



**Australian Government**

**Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service**

# Imported Food Program

## Guide for Laboratories Applying for Appointment as an Analyst

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## Purpose

This document is designed to inform prospective analysts about the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS), the Imported Food Inspection Scheme (IFIS) and the testing of imported foods. It also gives some guidance on the Conditions of Appointment and the AQIS electronic system.

## Steps to become an appointed analyst

The steps to become an appointed analyst under the *Imported Food Control Act 1992* are as follows:

### a) Fill in the application form

Laboratories are subject to all conditions outlined in the document 'Conditions of Appointment as an Analyst'. The full document can be viewed on the [AQIS website](#). If your laboratory can meet these conditions then fill out the 'Application to become an Appointed Analyst' and the blank 'Testing Capability Matrix' application. These documents can be downloaded from the website at the above link.

### b) Check your software will be compatible with the AQIS system

- Check with your IT division to see if eResults specifications and software is viable for your organisation. eResults system requirements and specifications documents can be provided on request. If eResults is feasible then complete the application.

### c) Use of sub-contracting services

There is an opportunity for appointed analysts to sub-contract specified testing to other appointed analysts and this must be disclosed to AQIS via the 'Testing Capability Matrix' application. Laboratories cannot sub-contract all testing. The sub-contracted laboratory must also be an appointed analyst and must have the NATA scope of accreditation for the food/analyte combination and ensure that all sub-contracting is in accordance with ISO17025. Appointed analysts must keep AQIS informed of changes to sub-contracting arrangements.

### d) Submit the application

- Scan completed forms and send to [foodimp@daff.gov.au](mailto:foodimp@daff.gov.au). Ensure the form is completed correctly or it will be returned. Once you have been advised by AQIS that your application is acceptable, liaise with the AQIS IT team (email [eResultsAdmin@daff.gov.au](mailto:eResultsAdmin@daff.gov.au)) to initiate eResults testing between AQIS Import Management System (AIMS) and your IT system.
- Notify the AQIS laboratory contact officer when eResults testing is completed and goes live into production. Your application cannot proceed if eResults cannot be implemented.

If you are successful a letter of appointment and a copy of the Schedule and 'Instrument of Appointment' will be forwarded to you to confirm your appointment as an analyst. Testing for the AQIS Imported Food Program can then begin.

The AQIS food importers website will be updated with a new Matrix and Laboratory Nomination Form.

# Important information about the Imported Food Inspection Scheme

## Imported Food Legislation

The [Imported Food Control Act 1992](#) (the Act) authorises AQIS imported food officers to inspect and sample food for testing under the IFIS. The compliance of imported food is regulated at the border through risk-based targeting of food for end point inspection and analysis.

The [Imported Food Control Regulations 1993](#) detail how the imported food inspection arrangements operate, and the [Imported Food Control Order 2001](#) details the food commodities classified by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) as 'risk' with respect to their potential risk to human health and safety.

Section 34 of the Act requires the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) or a delegate to appoint a laboratory as an appointed analyst for the purposes of analysing food samples.

## Food Standards Australia New Zealand

The [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#) (the Code) is a collection of individual food standards developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). The Code has the force of law. It is an offence in Australia and New Zealand to supply food which does not comply with relevant food standards, and a criminal offence in Australia to supply unsafe food.

## Imported Food Inspection Scheme

Inspections of food against Australian requirements are carried out by authorised AQIS imported food officers in conjunction with any applicable quarantine requirements. The principal focus of the AQIS IFIS is on food safety and compliance with the Code. See the AQIS website for more information on the [IFIS](#).

## Imported Food Notices

[Imported Food Notices](#) (IFN's) provide information to AQIS stakeholders. The relevant IFN's for food categories are to be referenced in order to know the specific foods to which tests are applied.

## Laboratory Nomination Form

The importer or agent is required to nominate an appointed analyst prior to booking the IFIS inspection by using the [laboratory nomination form](#). The importer or agent will complete the laboratory nomination form and forward it to their nominated laboratory. The laboratory can accept the nomination by completing the 'Laboratory use only' section of the form and forwarding it to the relevant regional office. An inspection cannot be booked until AQIS receives this form.

## What happens during an imported food inspection?

The AQIS imported food officer will conduct a visual and label inspection. If required, samples may also be taken for analysis and the importer informed of which tests are to be applied, and the samples will then be taken to the collection point by the imported food officer. It is the responsibility of the nominated laboratory to arrange for the courier to collect the samples from the collection point and transport them to the laboratory. The

importer is advised whether the rest of their goods will need to remain on hold, or if they can be released.

## Imported Food Inspection Report

All food inspected under the Act will have an imported food inspection report (IFIR), also known as EX317, completed at the time of inspection by the AQIS imported food officer. The IFIR identifies if foods are to be held or released and is a record of information to identify the food that was sampled, the tests to be applied and other administrative information.

The samples are placed in a tamper evident bag which has a unique bar code. A copy of the bar code will be placed on the IFIR which must accompany the sample bag to the appointed analyst. If the IFIR is not present, is incomplete or illegible or the barcode does not correspond the analyst should contact the relevant [regional AQIS imported food office](#).

Below is an example of the IFIR. The arrow indicates where the AQIS imported food officer will record the "Tests Required" by the analyst.

Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service		Imported Food Inspection Report				Imported Food Control Act 1992		Customs Entry No.			
Importer name & address						Phone No. ( )		Region:			
						Fax No. ( )		Region Phone: ( )			
Inspection Location								Region Fax: ( )			
	Sample ID	Condition	Sample ID	Condition	Sample ID	Condition	Sample ID	Condition			
Indicate if goods held or released*	<input type="checkbox"/> released <input type="checkbox"/> held <input type="checkbox"/> hold tape applied		<input type="checkbox"/> released <input type="checkbox"/> held <input type="checkbox"/> hold tape applied		<input type="checkbox"/> released <input type="checkbox"/> held <input type="checkbox"/> hold tape applied		<input type="checkbox"/> released <input type="checkbox"/> held <input type="checkbox"/> hold tape applied				
Actual inspection category	<input type="checkbox"/> surveillance <input type="checkbox"/> risk <input type="checkbox"/> FC <input type="checkbox"/> H/O:		<input type="checkbox"/> surveillance <input type="checkbox"/> risk <input type="checkbox"/> FC <input type="checkbox"/> H/O:		<input type="checkbox"/> surveillance <input type="checkbox"/> risk <input type="checkbox"/> FC <input type="checkbox"/> H/O:		<input type="checkbox"/> surveillance <input type="checkbox"/> risk <input type="checkbox"/> FC <input type="checkbox"/> H/O:				
Commercial Description											
Producer Name											
Brand											
Country of Origin											
Sample size											
Lot Code											
Lot Quantity											
Batch/Consignment Quantity											
<b>Importer/Broker References</b>			Tests Required			Tests Required			Tests Required		
Labelling			Labelling			Labelling			Labelling		
Visual			Visual			Visual			Visual		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dual Inspection											
Laboratory Name			Lab use			Lab use			Lab use		
Comments:											
I certify that services have been provided during the times shown					*Released = Permission to deal with the food pending Imported Food Inspection Advice (IFIA) of pass or fail. Failing food is the importers responsibility if it has been dealt with before IFIA received.						
ID No.	Start time	Finish time	Total	Date / /	<b>Note:</b> Costs for laboratory analyses are not included in the AQIS fees. Importer is responsible for all costs of inspection and analysis.						
Authorised officer print name		Signature of authorised officer			Printed name of importer or agent		Signature of importer or agent		Date / /		

Original - White Duplicate - Yellow Triplicate - Blue

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# AQIS Import Management System (AIMS)

## What is AIMS?

When an entry is lodged with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and is identified as requiring inspection by AQIS, the Customs system will send details of that entry to AIMS. The AIMS system contains all relevant information relating to each entry and all the information recorded on the IFIR is also entered into AIMS. A copy of the IFIR will be attached to the food sample which the analyst will need to use to ensure results can be successfully reported to the AIMS system.

Figure 1A – Laboratory Registration Details Screen in AIMS

Sample Id	Lot Code	Assessment	Sampled	Registered
1a	05-09-2006 (132046)	Pass	06 Dec 2004	06 Dec 2004
1b	05-09-2006 (132595)	Pass	06 Dec 2004	06 Dec 2004
1c	05-09-2006 (132595)	Pass	06 Dec 2004	08 Dec 2004

  

Test	Assessment
E COLI	Pass
LABELLING	Pass
VISUAL	Pass

  

Sample 1 of 3

Laboratory Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lab Sample Reference Id: 04/11033

Lab Registration Date: 06 Dec 2004

Bar Code Received at Lab: #0061537

Sample Arrival Condition: Room Temp (Shelf Stable)

Tampering Evident

The results are reported via [eResults](#) to the AIMS system. The information sent from the laboratory will appear in the AIMS 'Test & Results Details Screen'..

Figure 1B – Test and Result Details screen

Sample Id	Lot Code	Assessment	Sampled	Registered
1a	05-09-2006 (132046)	Pass	06 Dec 2004	06 Dec 2004
1b	05-09-2006 (132595)	Pass	06 Dec 2004	06 Dec 2004
1c	05-09-2006 (132595)	Pass	06 Dec 2004	08 Dec 2004

  

Test	Assessment
E COLI	Pass
LABELLING	Pass
VISUAL	Pass

  

Sample 1 of 3

Laboratory Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contracted Laboratory: \_\_\_\_\_

AQIS Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Test Method: E COLI

Test NOT Required

Reason NOT Required: \_\_\_\_\_

Mode	Report Id	Reported	Received
E	04/11033	09 Dec 2004	09 Dec 2004

Analysis	Units	Results of Analysis	Assessment
ECOLIS	(g)	<3, <3, <3, <3	Pass

Assess: Pending Pass Fail Interim N/A

An AQIS Imported Food officer will use the results to determine if the food is a 'Pass' or 'Fail'.

The eResults External Code Requirements are used by the appointed analyst to set up their reporting system.

### **eResults – electronic messaging**

eResults is the electronic transfer of sample information and the results of analysis from the appointed analysts to AQIS. This includes the electronic transfer of analysts' details, the tests applied to samples and the results of analysis. Appointed analysts are required to use the eResults system to report results of analysis electronically. This is achieved by laboratories developing an IT system which is capable of sending email messages containing attachments to AQIS.

The attachments consist of formatted XML which is compatible with the AQIS eResults database. The eResults database will interpret the XML data and apply it to AIMS.

NOTE: Please contact the AQIS laboratory contact officer to receive the relevant documents to assist you in developing this capability. If you have received the eResults documentation and require further assistance with the system, please contact [eResultsAdmin@daff.gov.au](mailto:eResultsAdmin@daff.gov.au).