



PRIME**SAFE**

Victorian Standard for Hygienic Production of Meat at Retail Premises

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1. SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THE STANDARD

This Standard has been approved by the Minister for Agriculture under provisions of section 13A(2) of the *Meat Industry Act* 1993 as a Code of Practice that will form part of quality assurance programs (Food Safety Plans). This Standard applies to all facilities retailing meat and meat products for human consumption in Victoria.

The overall goal of this Standard is to provide a framework for the production of safe and wholesome meat. Outcomes required from the application of this Standard are based on the following food safety criteria:

- microbiological safety; and
- prevention of physical and chemical contamination.

This Standard should be read in conjunction with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code in so far as that Code relates to matters of food safety and public health.

Alternate techniques or procedures to those detailed in the Standard may be used by operators providing compliance with the overall goal can be verified through the use of HACCP based programs. These procedures would need to be individually approved by PrimeSafe.

For the purpose of this Standard the word "shall" has been used to clearly indicate that the requirements are mandatory.

2. DEFINITIONS

In this Standard, the following meanings of the words and phrases apply throughout the Standard, unless the context otherwise requires.

animal

any animal approved by the controlling authority for the production of meat for human consumption.

approved

means approved by the controlling authority.

boning

means the:

- (a) removal of meat from the bones of a carcass, or a portion of a carcass;
- (b) production of bone-in meat cuts; or
- (c) production of boneless meat cuts.

Boning does not include the production of meat fractions and mechanically separated meat.

carcass

the whole dressed body of a slaughtered animal (the skeleton and attached musculature) excluding any part that has been severed or removed from the dressed body (e.g. head, hide, viscera, blood).

carcase parts

any tissue or structure removed from a carcase (e.g. offal, hide, horns, hair, blood, etc.).

chemical contamination

the presence of any chemical substance/s that renders meat unwholesome.

clean

in relation to:

- (a) carcasses or meat means free from all visible contaminants, for example: ingesta, dust, rail grease, wool, hair, faecal material, bile, excretions and pathological conditions; and
- (b) facility means surfaces of floors, walls, ceilings, equipment, appurtenances and utensils free of visible contamination, washed, sanitised and free of objectionable odours.

contamination

the presence of objectionable matter, including substances or micro-organisms, which may compromise food safety or wholesomeness.

controlling authority

a person or a body that under a law of a State, Territory or the Commonwealth, has statutory responsibility for meat hygiene.

critical control point

means a point, procedure or operation or stage in the food chain, including raw materials, at which control can be applied and is essential to prevent or eliminate a hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level.

critical limit

means the limit to which a hazard must be controlled at a critical control point to prevent or reduce to an acceptable level the occurrence of the identified food safety hazard.

edible

suitable for human consumption.

edible offal

edible parts from a slaughtered animal other than muscle meat.

food safety

means food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared or eaten according to its intended use.

food safety plan

a quality assurance arrangement.

Food Standards Code

means the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code as defined in section 3 of the *Australia New Zealand Food Authority Act 1991*.

HACCP

means Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point. HACCP is a system, which identifies evaluates and controls hazards, which are significant for food safety.

inedible

unsuitable for human consumption.

licensed

a meat processing facility licensed or registered in accordance with the requirements of the controlling authority.

manufactured meat

a processed food product that is a mixture of meat and other food (including water) and in which at least 66% of the unpacked weight of the product is meat, but does not include unmixed meat.

meat

the edible part of any slaughter animal and edible offal.

meat processing facility

a facility/premises processing meat and meat products for human consumption.

meat product

a manufactured meat.

microbiological safety

means carrying a bacteriological load consistent with a safe and wholesome product.

operator

the person, owner or manager who is responsible for the operation of the licensed meat processing facility.

physical contamination

means contamination with material presenting a risk to product safety, including material likely to carry a heavy microbiological load.

potable

in relation to water means a water quality that is consistent with standards for drinking water in the respective States.

quality assurance (QA) arrangement

an arrangement between the controlling authority and the operator of a meat processing facility with an approved quality system, where company management takes responsibility for ensuring the production of wholesome meat. The controlling authority's role is to monitor the effectiveness of a company's approved QA system through an audit program to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of this Standard.

ready-to-eat

when used in relation to meat and meat products means meat and meat products that are ordinarily consumed in the same state as that in which they are sold.

sanitise

apply approved chemical and/or physical agents or processes to cleaned surfaces to minimise risk of contamination of meat by micro-organisms.

smallgoods

manufactured meat and meat products that have undergone a further process (such as curing, heat treatment, drying, smoking, canning, fermenting or rendering) applied to form essentially a new product with different characteristics and flavour; and

- are ready-to-eat; or
- if not ready-to-eat, have undergone a heating and cooling process as part of manufacture.

site of micro-biological concern

when used in relation to meat or meat product means:

- (a) if the site on the meat or meat product where micro-organisms of concern are likely to be located is known – that site; and
- (b) in any other case – the thermal centre of the meat or meat product.

sterilise

in relation to equipment or utensils used in the hygienic processing of animals, cleaned and immersed until sterilisation is effected, or treated by other effective means. For the purpose of this Standard it means, "make commercially sterile".

unmixed meat

any meat that has not been mixed with any other substance, but includes meat that has had a negligible quantity of other food added to it if that food does not fundamentally change the character of the meat.

validate

means obtain evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of a system of controls.

verify

means apply methods, procedures, test and other evaluations in addition to monitoring to determine whether a requirement is complied with.

wholesome

when used in relation to meat and meat products means that the meat and meat products have been passed for human consumption on the basis that they:

- (a) are not likely to cause food borne disease or intoxication when properly stored, handled and prepared for their intended use;
- (b) do not contain residues in excess of established limits;
- (c) are free of obvious contamination;
- (d) are free of defects that are generally recognised as objectionable to consumers;
- (e) have been produced and transported under adequate hygiene and temperature controls;
- (f) do not contain additives other than those permitted under the Food Standards Code;
- (g) have not been irradiated contrary to the Food Standards Code; and
- (h) have not been treated with a substance contrary to a law of the Commonwealth or law of the State or Territory in which the treatment takes place.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAMS (FOOD SAFETY PLANS)

- 3.1 The proprietor of a meat processing facility shall have an approved arrangement in the form of a food safety plan that:
- includes the policy objectives of the meat processing facility for the production of meat and meat products that are wholesome;
 - contains procedures for each stage of production at the facility;
 - describes the system of operational hygiene process controls that are effective in ensuring that meat and meat products produced by the meat processing facility are wholesome;
 - uses records to validate and verify the production of wholesome meat and meat products;
 - provides for internal audits and management reviews to be conducted of the operational activities and policy objectives of the meat processing facility. The results of these reviews and the action taken are to be documented; and
 - provides for the implementation of a HACCP plan for each stage of production at the facility.

- 3.2 The HACCP plan as required in section 3.1 shall conform to principles 1-7 as specified in "A guide to the implementation and auditing of HACCP" (SCARM Report 60).

The seven principles are:

1. List all potential hazards associated with each step, conduct a hazard analysis and consider any control measures to control hazards.
2. Determine Critical Control Points (CCP).
3. Establish Critical Limits for each CCP.
4. Establish a monitoring system for each CCP.
5. Establish corrective action plans for CCP deviations that may occur.
6. Establish verification procedures.
7. Establish record keeping and documentation.

4. CONSTRUCTION – PREMISES AND EQUIPMENT

4.1 General

Outcome required:
Construction facilitates hygienic processing and prevents contamination of meat and meat products.

- 4.1.1 The design, working space and layout of the facility and its equipment shall facilitate the hygienic production and storage of meat and meat products and any inspection or auditing necessary during or after production.
- 4.1.2 Premises shall:
- (a) be adequately supplied with continuous hot and cold potable water at a volume and pressure to enable hygienic practice. Where ice is used it shall be produced from potable water and stored and handled in a manner that protects it from contamination;
 - (b) be provided with a reliable energy supply (electricity, gas, etc.) that ensures efficient operations;
 - (c) have waste disposal systems sufficient to handle, and where necessary, treat all liquid and solid waste; and
 - (d) have traffic ways constructed and maintained so as to not create dust and other environmental contamination.
- 4.1.3 Premises and equipment within shall be:
- (a) constructed of materials that are:
 - (i) durable;
 - (ii) non-toxic;
 - (iii) smooth-surfaced (consistent with safety in the case of floors);
 - (iv) corrosion resistant;
 - (v) impervious;
 - (vi) resistant to, or protected from, impact;
 - (vii) easily cleaned, and where necessary, capable of being dismantled for cleaning;
 - (viii) resistant to chipping or flaking;
 - (ix) of a finish which makes physical contamination clearly visible;
 - (b) constructed such that joints are effectively sealed;
 - (c) constructed to minimise accumulation of dust, water, litter or waste materials;
 - (d) wooden chopping blocks ("Butchers Blocks") shall be free of splits, cracks and holes; and shall be maintained in a hygienic condition; and
 - (e) saw dust, shell-grit, or other similar materials shall not be used on floors.

- 4.1.4 Construction shall be designed so that, unpackaged ready-to-eat product is stored separately from raw product.
- 4.1.5 A meat processing facility shall have sufficient natural or artificial lighting for the activities conducted on the premises to enable hygienic processing.
- 4.1.6 Ventilation shall maintain product wholesomeness and remove excessive heat, steam and condensation and prevent the entry of odours, dust, vapour or smoke.
- 4.1.7 Door openings and passageways shall be of a size ensuring product does not come into contact with jambs or walls.
- 4.1.8 The roof shall be waterproof.
- 4.1.9 Ceilings shall be provided in all processing areas.
- 4.1.10 Processing rails or other carcass elevating devices shall be of a height sufficient to ensure that there is adequate carcass clearance over, or from, operational equipment and structures.

4.2 Drainage and effluent

Outcome required:

A drainage system that effectively removes solid and liquid waste in a manner which does not jeopardise the wholesomeness of meat and meat products.

- 4.2.1 Floors shall be constructed so that liquids do not accumulate on the surface, and are adequately covered at wall and floor junctions.
- 4.2.2 Open drains shall be covered with removable grating.
- 4.2.3 The drainage system shall prevent odours, vermin, any objectionable material or storm water entering the facility.
- 4.2.4 Floor drainage shall be directed to:
 - (a) an external save-all; or
 - (b) other approved means of removing solids and suspended fats.
- 4.2.5 Effluent and sewage shall be disposed of by a means required by the relevant authorities and in a manner that prevents contamination of potable water supplies and does not jeopardise the wholesomeness of meat and meat products.
- 4.2.6 Wastewater from display cabinets and chiller plates shall be contained and directed into the drainage system.

4.3 Hygiene and sanitation

Outcome required:

The provision of hygiene and sanitation facilities, which ensure the hygienic processing of meat and meat products.

- 4.3.1. Facilities shall be provided at meat processing premises, which allow for cleaning and sanitising of premises, equipment and protective clothing.
- 4.3.2. Premises shall have hand-washing facilities, which are:
- (a) provided with hot and cold water from a central outlet;
 - (b) provided with an effective sanitising agent;
 - (c) equipped with taps which are not operated by hand;
 - (d) provided with hand drying facilities that do not contaminate washed hands or the surrounding area;
 - (e) connected directly to the drainage system;
 - (f) of a size that allows easy and effective hand washing; and
 - (g) clearly designated for personal hand washing only.
- 4.3.3. Where used, sterilisers for knives and other equipment shall be provided with:
- (a) potable water of not less than 82°C; or
 - (b) an equivalent method of sterilisation; and
 - (c) an overflow contained and directed into the drainage system.

4.4 Storage facilities

Outcome required:

Storage facilities constructed to ensure that stored items do not become contaminated and are not a source of contamination.

- 4.4.1. Adequate facilities, shall be provided for the storage of:
- (a) all processing and packaging materials;
 - (b) ingredients;
 - (c) laundered protective clothing;
 - (d) cleaning and sanitising products, equipment; and
 - (e) aprons and gear (knives, steels etc.) when not in use.

4.5 Chillers and freezers

Outcome required:

Chillers and freezers constructed to maintain the wholesomeness of all meat and meat products stored on the premises.

- 4.5.1 Chiller and freezer capacity shall be adequate to accommodate the maximum total quantity of product likely to be held on the premises at any one time.
- 4.5.2 Facilities for the chilling and storage of carcasses and quarters shall be constructed to enable the surface temperature of carcasses to be maintained at not more than 7°C.
- 4.5.3 Facilities for the chilling and storage of meat portions less than quarters shall be constructed to enable product temperature to be maintained at not more than a maximum temperature of 5°C at the site of micro-biological concern.
- 4.5.4 Where carcasses are removed from a chiller for processing and the surface temperature of the carcasses rises above 7°C, such processing shall be performed in a facility constructed to maintain an air temperature of not more than 10°C.
- 4.5.5 Facilities for the freezing and storage of meat and meat products shall be constructed to operate at a temperature that ensure that meat and meat products are hard frozen and maintained in a hard frozen state.
- 4.5.6 Facilities shall be provided with racks/stands etc. to store product in a hygienic condition.
- 4.5.7 Cooling unit discharge shall be contained and directed to the drainage system.

4.6 Loading areas

Outcome required:

Loading areas constructed to ensure that the wholesomeness of meat and meat products is not jeopardised.

- 4.6.1 Load-out and load-in areas where provided shall be constructed in such a manner that the wholesomeness of meat and meat products is not jeopardised.

4.7 Cleaning facilities

Outcome required:

Cleaning facilities constructed to ensure equipment is effectively cleaned and that the cleaning processes do not jeopardise the wholesomeness of meat and meat products.

- 4.7.1 Facilities shall be provided for the cleaning of equipment.
- 4.7.2 Facilities shall be provided for the storage of cleaned equipment.

4.8 Amenities

Outcome required:

Amenities constructed and located so that their use does not provide a source of contamination.

- 4.8.1 Location and construction of amenities shall not jeopardise hygienic processing.

5. OPERATIONAL HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS

Outcome required:

Hygiene controls of all operations that effectively prevent physical, chemical and microbiological contamination of product and risks to health and safety of personnel.

- 5.1 Cleaning and sanitising
 - 5.1.1 Premises and equipment shall be maintained in good repair and in a clean, orderly condition at all times.
 - 5.1.2 Rooms and areas shall be kept as free as possible of steam, odours, vapours and excess water. Condensation shall not be permitted to accumulate on overhead structures in an amount conducive to drip.
 - 5.1.3 Cleaning chemicals (detergents and sanitisers) shall be approved for use in meat processing facilities.
 - 5.1.4 Areas used for the storage of cleaning compounds, chemicals, insecticides and the like, shall have stored materials labelled.

5.2 Pest control

- 5.2.1 All precautions shall be taken to ensure that pests and pesticides do not contaminate edible product and materials, equipment and utensils.
- 5.2.2 There shall be an effective and continuous program for the control of insects, birds, rodents and other pests. Premises and surrounds shall be regularly examined for evidence of infestation.
- 5.2.3 Insect control equipment shall be designed and placed in such a position that eliminates any possibility of contamination of product or processing equipment.

5.3 Pet meat

- 5.3.1 Meat processed at the facility must be fit for human consumption.

5.4 Hygiene and health of personnel

- 5.4.1 A training program to facilitate hygienic processing of edible products shall be implemented.
- 5.4.2 Operators shall ensure that no employee while known to be suffering from, or to be a carrier of, a disease capable of being transmitted through meat, or while afflicted with infected wounds, sores or diarrhoea, is permitted to work in any capacity in which it is possible either directly or indirectly to contaminate product with pathogenic micro-organisms. Any person so afflicted shall report the illness to the management.
- 5.4.3 Particular attention shall be paid to infected wounds and sores, enteric infection and respiratory diseases.
- 5.4.4 Every person who is cut or injured shall cease work until their wound is suitably dressed. No person working in a registered premises area shall wear any bandage unless that bandage is completely protected by a waterproof and conspicuously coloured covering which cannot be easily detached.
- 5.4.5 Every person engaged in the handling of meat and meat products while on duty shall thoroughly wash their hands using liquid sanitiser and potable water when potential contamination has occurred.
- 5.4.6 Protective gloves for use in the handling of meat shall be maintained in a sound, clean and sanitary condition.
- 5.4.7 Every person involved in meat processing for edible products shall maintain a high standard of personal cleanliness. They shall at all times wear suitable clothing of a colour that allows detection of visible contamination, head covering enclosing hair and enclosed footwear. These articles shall be kept clean consistent with the work in which the person is engaged.

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- 5.4.8 Protective clothing such as aprons, protective gloves and implements shall be properly cleaned at the end of the day and when necessary in a facility provided for this purpose.
 - 5.4.9 Aprons and personal working equipment including protective gloves, knives and scabbards shall not be worn into toilet areas. Hooks shall be provided at designated sites within production areas for the hanging of these articles.
 - 5.4.10 Any behaviour which could result in contamination of meat, such as eating, smoking, spitting and throwing of product is prohibited.
 - 5.4.11 Contamination of product by cosmetics, jewellery, chemicals, sweat and such accidental acts as coughing and sneezing, shall be prevented.

5.5 Monitoring of requirements

- 5.5.1 Hygiene operating requirements shall be monitored daily by the operator or nominated employee of the registered premises under a QA arrangement approved by the controlling authority.

6. HYGIENE ON THE PROCESSING PLANT

Outcome required:
Consistent and routine application of effective disinfection and sanitation procedures to prevent microbiological contamination and adulteration of meat.

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 Recycled water shall not be used on any registered premises.
- 6.1.2 Only chemicals approved for use in food premises may be added to water used in the processing area.
- 6.1.3 An effective cleaning and sanitation program shall be implemented at the conclusion of each day's processing.
- 6.1.4 Daily processing shall not commence unless the facilities are clean.
- 6.1.5 During operations, the processing facilities shall be kept as clean as possible.
- 6.1.6 Equipment, used in processing shall be washed and then sterilised regularly, and whenever chance contamination has occurred.
- 6.1.7 Containers used for inedible material shall be clearly identified. Such containers shall only be used for the designated purpose.

6.1.8 An operator shall at all times:

- (a) maintain a high standard of hygienic processing as outlined in this Standard;
- (b) correct insanitary practices, if and when they occur;
- (c) ensure that there are staff readily available for correcting deficiencies; and
- (d) ensure that the provisions of this Standard are complied with in all respects.

6.2 Cleaning and sanitation

6.2.1 If rooms used for handling, preparation, processing, packaging or storage of meat and meat products are used for any other food preparation purposes, cleaning and sanitation shall be carried out immediately before and after such use.

6.3 Chillers and freezers

6.3.1 Meat for chilling or freezing and not in cartons shall be stored in a manner that permits adequate circulation of air around the meat and protects the stored product from deterioration and contamination through floor contact, splash and drip from other products.

6.3.2 Ready-to-eat meat products shall be stored separately from raw product so that the potential for cross-contamination is minimised.

6.3.3 Cartons of meat shall be stacked off the floor, to permit adequate circulation of air around each carton and allow the floor to be kept clean.

6.4 Meat thawing

6.4.1 Carcase meats and meat products shall only be thawed under controlled conditions consistent with this Standard.

6.4.2 Thawed meats and meat products shall not be refrozen.

6.5 Processing

6.5.1 Meat in product containers stored on racks under worktables and benches shall be protected from contamination from the underside of the worktables and from residue from work surfaces above.

6.5.2 Edible meat containers are not to be stored directly onto floors.

6.5.3 Edible meat containers/tubs shall not be stacked on top of another container containing exposed meat or meat products.

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- 6.5.4 Food used in the preparation of meat products shall:
- (a) consist of wholesome ingredients;
 - (b) be derived from approved sources;
 - (c) be disposed of at the end of each day's production;
 - (d) not be re-used; and
 - (e) be stored under refrigeration where required.
- 6.5.5 Ingredients used in the preparation of meat products shall be clearly labelled
- 6.5.6 Processing of meat and meat products shall flow continuously in an orderly manner to ensure uniform turnover of accumulated product.
- 6.5.7 Where the temperature of meat is likely to rise during a process, the temperature of that meat shall be reduced to 5°C or below as soon as possible.
- 6.5.8 Cross-contamination from raw meat to ready-to-eat products shall be prevented. All precautions shall be taken to ensure ready-to eat product:
- (a) does not contact equipment used for handling raw product;
 - (b) does not come in contact with raw product; and
 - (c) is stored to minimise cross-contamination with raw product.

6.6 Smallgoods processing

- 6.6.1 The manufacture of smallgoods products shall comply with the processing requirements of the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (SCARM Report 80) and the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

6.7 Packing

- 6.7.1 All packaging material shall be stored and dispensed in a manner that protects materials and product from contamination.
- 6.7.2 Labelling and company records shall allow positive identification of product and facilitate recall procedures.
- 6.7.3 Information required to be placed on wrappings and cartons shall be written legibly in dimensions conforming with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.
- 6.7.4 Containers returned from outside sources shall be effectively cleaned and sanitised before re-use and be stored to prevent contamination.
- 6.7.5 Wrapping and packaging shall effectively protect meat from contamination in the conditions under which it is to be handled, transported and/or stored.

- 6.7.6 Packaging material shall be free from substances capable of imparting any unwholesome or deleterious property to the product.
- 6.7.7 Cases or cartons shall be provided with a suitable inner liner or other satisfactory means of protecting meat, except where cuts of meat are individually wrapped before packing.
- 6.7.8 Packaged meats and meat products (wrapped or unwrapped) shall not be placed on the floor.

6.8 Personnel

- 6.8.1 Food shall not be consumed in any processing area other than in a meals area as provided under this Standard.
- 6.8.2 Dogs, cats, birds and other domestic animals shall be excluded from premises where meat is processed or stored.
- 6.8.3 Hoses when not in use shall be stored on reels or racks. Wash down hoses shall not be immersed in water or contact product in the act of filling containers or the like.

7. REFERENCES

Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (SCARM Report 80).

A guide to the implementation and auditing of HACCP (SCARM Report 60).



