



BELIZE

**THEFT OF CATTLE ACT
CHAPTER 108**

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CHAPTER 108

THEFT OF CATTLE

CAP. 101B, R.E.
1980-1990.
6 of 1986.
17 of 1988.

[27th March, 1986]

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the Theft of Cattle Act.

Interpretation.
17 of 1988.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,

- (a) “bovine cattle” means a bull, cow, heifer, ox, steer or calf;
- (b) “carcass” means the dressed body of a bovine cattle after the removal of offal and other items considered unfit for human consumption and includes a half carcass and a quarter carcass;
- (c) “cattle” includes bovine cattle, pig, sheep, goat, horse, mare, gelding, colt or filly, mule or ass as well as the meat, carcass, skin or any part of such cattle proven to the satisfaction of the court to be that of a stolen cattle, and theft of cattle shall be construed accordingly;
- (d) “half carcass” means the portion of the whole carcass split in two halves, usually along the length of the spinal column;
- (e) “quarter carcass” means the portion of the half carcass split into a forequarter and a hindquarter each including one leg.

Theft of cattle an
offence.
17 of 1988.

3.-(1) A person who commits theft of cattle shall be guilty of an offence and shall be sentenced,

- (a) on summary conviction, to a fine of not less than three thousand dollars and not exceeding five thousand dollars and to imprisonment for a term of not less than one year and not exceeding two years;
- (b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine of not less than five thousand dollars and not exceeding ten thousand dollars and to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years and not exceeding ten years.

(2) If any carcass of bovine cattle which is not marked in accordance with the Regulations made under the Food and Drugs Act, Cap. 291, is kept at any premises or other place or vehicle for the purpose of sale, the owner, occupier or the person for the time being in charge of such premises or place or vehicle shall be deemed to be guilty of an offence of theft of cattle and shall be sentenced to the same penalties as prescribed in subsection (1) of this section, unless he proves that he is the lawful owner of such carcass.

Possession of unstamped meat an offence.
S.I. 20 of 1970.

(3) It shall be within the discretion of the Director of Public Prosecutions whether an offence under this Act may be prosecuted summarily or on indictment.

4. Where any cattle to which this Act applies is, without the proper authority, found in the possession of any person, or kept in any place, such person or the occupier of such place, the owner of, or other person guilty of keeping, such cattle or handling such cattle, unless he can prove that it was deposited there without his knowledge or consent, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be sentenced to the same penalty as in section 3 of this Act.

Unauthorised possession or keeping of cattle.
17 of 1988.

5. Any police officer may stop and search any vehicle, vessel or other means of conveyance in or upon which there is reason to suspect that any stolen cattle is being transported or which has been employed in the commission or attempted commission of cattle theft; and he may arrest any person found therein and also seize and detain any stolen cattle so found as well as the said vehicle, vessel or other means of conveyance, for the same to be dealt with according to law.

Power of police officer to stop and search vehicle, etc.

Power to enter and search premises, etc.

6.—(1) It shall be lawful for a police officer to enter and search without warrant any of the premises listed in the Schedule of this Act unless such premises are being used as a dwelling house where such police officer has reasonable cause to believe that stolen cattle is being concealed or stored therein.

(2) If upon any search any stolen cattle is found, it may be seized and delivered into the custody of the officer in charge of the nearest police station, pending further proceedings in relation to the offence.

Forfeiture of vehicle, etc., used in the commission of the offence.

7. Where any person is convicted of an offence or of an attempt to commit an offence or of soliciting or inciting the commission of an offence under this Act and the court by which such person is convicted finds that any vehicle, vessel or other means of conveyance was used or employed by such person in or in furtherance of the commission of the crime of which he is convicted, such vehicle, vessel or other means of conveyance shall be forfeited,

Provided that no order for the forfeiture of any vehicle, vessel or other means of conveyance shall be made under this section, if the owner of such vehicle, vessel or other means of conveyance satisfies the court that neither he nor his servant or agent was aware that such vehicle, vessel or other means of conveyance was being so used or employed or if he or his servants or agent was so aware, that all reasonable steps were taken to prevent it being so used or employed.

Appeal to Supreme Court.

8. The owner of any such vehicle, vessel or other means of conveyance in respect of which an order of forfeiture has been made under section 5 of this Act, shall have all the rights of appeal of an accused person under Part VIII of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act, Cap. 91.

Award of compensation.

9. Where a person is convicted of an offence under this Act the court shall in addition to any other order made under the provisions of this Act order the payment by way of compensation to the owner of the cattle stolen of such sum as the court may determine is equal to the value of the cattle stolen notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any other enactment as to the amount of compensation payable.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, the sum ordered by the court as compensation shall be recovered by the court as a fine imposed by that court and paid to the owner of the stolen cattle.

Compensation.

11. The provisions of sections 145 to 151 of the Criminal Code, Cap. 101, shall apply *mutatis mutandis* as regards the interpretation and operation of this Act.

Reference to Criminal Code, Cap. 101.

SCHEDULE**THEFT OF CATTLE ACT**
Places to Search with a Warrant
[Section 6]

- 1.** Farm
- 2.** Storeroom
- 3.** Storage
- 4.** Slaughter-house
- 5.** Meat shop
- 6.** Restaurant