Australian Government
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Importation of stockfeed of plant origin into Australia

Information for applicants and manufacturers

The importation of stockfeed into Australia has the potential to introduce human, animal and plant pests and diseases of significant biosecurity concern.

Stockfeed represents a high animal biosecurity risk due to its direct pathway to livestock. Fortunately Australia is free from many significant infectious animal diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE –"mad cow disease") however contaminated stockfeed could introduce these or other diseases into Australia.

Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE) such as BSE in cattle or scrapie in sheep and goats are diseases that are caused by infectious misfolded proteins called prions. TSE infections lead to a spongy degeneration of the brain. BSE can also be transmitted to humans.

The widespread BSE outbreak in cattle in the United Kingdom starting in the mid-late 1980's was due, in large part, to the feeding of meat and bone meal (MBM) to cattle. Even small amounts of cross contamination with infected animal material could lead to cases of BSE.

Concerns over TSEs generally, and BSE in particular, have led to a range of measures designed to manage the risk of cases occurring in Australian livestock. These measures include the ban on feeding Restricted Animal Material (RAM) to ruminants.

Restricted Animal Material (RAM) is defined as any material taken from a vertebrate animal, other than tallow, gelatine, milk products or oils. Australia's approach to preventing the entry of the TSEs and other disease causing organisms via plant-derived products includes strict controls on plant-derived stockfeed materials to ensure that they do not contain materials derived from animals. Samples from stockfeed shipments are tested for the presence of RAM.

Grains and other crops can also be contaminated with weed seeds, insects, fungi, parasites, bacteria and viruses of biosecurity concern. For example, stockfeed produced from root crops can be contaminated with FMD, anthrax, Newcastle disease, infectious bursal disease, classical swine fever to name just a few. The use of manure as fertiliser significantly increases the biosecurity risk.

Stockfeed produced from standing crops can also be contaminated with manure, other animal excretions, soil, and water-borne disease causing organisms. The use of animal manure or effluent on pastures or where livestock (e.g. buffalos) are closely associated with crop production are therefore of particular animal biosecurity concern.

In general, raw materials grown, harvested, dried and stored on small household farms, using basic mechanical equipment or facilities are likely to be exposed to livestock, their faeces and other excretions. Therefore these pose a much greater risk of being contaminated with animal disease causing organisms than products sourced from broad acre production using modern mechanical harvesting, drying and processing equipment.

The type of production or processing establishment has a strong bearing on the risk of contamination with animal-derived materials and pathogens.

Establishments where a range of stockfeeds is produced or stored are more likely to provide opportunities for contamination with animal-derived materials and disease causing organisms. Pathways of contamination could include incorrect identification of lots, contamination from transport or production lines previously used for feeds which incorporate animal derived material, contamination from material left in storage areas, or inadequate cleaning of lines and equipment.

There may be potential for contamination during packaging if the same equipment or storage area is also used for animal derived material. Also, contamination could occur if bags are reused that have previously been used for animal derived material. Stockfeed or stockfeed ingredients that are enclosed in sealed packages such as new plastic bags, drums or glass containers are less likely to be contaminated unless the packages are broken. Appropriate packaging at the point of production is an effective means of preventing subsequent contamination.

Transport from the point of production to the point of export also provides opportunities for contamination. If the product is packed in bulk and the transport vehicles/containers are not clean, there is a risk of contamination because such vehicles/containers may have been previously used for products containing animal-derived materials.

Another point at which contamination might occur is at storage depots, which may be used before loading for export. Where the security of containers is inadequate, there may be opportunities for cross-contamination of product, or errors in the identification of lots.

Shipping containers and ships' holds that are used for transport to Australia may also present opportunities for contamination with animal-derived materials and disease causing organisms. Product that is bulk packed into a container or into the hold of a ship could be contaminated by residues of stockfeeds or animal-derived materials left over from previous trips.

A detailed assessment of a product’s sourcing, production, processing (including all heating and/or chemical treatments), storage and transport is necessary before an import permit can be granted. Rigorous thermal processing (heating) is usually the best method to inactivate disease causing organisms of biosecurity concerns. For most products, a detailed description of all relevant processing will be required for the biosecurity assessment.

Specific and complete details on drying and other heating methods are essential for the assessment. Typical information includes the equipment used, inlet and outlet core product temperatures, intake and output air temperatures for air dryers, drum surface temperature for drum dryers, exposure duration/retention time of each heat treatment, and product moisture levels for each heat treatment step.

Individual on-site verification audits may need to be undertaken to confirm the thermal processes, other production and processing cross contamination controls and that biosecurity concerns are adequately addressed.

The following questionnaire provides further guidance on the information required for assessment. Product and processes which do not adequately address biosecurity concerns will be refused. Applications which fail to provide sufficient information for the biosecurity assessment may also be refused.

PRODUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE FOLLOWING IMPORTED PRODUCTS:

1. **Animal feed (stockfeed, stockfeed ingredients, additives, pet food, fish food and aquarium, hatchery or aquaculture feed)**
2. **Plant-derived fertilisers**

- This questionnaire must be completed by the **manufacturer** of the product intended for export to Australia.
- This questionnaire must be submitted with the application for a permit to import animal feed or plant-based fertilisers into Australia.
- The information collected will be used to determine import conditions for these products.
- Product and processes which do not adequately address biosecurity concerns will be rejected.
- To facilitate the timely assessment of each import application, applicants should endeavour to provide as much of the information to the questions below as possible. Further information may be requested if considered necessary for the biosecurity risk assessment.
- Applications which fail to provide sufficient information for the biosecurity assessment may also be rejected.
- Please use additional paper, if insufficient space.

1. Previous Import Permit reference number (if applicable)**:**	**IP**
2. This applications Import Permit reference number (if known)**:**	

3. Where is the product manufactured? (Please provide name and address of the facility)				
Name				
Address				
	City:	Country:		
	Phone:	Fax:		
4. Exporter's details				
Name				
Address				
	City:	Country:		
	Phone:	Fax:		
5. Importer's details				
Name				
Address				
	City:	Country: Australia		
	Phone:	Fax:		
6. Has there been any change of ownership or management of the manufacturing facility in the past 12 months? (If yes, please provide details below)			☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Name				

City:	Country:

7. Name of product(s) to be imported (Please list all products below or attach a list)

1.		4.	
2.		5.	
3.		6.	

8. List all ingredients in each product and country of origin for each ingredient (Please list all raw ingredients below or attach a list – please include percentages adding up to 100%))

Ingredient	Composition in product %	Origin (Animal, plant, microbial, synthetic or chemical)	Country where grown/raised/mined (please note: the EU is not a country)	Scientific name (Genus and species for plant and microbial ingredients, species for animal ingredients)

9. Are any of the ingredients derived from fermentation? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes:

a) **Provide the names of all microbes used in manufacture of the ingredient (Genus and species):**

b) **List all ingredients used in the culture media used to propagate the microbe(s). Alternatively attach a list of culture media ingredients. (Please note: Percentages must add up to 100%)**

Culture media ingredient	**Composition in product (%)**	**Origin** i.e. Animal, plant, microbial, synthetic or chemical	**Country(*) and species of origin** Required for animal derived material only. The country in which the animals resided at the time of collection. Please note: the EU is not a country.

*** For animal derived ingredients this is the country where the animals were born, raised and slaughtered.**

c) **Provide details of the sterilisation of the culture media including times and temperatures (e.g. autoclave sterilisation at 121°C for 20 minutes)**

d) **Provide details of the method of harvest, extraction and/or purification for ingredients derived from fermentation**

10. What is the end use (as defined) and intended target species (for animal feed) or crops (for fertiliser)

11.

a. Is the product coming into Australia for further processing? ☐ **Yes (provide details below)** ☐ **No**

Provide details of the processing site in Australia and the flow chart of processing details (including temperatures and durations):

b. Will the product be heat- and/or pressure-treated in Australia?	☐ Yes (provide details below)	☐ No
During which step of processing does this occur?		

Minimum Temperature (°Celsius)		Duration held at Minimum Temperature (minutes or hours)	
Minimum pressure (bars or kilopascals)		Duration held at Minimum Pressure (seconds or minutes)	

12. Product Manufacturing Process (pre export)

a. Describe the manufacturing process for the product intended for export to Australia➔

Attach a flow chart detailing processing of raw material into finished product.
Attach full details of all heat, pressure and/or chemical treatments used during processing and show precisely where and when they occur on the flow chart.

b. Will the product be heat- and/or pressure-treated?	☐ Yes (provide details below)	☐ No

During which step of processing does this occur?			
Minimum Temperature (°Celsius)		Duration held at Minimum Temperature (minutes or hours)	
Minimum pressure (bars or kilopascals)		Duration held at Minimum Pressure (seconds or minutes)	

For heat treatments – the following information will assist in the assessment of each heating process:
i) details of equipment used and type of heat applied (moist dry etc)
ii) type and location of temperature guages (e.g. inlet, outlet, air or product measurment)
iii) product minimum core teperature on entry and on exit for each heating process
iv) minimum product core temperatures and exposure duration/retention time for each step heating is applied
v) water content of product at the beginning and at the end of each heating step (if known)vi) if relevant, the pressure (in bars or kilopascals) to the product and duration during any heating step.
vii) Details of any grinding or chopping INCLUDING the maximum particle size in mm or the meshscreen size the product will pass.

For chemical treatments –the following information will assist in the assessment of relevant chemical treatments:
i) describe, including purpose, the relevant step where the chemical treatment is applied
ii) the chemical used, concentration of the chemical in the product following its addition and duration/exposure time of the treatment
iii) for acid or alkali treatments, the pH of the product during treatment and duration the product is held at this pH
iv) procedure used to remove or neutralise the chemical following treatment, if applicable.

Applications cannot be processed if sufficient relevant details cannot be provided.

13. Water use during production and cleaning

a. Is water used during production and cleaning from a potable (safe to drink) source? If No, provide details.

☐ Yes	☐ No (provide details below on the source and quality of the water, details of its use and any microbial/safety testing undertaken)

14. What other products does the facility produce? (Please list all products below or attach a separate sheet)

1.		4.	
2.		5.	
3.		6.	

15. List all raw ingredients for all products manufactured or stored at this facility and the country of origin for each product

(Please list all products below or attach a separate sheet)

1.		6.	
2.		7.	
3.		8.	
4.		9.	
5.		10.	

16. Does the manufacturing facility store or use any products of animal origin (including marine animals and dairy)?
For fish/crustacean based products: Does the manufacturing facility store or use any products of terrestrial animal origin (including avian, mammalian and dairy)?
(If yes, please provide details below)

☐ Yes ☐ No

17. If materials of animal origin as listed above in 16 are stored or used on site, how are they segregated (kept separate from) other materials?

18. If animal derived products are stored or used on site, are they processed on the same production line as those used for manufacture of product for Australia?

Details should include: which animal derived products are processed on the same lines, and any cleaning or flush procedures for the processing lines that are in place to manage the risk of contamination.

Ingredient or Product	Country where grown/raised/mined	Species of origin

19. **How are the raw materials transported to the manufacturing facility? (Please provide details below, including how the ingredients are protected from contamination)**

20. **How is the finished product transported from the point of production to the point of export? (Please provide details below, including how the ingredients are protected from contamination)**

21. **Has the product been transferred in bulk from the production facility and packed into bags/containers at another facility?** (If finished product is packaged at another facility, please complete a separate questionnaire for that facility)	☐ Yes	☐ No
22. **Is a system in place to protect the product, during and post-production, from contamination with extraneous materials, including soil, faeces, feathers, insects, viable seeds or bark? (If yes, please describe the system below)**	☐ Yes	☐ No

23. **Quality Assurance and Compliance certification** ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. **Does the manufacturing facility have a certificate of Good Manufacturing Procedure (GMP) compliance and/or certificates of other Quality Assurance programs (e.g. ISO, HACCP)? (If yes, please attach photocopies of approval)**

1.		6.	
2.		7.	
3.		8.	
4.		9.	
5.		10.	

24. **Is the facility inspected and approved by the relevant national or regional government veterinary service or department of animal health or department of agriculture? (If yes, please attach photocopies of approval)** ☐ Yes ☐ No

25.	**Is the facility inspected and approved by an international, independent auditing company? (If yes, please attach photocopies of approval)**		☐ Yes	☐ No
26.	**Has this facility previously had an on-site audit performed by staff from the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources? If yes, when was the facility last audited?**		☐ Yes	☐ No
27.	**In what way is the product packaged?**			
a.	Packaged in new packaging?		☐ Yes	☐ No
b.	How is the product packaged?			
	i.	Packaged in new bags, drums or other retail/ bulk packaging?	☐ Yes (please specify) ..... kg or litres	☐ No
	ii.	Bulk packed into shipping containers at the production facility?	☐ Yes	☐ No
	iii.	Bulk packed into shipping containers elsewhere (not at the production facility)	☐ Yes	☐ No
	iv.	Bulk packed directly into the ship's hold	☐ Yes	☐ No
	v.	Other (please specify):		
28.	**Is the product ever stored at any location other than at the manufacturing facility and the wharf at the point of export? If yes, please provide details below including:** a. What products are stored at this location b. How is the product: i. Kept secure? ii. Protected from Pests / Substitution/ Contamination? **iii.** Stored? (E.g. on pallets? Shrink wrapping? As received from manufacturer?)		☐ Yes	☐ No
29.	**Attach a sample copy of the product label or tag (if applicable).**			

Manufacturer's declaration

I declare that the information above is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____ **Printed name:** _____

Position: _____

Company name: _____

Country: _____

Date: ____/____/_____

For notification of any changes in above details, please contact:

Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Biosecurity Plant Import Operations Program

Telephone: 1800 900 090 (or + 61 3 8318 6700 - from outside Australia)
Email: imports@agriculture.gov.au

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