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Export Meat Operational Guideline

4.1 European Union (EU) carcase evaluation services



Purpose

This document sets out the arrangement between AUS-MEAT and the department to ensure that European Union (EU) carcase evaluation requirements can be met while ensuring continuity of EU carcase evaluation services, and transparency and clarity regarding relevant cost recovery arrangements.

Scope

AUS-MEAT provides EU carcase evaluation services for the export of grain-fed high-quality beef to the EU. The EU carcase evaluation services include the administration, cost recovery, training, management, and administration for EU carcase evaluators (see Attachment 2: [Overview of the European Union carcase evaluation services](#)).

In order to continue meeting EU export requirements in relation to the EU carcase evaluation services, independent contractors performing EU carcase evaluations must both:

- be directly appointed by the department
- be third party authorised officers authorised under the *Export Control Act 2020*.

AUS-MEAT has established training, management and administration functions for independent contractors and will continue to perform these functions. AUS-MEAT will also continue to recover the cost for EU carcase evaluation services from registered establishments.

Legislative basis

Under Section 291 of the *Export Control Act 2020* (the Export Control Act) a person who is not an officer or employee of a Commonwealth or a State or Territory body may apply to the Secretary to be a third party authorised officer.

Under Chapter 5, Part 1, Division 2, Section 5-5 of the Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Rules 2021, an approved arrangement must ensure that all importing country requirements must be met that relate to export operations and the prescribed meat or meat products produced under those export operations.

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Approval process

Application

An AUS-MEAT trained carcase evaluator proposing to undertake EU carcase evaluation services must make an application to be a third party authorised officer by either:

- emailing aao@agriculture.gov.au
- mailing a request to the Governance & Audits Team, Meat Exports Branch, Exports and Veterinary Services Division, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601.

Applications must include:

- a completed [application form](#)
- evidence that the applicant meets all the required criteria
- a digital passport photo.

Assessment

Where applicants have met all the requirements of the application under the Export Control Act, have been determined to have met all the criteria required to provide carcase evaluator inspection services and passed a fit and proper person (FPP) check:

- an instrument of authorisation (IoA) will be issued in accordance with the Export Control Act that stipulates the functions the applicant is authorised to undertake as a third party authorised officer.

If an applicant has not met all the requirements, the department will be in contact to discuss options.

AUS-MEAT responsibilities

AUS-MEAT will continue to provide EU carcase evaluation services to registered establishments, including:

- all administrative functions relating to the provision of the EU carcase evaluation services, including but not limited to, scheduling, invoicing, cost recovery and reporting
- the maintenance of all systems required to provide EU carcase evaluation services in all circumstances
- the identification of appropriately trained and qualified independent contractors to be engaged by the department to perform chiller assessments as part of EU carcase evaluations (this may include individuals previously or concurrently engaged by AUS-MEAT to perform evaluations)
- the provision of all training (initial and ongoing) of independent contractors, including maintenance and implementation of all necessary procedures and work instructions
- ensuring that its officers conducting audit and carcase evaluations in relation to verification of compliance to EU grain-fed high-quality beef (EU GF-HQB) are officers authorised under the Export Control Act
- ensuring that all Work Health and Safety (WHS) training and reporting of incidents, investigation and corrective action comply with WHS law
- conducting audits and evaluations to verify the production of compliant EU GF-HQB that are objective, independent, fair and accurate
- verifying that establishments producing EU GF-HQB effectively document and implement systems in their approved arrangement to ensure compliance to the required standard
- providing suitably qualified and authorised officers to perform chiller assessments of all EU GF-HQB carcasses to verify compliance to carcase specifications

- ensure that EU carcase evaluation services can be provided in all circumstances by ensuring that there is a backup pool of appropriately trained independent contractors to perform EU carcase evaluations subject to items set out in the paragraphs above, as well as subject to the items below.

In regard to independent contractors, AUS-MEAT will:

- identify and provide training to independent contractors to perform EU carcase evaluations
- directly engage the backup pool of independent contractors
- be solely responsible for the remuneration and any liability in relation to the backup pool of independent contractors
- only provide the EU carcase evaluation services using the backup pool of independent contractors where prior departmental approval has been sought and provided
- keep records relating to all EU carcase evaluation services performed by the backup pool of independent contractors, including the number of evaluations performed by each backup EU carcase evaluation
- recover the costs associated with providing EU carcase evaluation services directly from registered establishments in accordance with the agreement between the department and AUS-MEAT
- keep clear and accurate records regarding the recovery of costs associated with providing EU carcase evaluation services.

European Union carcase evaluator responsibilities

EU carcase evaluators will:

- perform EU carcase evaluation services, when required by AUS-MEAT and as authorised by the Secretary of the department as a third party authorised officer for the purposes of section 291 of the Export Control Act
- attend all training (initial and ongoing) required of suppliers as specified by the department and AUS-MEAT, including maintenance and implementation of all necessary procedures and work instructions
- maintain the required qualifications to be considered appropriately trained and qualified to perform EU carcase evaluations
- be medically fit to perform the duties of the role
- submit invoices at a frequency of no more than one invoice per month, with final invoice to be received no later than 14 days after the final services were performed
- comply with all requirements within their contract with the department.

Department responsibilities

The department will:

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that all independent contractors it engages are authorised as third party authorised officers under Section 291 of the Export Control Act
- directly engage independent contractors to perform EU carcase evaluations, where it will recover the costs associated with engaging independent contractors, including ongoing employment costs, from AUS-MEAT
- verify that the occupier of a registered establishment requiring evaluation of EU GF-HQB eligible carcasses has updated their approved arrangement to reflect that AUS-MEAT will provide this service on behalf of the department
- keep clear and accurate records regarding costs arising from the engagement of independent contractors
- maintain a list of registered establishments that produce EU GF-HQB

- monitor all training (induction and ongoing) and reporting of incidents, investigations and corrective action requirements through verification and audit processes.

Standards

To meet quota specifications for EU GF-HQB product, cattle can only be sourced from AUS-MEAT approved and [National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme \(NFAS\)](#) holdings which provide EU-eligible animals that have been fed a diet specified in these arrangements.

The outline of EU carcass evaluation is specified within all of the following sources:

- Section 5-5 'Importing country requirements must be met' of the Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Rules 2021 (Note: guidance is found in the [Manual of Importing Country Requirements \(MCoR\)](#))
- the Australian Beef Carcass Evaluation Language as shown in the [Australian Meat Industry Classification System](#) (also known as the AUS-MEAT Language).

Arrangements for the verification of trade description requirements in relation to EU GF-HQB are addressed in the following documents.

The EU carcass evaluations requirements are covered through:

- Schedule 2 of EU Carcass Evaluator Instrument of Authorisation – Arrangements for the verification of trade description requirements in relation to EU GF-HQB
- Importing country requirements for the European Union available on the [European Union law website](#)
- Quota 09.2201 and 09.2202 in [Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1988](#)
- Quota 09.4451 in [Regulation \(EU\) 2020/761](#).

Insurance

Liability coverage of European Union carcass evaluators for operations

- Under section 430 of the Export Control Act 'Protection from civil proceedings', an EU carcass evaluator is provided with an indemnity in relation to anything done, or omitted to be done, in good faith in the performance of their functions or duties as a third party authorised officer.
- An 'EU carcass evaluator' is a non-government employee but, as a third party authorised officer under Section 291 of the Export Control Act, is legally bound to the department to perform functions in accordance with inspection standards identified in section: [Standards](#) in this guideline.

Related material

The following related material is available on the department's website:

- Webpage: [Export Control Act 2020](#)
- Webpage: [Export Control \(Meat and Meat Products\) Rules 2021](#)
- Webpage: [Manual of Importing Country Requirements](#)
- Webpage: [Application for appointment as an AAO](#)
- Webpage: [Understanding the fit and proper person test](#)
- Webpage: [High-quality beef and grain-fed beef quotas \(EU and UK\)](#)

The following related material is available on the internet:

- Webpage: [AUS-MEAT](#)
- Webpage: [National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme \(NFAS\)](#)
- Webpage: [Australian Meat Industry Classification System](#)
- Webpage: [EUR-Lex Access to European Union law](#)

- Webpage: [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1988 of 11 November 2020 laying down rules for the application of Regulations \(EU\) No 1308/2013 and \(EU\) No 510/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the administration of import tariff quotas in accordance with the ‘first come, first served’ principle](#)
- Webpage: [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/761 of 17 December 2019 laying down rules for the application of Regulations \(EU\) No 1306/2013, \(EU\) No 1308/2013 and \(EU\) No 510/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the management system of tariff quotas with licences](#)

Attachment 1: Definitions

Approved arrangement

An approved arrangement under Chapter 5 of the *Export Control Act 2020*.

An arrangement for a kind of export operations in relation to a kind of prescribed goods approved by the Secretary.

An approved arrangement:

- documents the controls and processes to be followed when undertaking export operations in relation to prescribed goods for export
- enables the Secretary to have oversight of specific export operations.

AUS-MEAT

AUS-MEAT Limited ABN 44 082 528 881 is a company owned by Australian meat and livestock industries. It is primarily responsible for the development, approval, and maintenance of standards for meat trade description. AUS-MEAT is the body responsible for setting trade description standards for meat and meat products derived from bovine, caprine, ovine, and porcine animals for export from Australian territory.

EU carcass evaluation services

Auditing and evaluation services that ensure production of cattle carcasses that are eligible for export to the European Union market.

EU-eligible animals

In this document refers to animals that meet all importing country requirements for the European Union market, and where the meat and meat products of these animals are eligible to be exported to the European Union.

EU grain-fed high-quality beef (EU GF-HQB)

Products sourced from animals that are eligible to be described as grain-fed high-quality beef as required by the European Union:

- Beef cuts obtained from carcasses of heifers and steers less than 30 months of age which have only been fed a diet, for at least the last 100 days before slaughter, containing not less than 62% of concentrates and/or feed grain co-products on a dietary dry matter basis that meet or exceed a metabolisable energy content greater than 12.26 mega joules per one kilogram of dry matter.
- The heifers and steers that are fed the diet described in point 1 shall be fed on average, no less than 1.4% of live body weight per day on a dry matter basis.
- The carcass from which beef cuts are derived are evaluated by an evaluator employed by the national government who bases the evaluation, and a resulting classification of the carcass, on a method approved by the national government. The national government evaluation method, and its classifications, must evaluate expected carcass quality using a combination of carcass maturity and palatability traits of the beef cuts. Such an evaluation method of the carcass shall include, but not be limited to, an evaluation of the maturity characteristics of colour and texture of the longissimus dorsi muscle and bone and cartilage ossification, as well as an evaluation of expected palatability traits, including a combination of the discrete specifications of intramuscular fat and firmness of the longissimus dorsi muscle.
- The cuts shall be labelled in accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L204 11.8.2000, p.1.).
- The indication 'High Quality Beef' may be added to the information on the label.

Fit and proper person test

The Fit and Proper Person (FPP) Test is where the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (or delegate) decides whether a person, or company, is of a trustworthy nature and demonstrates the personal integrity to export agricultural goods from Australia. It is applied when someone is applying for an export licence, registering an export establishment, proposing an export arrangement, or being appointed as an authorised officer, approved assessor or approved auditor.

Instrument of authorisation

The instrument of authorisation (IoA) is a document that authorises the third party authorised officer to perform certain functions and powers as they pertain to their work under the Export Control Act.

Third party authorised officer

A person who is authorised under section 291 to be an authorised officer under the Export Control Act and, who is under the employment of the export-registered establishment or a service provider.

Trade description

A trade description for goods is a description or statement (whether in English or any other language), or a pictorial representation, indication or suggestion (direct or indirect), as to any of the following:

- the nature, number, quantity, quality, purity, class, grade, breed, measure, gauge, size, mass, colour, strength, sex, variety, genus, species, or age of the goods
- the country or place where the goods were made, produced or grown
- the exporter, manufacturer, or producer of the goods
- the person by whom the goods were selected or in any way prepared
- the method, time, or place of manufacturing, producing, selecting or otherwise preparing the goods
- the time before which, or period within which, the goods are to be used
- the batch, lot, or other grouping in which the goods are included
- the material or ingredients of which the goods are composed or from which they are derived
- the goods being the subject of an existing patent or privilege.

Attachment 2: Overview of the European Union carcass evaluation services

The figure below provides an overview of the European Union (EU) carcass evaluation services.

