



Imported Food Notice 02/11

Issued: 29 March 2011

SUBJECT: Imports of beef and beef products End of interim BSE* arrangements 30 June 2011

Purpose

To advise importers and brokers of the implications of the end of interim arrangements under Australia's BSE Food Safety Policy 30 June 2011.

Countries currently exporting beef and beef products to Australia have until 30 June 2011 to apply to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) for assessment under Australia's BSE Food Safety Policy. If a country does not apply to FSANZ, beef and beef ingredients sourced from that country will no longer be considered to be derived from animals free from BSE as required under the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (Standard 2.2.1, clause 11). Consequently, from 1 July 2011, beef and beef products from a country that does not apply to FSANZ will be treated as a failing food, unless the product falls within one of the exemptions in the Standard.

Scope

All beef products and products containing beef as an ingredient (such as beef gelatine) are affected.

Currently permitted countries that must apply to FSANZ for re-assessment

- Argentina
- Brazil
- Chile
- Iceland
- Norway
- Uruguay
- Vanuatu
- Pakistan
- Mexico
- Croatia
- Hungary
- Indonesia
- Lithuania
- Turkey
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Taiwan

Australia's BSE Policy

On 20 October 2009, the Australian Government announced a change in Australia's BSE food safety policy for imported beef and beef products which sets new requirements for countries that wish to export beef and beef products to Australia. The new policy came into effect on 1 March 2010.

The policy required exporting countries to submit an application for assessment to FSANZ by 30 June 2011 or they would lose access to Australia for all beef and beef products originating from that country. The competent authorities in the affected countries have been notified directly of the change in policy and the requirement to provide an application to FSANZ by 30 June 2011 for trade to continue uninterrupted.

To date, New Zealand is the only country to lodge an application with FSANZ for assessment. Unless an application is received from other countries, it will mean that only food containing beef ingredients of Australian or New Zealand origin will be permitted.

This arrangement will become effective 1 July 2011 and will also affect valid AQIS Import Permits from the above listed countries.

* BSE = bovine spongiform encephalopathy

What will happen to imported food containing beef after 1 July 2011?

Under the Imported Food Inspection Scheme, beef and beef products that are from a country not listed by FSANZ and that do not comply with the exemptions under Standard 2.2.1 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code will be considered a FAILING FOOD. AQIS will require this food to be re-exported or destroyed.

If an application for assessment is submitted by a country prior to 30 June 2011, the existing access arrangements will be maintained until the risk assessment is complete.

If an application is received after 30 June 2011, market access will not be restored until the risk assessment is complete and FSANZ determines the Category for the country. No trade will be permitted until a successful assessment is completed.

Until 30 June 2011, imports will be assessed as per the requirements specified in Imported Food Notice IFN04/07 BSE certification.

What if I have an AQIS Import Permit?

When the policy was announced in 2010 AQIS Biologicals Imports Program identified foods that were likely to be affected by the policy. As a precaution, import permits were only issued with expiry dates 30 June 2011. However AQIS are aware that there are some permits issued during 2010 that may still have expiry dates past 30 June 2011. These permits will be reviewed.

Note that even if you hold a valid Import Permit non-compliant food may still be found to fail under the Imported Food Inspection Scheme.

If you need to find out more about the status of your Import Permit you need to contact:

AQIS Biologicals Imports Program

Phone: 02 6272 4578 between 9am -12pm and 2pm - 4pm business days

Email: biologicals@qis.gov.au

What do I do if my imports are likely to be affected after 1 July 2011?

If these changes are relevant to your business we recommend you consider the following:

- Do you have any contracts or orders in place to import food containing beef as an ingredient after 30 June 2011? If so, you should determine whether the food will comply with the country of origin requirements of the new BSE policy.
- If the products will not comply after 1 July 2011, contact your suppliers in the exporting country to inform them that you will no longer be able to import the goods after 30 June 2011, unless the country's competent authority makes an application to FSANZ before 1 July 2011.

Where do I go for more information on the new policy or updates on the status of applications?

The FSANZ website has more information about Australia's BSE requirements, the BSE policy and the BSE risk assessment process:

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/bovinespongiformencephalopathybse/>

The Policy document itself can be found at:

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/bovinespongiformencephalopathybse/bovinespongiformence4751.cfm>

If you have more questions about the BSE Food Safety Policy, Australia's BSE requirements and the risk assessment process the Policy or the risk assessment process, please contact FSANZ:

Dr Scott Crerar

Phone: 02 6271 2222

Email: BSE@foodstandards.gov.au

AQIS will publish a new Imported Food Notice for BSE requirements that reflects the new policy and country status prior to the implementation date.

To keep current with Imported Food Notices it is recommended you subscribe to our notification service:

<https://www.test.edaff.gov.au/Applications/DaffMailer/User/Default.aspx>

Select "AQIS Imported Food Notices"

AQIS Imported Food offices

NSW	(02) 8334 7475	nswimpfood@aqis.gov.au
Queensland and Northern Territory	(07) 3246 8757	qldimpfood@aqis.gov.au
Victoria, Tasmania	(03) 8318 6700	vicimpfood@aqis.gov.au
Western Australia and South Australia	(08) 9334 1532	waimpfood@aqis.gov.au
Canberra	(02) 6272 5488	foodimp@aqis.gov.au

Note: The information in this document covers AQIS imported food requirements only and is current on the date of publication but may change without notice. Importers must satisfy all requirements of the Imported Food Control Act 1992 applicable at the time of entry. The Commonwealth through AQIS is not liable for any costs arising from or associated with decisions to import based on information presented here which is not current at the time of importation. While every effort is taken to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this document, the ultimate determination in respect to food standards that must be complied with are those set down in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code