



Department of
**AGRICULTURE
FISHERIES &
FORESTRY -
AUSTRALIA**



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ANIMAL BIOSECURITY POLICY MEMORANDUM 2002/49

PROPOSED REMOVAL OF 30-DAY POST-SLAUGHTER REQUIREMENT FOR MEAT IMPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (USA), CANADA AND MEXICO

This Animal Biosecurity Policy Memorandum (ABPM) seeks comment on the proposed removal of the requirement for meat imported from the USA, Canada and Mexico be stored for no less than 30 days after the slaughter of the animals, before release from quarantine in Australia. We would welcome your comments by 3 January 2003.

Quarantine requirements for the importation of meat and meat products from domestic stock (excluding pig and poultry) were revised in May 1999 and amended on 6 April and 13 September 2000. These are generic conditions and apply to imports from all countries except New Zealand, and include a requirement for post arrival quarantine that states:

The meat and meat product shall be stored for no less than 30 days after the slaughter of the animals from which it is derived before release from quarantine.

This requirement was originally introduced to counter the risk of meat being imported and distributed in Australia from a country in which an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease or rinderpest was incubating at the time of export, but only became evident after release in Australia.

The measure causes little restriction to trade as most imported meat is shipped and the 30-day quarantine after slaughter is taken up during preparation and transport. However, it is an impost if the meat is flown to Australia. Some years ago, a request was received from Japan to remove this requirement so that Wagyu meat could be flown into resorts in Queensland. After deliberation and consultation it was decided to grant a dispensation but the trade did not proceed.

The USA has requested removal of the 30-day quarantine period. As the USA, Canada and Mexico are partners in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which allows unrestricted movement of product between the 3 countries, any alteration of import policy has to apply to the 3 countries.

For the following reasons it has been decided to propose the deletion of this restriction from conditions for meat and meat products (except porcine and avian) from the USA, Canada and Mexico:

Electronic communication now allows rapid exchange of animal health information between countries. This was not available when the original policy was formulated in May 1999.



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- . NAFTA countries have competent veterinary authorities, efficient animal health reporting systems and exotic disease outbreak contingency plans.
- . NAFTA countries have a good record of rapidly notifying disease outbreaks.
- . Australia has confidence in animal disease monitoring and surveillance in NAFTA countries and the speed with which they would inform trading partners of any outbreak of exotic disease.

The attached draft conditions have also been amended to include the new revised bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) requirements for beef and beef products not for human consumption. The BSE requirements for beef and beef products for human consumption are available from Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ).

Next Steps

Your comments on the proposed adoption of these revised conditions would be appreciated by 3 January 2003.

Please pass this notice to other interested parties. If those parties wish to be included in future communications on this matter they should get in touch with the contact officer (details below).

Confidentiality

Respondents are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received in response to Animal Biosecurity Policy Memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the Memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the *Privacy Act*.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked 'confidential' and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act*.

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