



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

Notice to Industry

7/2009

Safety of Irradiated Pet (Cat) Foods – Update to Notice 33/2008-09

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) posted a Notice to Industry on 23 December 2008 about the Safety of Imported Pet Foods. The purpose of this notice is to update and advise Industry of additional information related to Notice 33/2008-09:

- Pet food must comply with Australia's import conditions before an import permit is issued by AQIS to an importer.
- Where imported pet food has not undergone moist heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 100°C for at least 30 minutes or equivalent during the manufacturing process, AQIS offers importers the options of subjecting the pet food to moist heat treatment or irradiation, as a condition of import.
- Importers are advised by AQIS to consult with the irradiation provider and inform themselves about the possible effects of irradiation treatment on their particular product prior to electing to undertake such treatment.
- AQIS has become aware of scientific literature (see below) regarding the irradiation of pet (cat) food. This is not an exhaustive list of literature available on the subject.
- Importers should continue to monitor scientific literature on this issue to consider whether it has any relevance to their imported products and to ensure they remain informed and up-to-date.
- Ultimately it is the responsibility of the pet food manufacturers and importers to determine if irradiation treatment could be a risk to pet health.

References:

1. Cassidy JP, Caulfield, Jones BR, Worrall S, Conlon L, Palmer AC, Kelly J. Leukoencephalomyelopathy in Specific Pathogen-free Cats. *Vet Pathol* 2007; 44:912-916
2. Caulfield CD, Cassidy JP, Kelly JP. Effects of gamma irradiation and pasteurization on the nutritive composition of commercially available animal diets *J Am Assoc Lab Animal Sci* 2008; 47(6) 61-66