



AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY CHOICE

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Re: HACCP BASED FOOD SAFETY & QUALITY MANAGEMENT AT ESTABLISHMENT 1620

The above are conducted in compliance with the following food safety management standards:

- British Retail Consortium Global Standard for Food Safety
- ISO 22000

And the following quality management standard:

- ISO 9001

I can also offer the following general comments:

Export Operations

Export operations are conducted under the regulatory control of the federal government authority responsible for compliance with food safety, overseas country requirements and Australian export standards i.e. the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS).

AQIS veterinary officers and meat inspectors are located on site on a full time basis and monitor and audit company performance in discharging our obligations in compliance with our approved arrangement with AQIS, including disease and health control.

Overseas Listings

Establishment 1620 is US listed to produce bulk packed manufactured beef for grinding, amongst other products.

HACCP Plans, Reassessments & Reassessment Outcomes

Our approved arrangement with AQIS includes HACCP and the HACCP plans include CCP's which directly address the hazard of E.coli O157:H7.

HACCP plans have been reassessed in accordance with AQIS Meat Notice 2002/13 and Federal Register Notice 9 CFR part 417 Docket number 00-022 N dated 7 October 2002 – E.coli O157:H7 contamination of beef products.

E.coli O157:H7 has been assessed as a hazard likely to be a significant risk if not effectively controlled by the establishments HACCP plan.

The critical control points are assessed effective in controlling the hazard based on the data base of test results from carcass and trim boxed products tested over a number of years.

Process Monitoring & Microbiological Testing

Total aerobic plate count and generic E.coli testing is conducted on a daily basis as a quality assurance measure. E.coli O157:H7 testing is performed on end product.

Testing is conducted by an independent AQIS approved NATA accredited laboratory.

In the event of a confirmed positive test result for E.coli O157:H7 product remains under AQIS & company control and disposition involves heat sterilisation in Australia. Records relating to any detection are maintained.

Current Detection Rate for E.coli O157:H7

For the period 31/3/08 to 31/3/09 2 detections have occurred from 397 samples submitted, giving a detection rate of 0.5%.

Ongoing Minimisation Controls

HACCP plans are supported by pre-requisite programmes in a number of areas including pre-operational sanitation and hygiene inspection, operational sanitation, and personal health & hygiene as documented in standard operating procedures.

Operational controls commence with the cleanliness of livestock presented for slaughter, hygienic dressing techniques that include two (2) knife sterilisation, and in the hide on area the washing of hands with soap & hot water between bodies. Carcass chilling and product handling procedures minimise the growth and spread of microbes during boning & other operations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information.

Yours Faithfully,

AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY CHOICE

Andrew Le Breton
General Manager – Quality & Accreditations