

AQIS Notice Number <b>MEAT 2002 / 06</b>		<b>Procedures to be followed for the off site freezing of boned meat and offals for export.</b>	
NSFS Ref 17		Contact Officer:	
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Distribution Category	Last Notice this Category	Distribution Category	Last Notice this Category
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Central & Regional Office	2002/05	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Managers, Export Meat Establishments	2002/05
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OIC Inspection Staff Meat Establishments	2002/05		
<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 _____			

### Purpose

To reiterate to abattoir management and AQIS staff the procedures for freezing of boned product, referencing *Export Meat Order* (EMOs) 273.1.b (i) and b (ii).

And offal: EMO258.1 and 258.2

### Scope

This notice applies to all export abattoirs, independent boning rooms and cold stores.

### Background

The EMOs set time/temperature requirements for the freezing of boned product and offals to ensure microbiological growth is minimised. This freezing is usually carried out at the boning establishment but the EMO's do allow product to be transferred off-site for freezing. If this option is taken up the boning establishment must implement a program in which particular attention is paid to ensure the wholesomeness of the transferred product is not placed at risk because of non-compliance with time/temperature requirements.

### Procedures

Management wishing to freeze product, particularly if off-site must ensure that they meet the requirements of EMO 273.1 b (i) and/or (ii) and EMO258.1 and/or 258.2 which states frozen goods must, in the case of:-

Order 273.1 b (i)

Be reduced to a meat temperature of not more than minus 6 degrees C within 48 hours of the time boning was completed and further reduced to a meat temperature of not more than minus 10 degrees C within 80 hours of the time boning was completed; or

#### Order 273.1 b (ii)

In the case of meat boned and packed while at a meat temperature of not more than 7 degrees C and maintained at or below that temperature, be placed under refrigeration for freezing within 24 hours of the time boning was completed and reduced to a meat temperature of minus 10 degrees C within 48 hours of being placed under refrigeration for freezing.

#### Order 258.1

Following handling and treatment in accordance with sub-order 234.3 or 234.4, edible offal, unless handled as specified in order 251 or sub-order 258.2, shall be frozen and shall be -

- (a) placed under refrigeration in the chamber in which freezing is to take place within 2 hours of removal from the carcase during dressing; and
- (b) reduced to a meat temperature of not more than minus 10 degrees C within 48 hours from the time the offal was placed under refrigeration for freezing, or

#### Order 258.2

Edible offal that has been chilled in accordance with order 251 shall not be placed under refrigeration for freezing if –

- (a) in the case of items of vacuum packed offal that have been handled in accordance with sub-order in 251.2, more than 14 days; or
- (b) in all other cases, more than 96 hours have elapsed from the time the edible offal was first placed under refrigeration for chilling.

#### **Freezing of product off-site at independent cold stores**

Establishments that transfer cartoned meat and offal from carcasses to independent cold stores for freezing must have in place procedures that ensure the time/temperature parameters of EMO 273.1 (b) (i) or (b) (ii) 258.1 and 258.2 can be confidently and consistently met.

Before procedures can be approved by the ATM they must be trialed to show the time/temperature parameters can be met under the condition of the program. Product used in the trial will be identified and retained until such time as a decision of the acceptability of the program by the ATM. The trial will require data to be collected using a data logger.

The management of the boning establishment shall provide the AQIS on-plant OIC with a written program outlining how the meat will be handled at all stages up to and including freezing. The responsibility for compliance with the above requirements lies with management of the boning establishment. However the company will need to obtain suitable guarantees from managements of independent cold stores, which are to be attached to the establishment program. It is suggested that the program be based

on the SOP format and clearly outlines how the program will be monitored and verified. The relevant ATM is to approve the program.

### **Integrated or independent boning establishment**

For boning establishments the program shall include:

- the name, address and the establishment number,
- the initial temperature of the product prior to boning. This will determine the time/temperature parameters to be met in the program,
- the method of storage of the boned product prior to transfer to the independent cold store. It should be held under active refrigeration and not be block stacked but held in a way that allows adequate airflow around cartons,
- the arrangement for transport including the latest time the cartoned meat may be transported to allow freezing off-site to occur,
- the temperature at which the truck will be refrigerated,
- the estimated time for the journey,
- the method of stacking cartons in transport vehicle, and
- details of how the program will be monitored.

### **Independent cold stores**

For independent cold stores the program shall include:

- the name, address and the establishment number,
- a clear statement showing that the freezing establishment is aware of the boning establishments program and they are able to fully comply with the nominated time/temperature parameters set by the boning establishment,
- the expected time(s) of arrival of the product at the cold store,
- the maximum time delay allowed for loading into the blast freezer,
- the temperature setting for the blast freezer,
- the system for monitoring product temperatures so that the freezing time/temperature requirements are met,
- the method of supplying information back to the originating establishment on the time/temperature compliance of each load,
- the means of identifying and retaining cartoned meat or offal that have not met requirements of the relevant EMOs
- alternative procedure when the freezing chamber is defective or the product cannot be loaded into the blast freezer on arrival at the cold store, in the nominated timeframe.

To standardise the completion time for boning of each load transferred, the effective boning time for a “lot” is to be taken as midway between the initial carton being filled and the final carton of the “lot”. An example would be for a lot that covers an eight-hour production period the effective boning time would be 4 hours after the start of the days production. The completion time is to be noted on the MTC, along with the boning temperature that the program is based on.

John Dorian

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Meat Program