

AQIS MEAT NOTICE		EUROPEAN UNION (EU) IMPORTING COUNTRY REQUIREMENTS	
NUMBER: 2008 / 03		Palpation requirements for European Union Cattle Accreditation Scheme (EUCAS) cattle slaughtered at EU listed establishments	
NSFS Ref 16, 17			
		Contact Officer:	
		Ron Southgate	
		Product Integrity Manager	
		Export Meat Program	
		02 6272 3101	
		Ron.Southgate@aqis.gov.au	
Date Of Effect	Date of Expiry		
Immediate	9 May 2009		
Distribution Category	Last Notice this Category	Distribution Category	Last Notice this Category
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Central & Regional Office	2000/08	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Managers, Export Slaughtering Establishments	2000/08
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meat Inspection Staff	1997/12		1997/12
IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (to be completed by the On Plant Supervisor on the AQIS file copy)			
Date Received _____		Date Discussed With Management _____	
Initial Implementation Date _____		Date Completed _____	
Establishment Management Initials _____		AQIS OPS Initials _____	

1. PURPOSE

To reconfirm the palpation requirements for European Union Cattle Accreditation Scheme (EUCAS) animals slaughtered at EU listed establishments. This refers to cattle sourced from EUCAS properties travelling on EU Vendor Declarations (EUVDs).

2. SCOPE

This notice applies to all EU listed export beef slaughter establishments. This notice updates the hormonal growth promotant (HGP) marker pellet palpation verification requirements of AQIS Meat Notice 2000/08.

3. BACKGROUND

EUCAS is the national animal production scheme administered by AQIS. The scheme provides full traceability of all scheme cattle through the use of EUVDs and the National Livestock Identification Scheme (NLIS). The NLIS database is used to assist in providing lifetime traceability of individual EU eligible animals and identify EUCAS accredited properties. To maintain EU eligibility, all movements/transactions of EUCAS cattle must be registered on the NLIS database.

The legislative basis for EUCAS is the *Export Control Act 1982* and the requirements of EUCAS are described in Part 4 of Schedule 7 of the *Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Orders 2005*.

With the exception of bobby calves, bovine meat and meat products, exported to the EU must come from animals that have:

- never been treated with Hormonal Growth Promotants (HGPs)¹;
- been sourced from EUCAS properties (farms or feedlots) accredited by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS); and
- be prepared, processed or stored in export registered establishments that have an EU listing.

Any failure to comply with the EUCAS rules or EU requirements will result in the loss of EU eligibility for the cattle and their respective meat and meat products.

Compliance with EUCAS rules and EU processing requirements is auditable by AQIS and visiting EU reviewers.

4. EU MARKET ACCESS REQUIREMENT

4.1 Palpation of EUCAS cattle slaughtered for the EU Market

All EUCAS cattle travelling to an EU listed slaughter establishment on an EUVD must be palpated (or searched by another approved and effective method) for the presence of HGP implant markers. This needs to occur irrespective of the commercial decision as to which market (EU or other) the final product is destined.

Note: To retain EU eligibility status all cattle must be processed according to EU requirements, including palpation requirements. EUCAS cattle not being processed according to EU requirements, including palpation requirements, will lose their EU eligibility status.

4.2 Palpation technique for HGP markers

- Palpation for HGP markers must be active and determined and must focus on both approved implantation sites² and illicit sites, including the caudal tail fold, brisket and inter-digital space.
- Palpation must occur prior to hide removal whilst the RFID is still attached to the carcass.

4.3 Procedures to be followed by AQIS officers on detection of an HGP marker

Refer to Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) No 1.08 – Compliance and Work Instruction (WI) Nos 1.08.05 – Alleged HGP Breach, and 1.08.06 – HGP Breach at an illegal site.

¹ HGPs are veterinary chemical products that contain a substance or mixture of substances responsible for estrogenic, androgenic or gestagenic activity to enhance growth or production in cattle

² **Approved implantation sites** – The only approved implantation site for all brands of implants, except Ralgro, is subcutaneously (between the skin and cartilage) in the middle third of the back of the ear. Ralgro is implanted subcutaneously at the base of the ear. This allows efficient absorption and the ear does not enter the human food chain.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 ESTABLISHMENT MANAGEMENT

- 5.1.1 Review their existing EU importing country requirement section of their Approved Arrangement (AA) to ensure that the HGP implant marker palpation verification requirements and ensuing corrective actions to be taken in the event of an alleged HGP breach being detected are included and are in compliance with the requirements of this meat notice.
- 5.1.2 Perform the HGP marker palpation verification requirements as outlined above as appropriate.

5.2 AQIS ON PLANT SUPERVISOR (OPS)

- 5.2.1 Review any amendments made to the establishment's AA, and where appropriate, recommend amendments to AAs to the ATM for approval.
- 5.2.2 Ensure that the establishment performs its HGP implant marker palpation verification requirements in accordance with this meat notice and their AA (check-the-checker), once per week.
- 5.2.3 Perform Independent Product Process Evaluation (IPPE) activities verifying HGP marker pellet palpation is being conducted by the appropriately trained establishment personnel, once per week.
- 5.2.4 In the event of an alleged HGP breach, follow the requirements of this meat notice.
 - 5.2.4.1 Ensure the integrity of all physical evidence, and keep secure using AQIS Official Marks (Section 13.10 of Part 13 of the EC(PGG)O 2005) (See SOP No 1.08 /WI Nos 1.08.05 &1.08.06).
 - 5.2.4.2 Maintain accurate official records, and keep concise and detailed notes which are taken at the time of the incident.
 - 5.2.4.3 Advise the ATM of the alleged HGP breach and of all actions taken.
 - 5.2.4.4 Report alleged HGP marker detection to EUCAS Coordinator (ph 1800 305 544).

5.3 AQIS AREA TECHNICAL MANAGER (ATM)

- 5.3.1 Review new or amended program/s recommended for approval by the OPS and where compliant, approve the amended program.
- 5.3.2 Verify during audit that HGP implant marker verification activities are being conducted in accordance with the requirements specified in the Company's AA.
- 5.3.3 In the event of an alleged HGP breach:
 - 5.3.3.1 Review the action taken by the AQIS OPS, and provide guidance as required.
 - 5.3.3.2 Advise the AQIS Field Operations Manager (FOM) of any notifications of an alleged HGP breach.

5.3.3.3 Liaise with relevant State/Territory authorities regarding the alleged detection of a HGP in an EUCAS animal.

6.4 AQIS FIELD OPERATIONS MANAGER (FOM)

6.4.1 Advise the AQIS Canberra Office (Manager of the Export Meat Program) of any notifications of an alleged HGP breach.

Carol Sheridan
Manager
Export Meat Program