleeding the animals, is mandatory. It must be done using a device approved by the Comité Technique d'Agrément des Matériels d'Abattage (Slaughtering Equipment Approval Technical Committee) and which is subject to strict inspection.

THE CHARTER – CONSUMERS' PART

Article XVI – Rigorous hygiene every step of the way

All throughout preparation, finishing and processing, which is performed by professionals with the greatest care and attention, hygiene protocols that apply to personnel and equipment, premises and miscellaneous facilities are strictly observed. In particular, the cold chain is closely respected according to regulations.

Article XVII - Processing: rigorous specifications and batch traceability

Foie Gras must conform to a certain number of specifications stipulated by legal standards and must be completed by specifications set together by the producer and their suppliers.

An accompanying sheet is assigned to each batch, which allows permanent verification of the relationship between the Foie Gras' origin and the finished product. This document must contain a minimum of information including the elements of identification, the dates of the various operations (trimming, de-veining, seasoning, poaching, etc.), as well as the thermal treatment conditions.

Article XVIII - Europe: recognition of French Foie Gras

According to a 1995 European decision, the minimum weight for commercialised raw Foie Gras is 300 g for duck Foie Gras and 400 g for goose Foie Gras.

Only duck Foie Gras obtained from male animals can be sold, in order to conserve tradition and maintain French quality.

Article XIX – Regulated Foie Gras appellations

A 1993 order states that only preparations containing 100% Foie Gras may bear the name “Foie Gras”: whole Foie Gras (whole Foie Gras or one or more lobes of Foie Gras), Foie Gras (pieces of lobes lumped together) and block of Foie Gras (reconstituted Foie Gras which may include pieces of lobes).

The Appellation truffled Foie Gras guarantees at least 3% truffle content.

Article XX – Raw, pasteurised, or preserved

Raw Foie Gras is generally vacuum packed. It is both firm and flexible to the touch and has an attractive beige/ivory to ochre colour. It should be kept at 0-4°C.

Fresh Foie Gras has been slightly cooked. It should be kept at 0-4°C for a maximum of 30 days.

Semi-preserved or semi-cooked Foie Gras is pasteurised. It should be kept at 0-4°C.

Preserved Foie Gras (canned) has been thermally treated. It can be kept several years in a cool, dry place.

All these processes are subject to very strict production requirements.

Article XXI – Loyal labelling for loyal products

The various preparations that bear the name “Foie Gras” are presented in modern or traditional forms of packaging: jars, terrines, cans, trays, transparent vacuum packaging, etc.

Their labels mention the exact appellation, as well as the weight, the list of ingredients, spices and flavourings, and the use before date for raw and semi-preserved products or the best before date for preserved

products, the storage temperature, the batch identification, sanitary approval and the packer's address.

Article XXII – Other preparations with Foie Gras

There are many preparations with a variable Foie Gras content, for example, parfait of duck or goose foie gras: at least 75% Foie Gras content. Medallions, pâtés, mousses and galantines of duck or goose foie gras have at least 50% Foie Gras content. The term Foie Gras cannot be used in the names of these preparations.

Article XXIII – The CIFOG would press charges

The CIFOG would press charges if trade members or partners did not respect the regulations and uses outlined in the articles of the present Charter.