

Supporting document 3

Current Regulatory Requirements for Meat Safety

Proposal P1014

Primary Production & Processing Standard for Minor Meat Species & Wild Game

Executive summary

There are no requirements in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code) applying to the on-farm production of meat animals. The current Production and Processing Standard for Meat in Chapter 4 (Standard 4.2.3) includes requirements for production of ready-to-eat meat only and does not include primary production requirements.

All states and territories have separate legislation requiring businesses operating abattoirs/meat slaughtering facilities to be licensed or accredited and to operate in accordance with approved systems to manage meat safety and suitability. The legislation requires the businesses to comply with specific Australian Standards.

The export of meat is regulated by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry under the *Export Control Act 1992* and specific Export Control Orders.

1. Australian Standards

Table 1 summarises the main Australian Standards that currently relate to meat for human consumption in Australia.

Table 1: Scope of Australian Standards

Australian Standard Number	Complete Name/Title	Date	Scope (Commodities and supply chain coverage)
AS4464	<i>Hygienic production of wild game meat for human consumption</i>	2007	<p>This Standard sets out the outcomes required for the production for human consumption of products derived from wild game animals. It contains the minimum requirements of hygiene in harvesting and processing to assure a safe and wholesome product. Provision is made for small animals such as hare and wild game birds presented whole.</p> <p>The Standard does not apply to production of products from animals or birds unable to roam free, herded or kept under supervision. It does not apply to birds presented for sale eviscerated and without feathers. This Standard does not apply to the packaging, storage, transportation and further processing of wild game meat. Such activities are to be carried out in the same manner as stipulated for meat in</p>

Australian Standard Number	Complete Name/Title	Date	Scope (Commodities and supply chain coverage)
			<p>AS4696:2007.</p> <p>Additionally, further processing must comply with the <i>Food Standards Code</i>. These stages of production must also be covered in the wild game business's approved arrangement (see clause 3.1). Wild game animals shall be processed in accordance with an approved HACCP-based program that consistently demonstrates equivalence with this Standard.</p>
AS4466	<i>Hygienic production of rabbit meat for human consumption</i>	1997	<p>This Standard applies to production and hygiene quality control of meat from Rabbits processed for human consumption at all registered establishments in Australia. The overall goal of the standard is that there is no more than a 1-log (10-fold increase) in the count of total viable bacteria on the surface of the meat from the time of dressing until the product is packaged for sale or used as an ingredient for further processing.</p> <p>Alternate techniques or procedures to those detailed in the standard may be used by operators providing compliance with the overall goal can be verified through the use of HACCP-based programs. The standard shall be applied at all rabbit establishments, whether operating under a full-time meat inspection program (incorporating HACCP principles), or a HACCP-based quality assurance arrangement approved and monitored by the controlling authority.</p> <p>Hygiene procedures in boning rooms and other further processing plants producing chilled or frozen fresh meat are covered in the Australian Standard for <i>Production of Meat for Human Consumption</i>. State and Territory authorities shall enforce compliance with the Standard.</p>
AS4467	<i>Hygienic Production of Crocodile Meat for Human Consumption</i>	1998	<p>This Standard applies to the construction and equipment and procedures of all premises where crocodiles are slaughtered and processed for the production of crocodile meat for human consumption. It contains the minimum construction and procedural requirements for premises used for the production of wholesome crocodile meat. Authorities with regulatory responsibilities for the processing of crocodiles for human consumption shall enforce compliance with this Standard. The overall goal of the standard is that there be no more than a log (10-fold) increase in the load of indicator bacterial pathogens on the surface of meat from the time of dressing until the product is packaged for sale or used as an ingredient for further processing.</p> <p>Alternate techniques or procedures to those detailed in the standard may be used by operators providing compliance where the overall goal can be verified through the use of HACCP based programs.</p> <p>The Standard shall be applied at all crocodile processing establishments, whether operating under a full-time meat inspection program (incorporating HACCP principles), or a HACCP-based quality assurance arrangement approved and monitored by the controlling authority.</p> <p>The Standard does not address controls over the commercial exploitation of crocodiles under the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and under legislation covering wildlife management and conservation. However, the Standard does require that all structures and procedures conform to the legal requirements of authorities responsible for regulating the possession and trade of wildlife and wildlife products. Operators of premises to which this Standard refers should be licensed by a State wildlife management</p>

Australian Standard Number	Complete Name/Title	Date	Scope (Commodities and supply chain coverage)
			<p>authority and/or meat industry authority to farm and process crocodiles for the production of crocodile meat for human consumption.</p> <p>In addition to the requirements outlined in this Standard, the Food Standards Code and associated state/territory food hygiene regulations must be taken into account when applying this Standard. If offals are to be recovered for human consumption, Meat Standards Committee is to make application to Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) with appropriate supporting evidence that there is no risk to public health and safety from eating crocodile offal.</p>
AS4696	<i>Hygienic production and transportation of meat and meat products for human consumption</i>	2007	<p>This Standard sets out the outcomes required for the receipt and slaughter of animals, the dressing of carcasses, and the processing (including further processing), packaging, handling and storage of meat or meat products. It also details rules for the construction of premises and transportation of meat and meat products. The Standard applies to retailers who store or prepare meat and meat products and to the transportation of meat and meat products from the retailer to the consumer.</p> <p>However, the question of when meat and meat products cease to fall within this Standard and are to be covered under food laws applying to retailers is left to be dealt with under Commonwealth, state and territory laws governing the adoption of this Standard. This Standard is in addition to other requirements under Commonwealth, state and territory legislation and the standards and codes that also apply to the production of meat and meat products.</p>
AS5008	<i>Hygienic rendering of animal products – second edition</i>	2007	<p>This standard applies to all rendering premises operating in Australia and to all products of rendering operations including, but not restricted to: meat meal, meat and bone meal, bone meal, poultry meal, poultry by-product meal, feather meal, fish meal, blood meal, tallow, poultry oil, fish oil. Minimum requirements for construction and equipment and rendering operations are prescribed in this Standard. Rendered products intended for human consumption must also comply with the ANZFSC.</p>
AS5010	<i>Hygienic production of ratite (emu/ostrich) meat for human consumption</i>	2001	<p>This Standard applies to the construction and equipment of all processing premises where ratites are slaughtered for the production of ratite meat for human consumption. It contains the <i>minimum</i> construction, and hygienic production requirements for premises used for the production of wholesome ratite meat.</p> <p>The overall goal of the standard is that there be no more than a one-log (10-fold) increase in the load of bacterial pathogens on the surface of the meat from the time of dressing until the product is packaged for sale or used as an ingredient for further processing. This Standard is not intended to be applicable to meat retail premises.</p>
AS5011	<i>Hygienic production of natural casings for human consumption</i>		<p>This Australian Standard contains the minimum requirements for preparing and processing natural casings derived from the intestines of sheep, pigs, goats and cattle.</p>

2. The Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code

The Standards in Chapter 1 – General Food Standards include labelling requirements, the maximum permitted levels for additives, processing aids, contaminants and natural toxicants,

maximum residue levels for agricultural and veterinary chemicals in food, requirements for materials in contact with food, processing requirements and microbiological limits for food. Chapter 2 – Food Product Standards, contains requirements for specified classes of foods and includes Standard 2.2.1 Meat and Meat Products. Although the meat produced as a result of the slaughtering of animals must meet the above requirements, there are no requirements in Chapter 1 or Chapter 2 that apply to the slaughter, dressing and secondary activities such as boning or production of primary products (such as natural casings and rendered products).

Standards 3.2.2 – Food Safety Practices and General Requirements and 3.2.3 – Food Premises and Equipment set out specific requirements for food businesses, food handlers and the food premises and equipment with which they operate to ensure the safe production of food. The Chapter 3 Food Safety Standards apply in Australia only and apply to all food businesses, other than primary production businesses¹, involved in the handling of food intended for sale. Under the application provisions in Chapter 3, these standards would apply to meat processing.

Standard 3.2.2 requires food to be protected from contamination, to be stored under appropriate temperatures and other environmental conditions (to ensure safety and suitability), to use safe ingredients and to be processed so that the food is safe to eat. There are also requirements for health and hygiene of personnel and for cleaning and sanitation. Standard 3.2.3 has requirements for premises and equipment that facilitates compliance with Standard 3.2.2².

3. Export Control Orders

The export of meat is regulated by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry under the *Export Control Act 1992*, Export Control (Prescribed Goods - General) Order 2005 and the Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Order 2005. Meat from animals processed for the export market is sold domestically. Therefore the requirements applicable to processing of export meat are relevant to this Proposal. The Export Meat Orders referred to above reference the Australian Standard for the *Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption AS 4696-2007* as the basis for operational controls for the export meat industry.

The *Export Control (Wild Game Meat and Wild Game Meat Products) Orders 2010* incorporate, by way of reference, the Australian Standard for the *Hygienic Production of Wild Game Meat for Human Consumption (AS4464:2007)*. This standard provides the basis for operational controls for food safety and wholesomeness in the game meat industry, whether for export or domestic production. The Wild Game Orders also incorporate, by way of reference, the further processing sections of the Australian Standard for the *Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (AS 4696:2007)* as once the unique issues related to harvesting and initial processing have been addressed, the food safety controls become the same as for red meat.

The *Export Control (Rabbit and Ratite Meat) Orders 1985* apply to rabbit meat and products and ratite meat and products and reference the respective Australian Standards.

¹ Primary food production means the growing, cultivation, picking, harvesting, collection or catching of food and includes transportation or delivery, and the packing, treating (such as washing) or storing of food on the premises on which it was grown, cultivated, picked etc.

² The Food Safety Standards are available on the FSANZ website at <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodstandards/foodstandardscode.cfm>