



<b>AQIS MEAT NOTICE</b>		<b>RESIDUE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM</b>			
<b>NUMBER: 2006 / 06</b>					
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OIC Inspection Staff, Meat Establishments		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> States			
<b>IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE</b> (to be completed by the On Plant Supervisor on the AQIS file copy)					
Date Received: _____ Date Discussed With Management: _____					
Initial Implementation Date: _____ Date Completed: _____					
Initials: _____					

## 1. PURPOSE

To provide guidance for establishments slaughtering livestock for export on procedures to ensure that animals are sourced from holdings where the management of pesticides and veterinary chemicals ensures that the wholesomeness of meat and meat products derived from the animals is not jeopardised.

## 2. SCOPE

This notice applies to all establishments slaughtering livestock for export.

The guidance in this Notice is not exhaustive or prescriptive. It does not cover all aspects of residue control and management, nor all processors obligations. Moreover, processors may, if they choose, adopt other ways of complying with their obligations.

## 3. BACKGROUND

The *Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transport of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption* (AS4696:2002) (**Standard**) covers cattle (including calves), buffalo, sheep, lamb, goats, pigs, horses and deer, and includes compliance with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code with respect to chemical residues.

The Standard, Part 3 clause 6, seeks to achieve, among other things, the outcome that animals admitted for slaughter for meat and meat products for human consumption

“are sourced from holdings where the management of animals ensures that the wholesomeness of meat and meat products derived from the animals is not jeopardised”.

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This is achieved by standards that require animals for slaughter to be sourced from holdings with good animal husbandry practices, and that regulate the admission of animals that may present a risk of chemical residues in excess of established limits.<sup>1</sup> Abattoirs' Approved Arrangements will include procedures for assessing the residue status of animals admitted for slaughter.

Compliance with the Standard is mandatory for processors.<sup>2</sup>

### **4. DISCUSSION**

#### ***4.1 – Recent initiatives***

A major initiative for management of residue risks has been the establishment of export slaughter intervals for veterinary medicines and, more recently, export slaughter and grazing intervals for agricultural pesticides. These are now established as a matter of routine by the regulator, the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Management Authority. For cattle and sheep, the National Vendor Declaration (**NVD**), underpinned by Livestock Production Assurance (**LPA**) or a similar appropriate QA program (eg Dairy QA), is a tool by which residue status of livestock is communicated whether the exposure is from direct treatments (veterinary medicines) or through animal feed (agricultural pesticides and environmental contaminants). Quality assurance programs exist for other livestock industries, such as the Australian Pork Industry Quality Program (**APIQ**).

#### ***4.2 – An example: organochlorine residue management***

Organochlorine (**OC**) residues in cattle are an example of a residue risk that requires management. LPA for example, requires that all participating producers proactively assess whether there are persistent chemical risk areas on their properties and take action to minimise the exposure of livestock to potentially contaminated areas. In addition, from 1 January 2006 cattle producer and industry management of persistent OC residues will be integrated into LPA with known OC contaminated properties being periodically audited by LPA auditors. Consequently, cattle sourced from LPA accredited holdings, or from holdings with suitable accreditation with a recognised industry QA program that specifically addresses residue risks (eg Dairy QA programs), will represent a class of animals of reduced residue risk.

### **5. GUIDANCE**

#### ***5.1 – General***

It is the processors' responsibility to ensure that they comply with the Standard and the *Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Orders 2005 (Cth)*.

However, the following paragraphs set out AQIS' expectations of processors' approaches to dealing with residue hazards and some guidance on how this can be done.

#### ***5.2 – HACCP Plan***

AQIS will generally expect that processors' HACCP Plans will specifically address the identification and treatment of residue risks. In particular, AQIS will generally expect that processors' HACCP Plans will set out:

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<sup>1</sup> For example, clause 6.8.

<sup>2</sup> *Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Orders 2005 (Cth)*: see order 32.

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- (a) How processors identify the level and significance of residues in animals to be admitted to the establishment; and
- (b) How processors satisfy themselves that holdings from which their animals are sourced comply with the specific requirements of the Standard.

#### ***5.3 – Specific measures***

##### ***What processors should satisfy themselves of:***

In addition to implementing processors' HACCP Plans, AQIS will generally expect processors to take the following steps:

- (a) Processors should satisfy themselves that the withholding periods (WHPs) and relevant Export Slaughter Intervals (ESIs) for any veterinary drugs or chemicals used to treat livestock have been met.
- (b) If it is known that livestock have been exposed to animal feeds containing residues of agricultural pesticides or environmental contaminants of concern (such as DDT, dieldrin or heptachlor epoxide), processors should satisfy themselves that the relevant WHPs and ESIs have been met and that the holding from which the animals have been sourced have complied with the relevant property residue management plans.
- (c) Processors should satisfy themselves that the holdings from which livestock have been sourced have and apply effective systems for managing identified residue risks.
- (d) As part of determining the risk status of incoming animals and, in the case of cattle, whether testing is required, processors should make inquiries of the MLA NLIS database. In the case of cattle, processors can use the NLIS device or tail tag to make these inquiries.

#### ***5.4 – Using Approved QA Programs (eg. LPA) and NVDs***

##### ***For cattle, goats and sheep:***

In the case of cattle, goats and sheep, AQIS will generally accept that it is reasonable for a processor to satisfy itself of the matters mentioned above under specific measures in paragraphs (a) and (b) by ensuring that:

- (a) The holding from which the animals are sourced is accredited under the LPA or other relevant QA programs (eg. Dairy QA programs); and
- (b) The NVD provided by the vendor is complete and valid.

This is not intended to restrict the ways in which processors can carry out these steps, or meet their legal obligations. However, the onus would be on processors to demonstrate that other methods and procedures were equivalent.

##### ***For cattle:***

In the case of cattle, AQIS considers that following changes to the NORM program, a processor can satisfy itself of the matters mentioned above under specific measures in paragraph 5.3 (c) by ensuring that the holding from which the animals are sourced is accredited under the LPA or an equivalent on-farm QA program that addresses organochlorine risks (eg. Dairy QA programs).

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If the holding is not so accredited under a relevant QA program, processors will have to assess the OC risk status of incoming animals by testing sentinel animals from each lot. If a residue test returns results  $\geq \frac{1}{2}$  MRL, the processor will either have to:

- (a) Test all the companion animals for OC residues and making disposition decisions based on the test results; or
- (b) Give the vendor the option of returning the cattle to their property of origin or some other nominated property approved by relevant State or Territory authorities.

Bobby calves are a special class of cattle and are considered of low risk for organochlorine residues.

#### ***For pigs:***

In the case of pigs, AQIS will generally accept that it is reasonable for a processor to satisfy itself of the matters mentioned above under specific measures in paragraphs 5.3 (a), (b) and (c) by ensuring that:

- (a) The holding from which the animals are sourced is accredited under the APIQ; and
- (b) A complete, valid declaration under the APIQ is provided by the vendor.

This is not intended to restrict the ways in which processors can carry out these steps, or meet their legal obligations. However, the onus would be on processors to demonstrate that other methods and procedures were equivalent.

## **6. *AQIS Responsibilities***

As part of its compliance role, AQIS will:

- (a) Assess whether processors' Approved Arrangements and HACCP Plans adequately address the management of potential pesticide and chemical residues in livestock; and
- (b) Confirm that processors comply with their Approved Arrangements in accordance with the National Plant Management System.

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#### ***References:***

AQIS Notices Meat 2004/13, 1999/05, 1996/36, 1996/20  
*Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Orders 2005 (Cth)*  
*Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transport of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (AS4696:2002)*