



3 March 2009

Biosecurity policy determination for chicken meat

Australia's Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine has made a policy determination establishing strict quarantine requirements for the importation of chicken meat.

The determination is based on the final *Generic Import Risk Analysis Report for Chicken Meat*, issued in October 2008.

The final import risk analysis (IRA) report recommended that importation of chicken meat be permitted, subject to quarantine conditions for nine disease agents of quarantine concern. These include notifiable avian influenza, Newcastle disease and infectious bursal disease.

Depending on a country's disease status, the quarantine measures would include country or zone disease freedom. If a country or zone is not free from the diseases of concern the product will need to be heat processed off-shore or on-shore, under quarantine control.

Australia would consider equivalent measures, such as flock accreditation or compartmentalisation that reduced risk to an acceptably low level, which would require rigorous examination, including on-the-ground assessments.

Most countries have different strains of the infectious bursal disease (IBD) virus than occur in Australia and the IRA recommended cooking at high temperatures for long periods to inactivate the virus (80°C for 125 minutes).

Australia presently has conditions governing the importation of cooked chicken meat from the United States, Denmark and Thailand.

The IRA responded to market access applications for chicken meat from a number of countries, including the United States, Thailand, some European Union member states, New Zealand, China, Malaysia and Brazil.

Biosecurity Australia consulted stakeholders throughout the process, which began in 1998.

The independent Eminent Scientists Group reviewed the IRA and concluded that all stakeholder comments had been properly considered in the preparation of the final IRA report.

The final IRA report was subject to an independent appeal process and the Import Risk Analysis Appeal Panel reported to Australia's Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine and appellants on 15 January 2009 that it did not allow the appeals.

The *Generic Import Risk Analysis Report for Chicken Meat* is available at www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au.

The final IRA report is a comprehensive, science based analysis that reflects Australia's conservative approach to quarantine (i.e. Australia's appropriate level of protection).

IRAs are an important step in assessing the quarantine risks and, where appropriate, putting in place risk management measures to keep Australia free of exotic pests and diseases present in other countries.

Biosecurity Australia undertakes science-based risk analyses to assess any quarantine risks associated with applications to import agricultural and other commodities to Australia.

Further information: www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au

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