



Australian Government
Biosecurity Australia

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BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA ADVICE 2010/02
HANDLING OF MARKET ACCESS REQUESTS AND QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS
FOR BEEF AND BEEF PRODUCTS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

This Biosecurity Australia Advice (BAA) informs stakeholders of the standard procedures that Biosecurity Australia will follow in processing market access requests and the implementation of quarantine requirements for beef and beef products for human consumption (with the exclusion of retorted/shelf-stable beef products and casings).

Biosecurity Australia is responsible for developing and reviewing animal quarantine measures for the importation of animals and animal products into Australia. In the case of beef and beef products, there are long established import conditions.

In relation to human health and food safety risks associated with beef and beef products Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) provides risk assessment and country categorisation advice to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS).

Australia's bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) food safety policy for beef and beef products for human consumption will change from 1 March 2010. Under the changes imported beef and beef products for human consumption, from countries that have been affected by BSE, will be subject to meeting specific import conditions.

These countries will need to apply to the BSE Food Safety Assessment Committee, for individual country risk assessment to address human health and food safety issues. This committee will be chaired by FSANZ. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry will work closely with FSANZ during this process and a Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry officer will be on the BSE Food Safety Assessment Committee.

Details of this process are available on the FSANZ website <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/bovinespongiformencephalopathybse/>. The outcome of the FSANZ risk assessment will advise whether the beef and beef products from a country represent a risk to the health of Australian consumers and the import conditions that would need to be imposed by Australia before beef and beef products could be imported from that country.

Separately, Biosecurity Australia will, under its normal procedures for market access requests for the importation of beef and beef products for human consumption (except for retorted/shelf-stable beef products and casings – the retorting process addresses animal diseases of quarantine concern), conduct an analysis in line with the Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2007 (update 2009) to address animal quarantine issues. This analysis will be on a country-by-country basis in response to specific market access requests. It will be conducted outside the regulated IRA process as a non-regulated analysis of existing policy.

Attachment 1 outlines the steps in the process. Countries or importers seeking market access for beef and beef products will need to lodge a market access request with Biosecurity Australia.

The importation of beef and beef products will need to meet animal quarantine requirements, including for FMD and rinderpest. With regard to BSE, measures under the new Australian Government BSE policy to protect human health are sufficient to protect animal health because there is no plausible route by which BSE could be transmitted to Australian cattle via safe imported beef. Australia also enforces bans on feeding animal materials such as beef to cattle.

Further standard requirements will apply to the slaughter and processing of the animals from which the beef is derived, such as veterinary supervised ante- and post-mortem inspections.

Quarantine requirements for the importation of beef and beef products for human consumption (with the exclusion of retorted/shelf-stable beef products and casings) from each country will be published on Biosecurity Australia's website (www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au) normally for a period of 30 days, during which time stakeholder comment will be accepted.

Please pass this notice to other interested parties. If those parties wish to be included in future communications on this matter they should advise the contact officer. Alternatively, if you wish to be removed from the distribution list, please advise the contact officer.

Information on risk analyses and policy reviews being conducted by Biosecurity Australia is available on the Biosecurity Australia website.



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