

# NSW Standard for Construction and Hygienic Operations of Retail Meat Premises

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## Introduction

The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry, and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Food Authority Food Safety Officers are Authorised Officers under the NSW Food Act 2003 (the Act) and have wide powers, which include the power to enter and inspect premises and inspect any records relating to the sale of food.

This Standard has been developed by the Food Authority to assist retail meat premises in meeting the food safety and labelling requirements outlined in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Food Standards Code), which is law in Australia.

Whilst the Food Authority aims to inform industry and assist businesses with meeting their responsibilities, under the Act the Food Authority can take enforcement action against any businesses that fail to comply.

The Standard may not list all the legal requirements that your business needs to comply with. Businesses should refer to the Act, Food Regulation 2015, and the Food Standards Code for details on food safety requirements.

NSW legislation can be found at [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au) and the Food Standards Code at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au).

## Purpose and scope

The Food Regulation 2015 (the Regulation) defines a retail premises as:

- a premises where meat (including poultry) is sold by retail and on which raw meat carcasses or parts of raw meat carcasses are processed in some way (such as boning, slicing, or cutting).

'Butcher shop' is the term commonly used for these premises and may include supermarket operations and independent meat and poultry retail premises.

A retail meat premise does not include premises where:

- a. in any week during the preceding calendar year, more than one tonne of meat was sold by wholesale (these premises must be licensed as a meat processor), or
- b. in a form ready to be consumed (such as is sold at a restaurant or take-away food shop), or
- c. in a form commonly referred to as cook and chill (that is, cooked packaged meat that requires reheating before consumption).

The NSW Standard for Construction and Hygienic Operations of Retail Meat Premises (the Standard) contains the minimum construction requirements and hygienic operation standards for retail meat premises and forms part of the minimum standards for retail meat premises, as required by the Regulation.

As part of the Standard, all retail meat premises must operate under an approved Food Safety Program based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.

In addition, the requirements of Standard 3.2.1 – Food Safety Programs, Standard 3.2.2 – Food Safety Practices and General Requirements and Standard 3.2.3 – Food Premises and Equipment of the Food Standards Code have been considered in the Standard. For ease of interpretation, there are sections which have been expanded to accommodate the specific requirements for retail meat premises.

Alternative equivalent techniques or procedures to those detailed in the Standard may be used by operators of retail meat premises, provided compliance with the overall goal can be verified using a HACCP-based Food Safety Program.

## Definitions

Term	Definition
abattoir animal	Any bull, ox, steer, cow, heifer, calf, ram, ewe, wether, lamb, goat, kid, swine, buffalo, deer, rabbit, or any bird.
abattoir meat	Meat that is from an abattoir animal and that is intended for human consumption.
amenities	Includes changing rooms, dining rooms, toilets, hand wash basins and showers.
appliances	Any equipment used in a retail meat processing premises.
approved audit	An audit approved by the NSW Food Authority.
audit	A programmed and clearly defined system of verifying that a quality system is operating to standards defined in the Food Safety Program.
clean	In relation to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Carcasses or meat means free from all visible contaminants (such as ingesta, dust, rail grease, wool, hair, faecal material, bile, excretions and pathological conditions).</li> <li>a. Equipment, utensils and clothing means free of visible contamination, washed, sanitised and free of objectionable odours.</li> <li>b. Premises means surfaces of floors, walls, ceilings free of visible contamination, washed, and free of objectionable odours.</li> <li>c. Clothing, means free of visible contamination.</li> </ol>
construction	The design, construction, equipment and maintenance of retail meat premises.
contamination	The presence of objectionable matter, including substances or microorganisms, that makes meat and meat products unsafe or unsuitable for human consumption.
coving	A curved junction at two surfaces (for example floor and wall) to enable effective cleaning.
cured	A product is cured if curing salts have been added at a level which preserves the product, being a minimum 2.5% salt on water phase and 100 ppm nitrite in-going.
edible	Safe and suitable for human consumption.
Food Safety Program	A documented program which identifies any steps in the activities of a retail meat business which are critical to ensuring food safety and ensures that adequate food safety measures are identified, implemented, maintained and reviewed.

Term	Definition
game animal	Any vertebrate animal: including a mammal, bird or reptile but, excluding fish; of a species that can be legally harvested; and has not been husbanded in the manner of a farmed animal and is killed in the field.
game meat	The edible part of any game animal that has been dressed or prepared in a game-processing establishment and passed by an inspector as fit for human consumption.
HACCP	A Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point approach comprising a structured system for the analysis of hazards and identification of methods for monitoring of hazard and the implementation of control measures for each hazard.
hazard	A biological, physical or chemical agent in, or condition of, food that has the potential to cause an adverse health effect in humans.
hazardous substances	Any substance which, if it comes into contact with meat, meat products or meat contact surfaces, will jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat and meat products.
inedible	Unsafe or unsuitable for human consumption.
licensed	A premises licensed with the NSW Food Authority (or equivalent interstate/overseas jurisdiction).
meat	The edible part of any abattoir animal and edible offal intended for human consumption.
retail meat premises	<p>Any premises where meat (including poultry) is sold by retail and on which raw meat carcasses or parts of raw meat carcasses are processed in some way (such as boning, slicing, or cutting).</p> <p>A retail meat premises does not include premises where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. in any week during the preceding calendar year, more than one tonne of meat was sold by wholesale (must be licensed as a meat processor), or</li> <li>b. all the meat sold is:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. in a form ready to be consumed (such as is sold at a restaurant or takeaway food shop), or</li> <li>ii. in a form commonly referred to as cook and chill (that is, cooked, packaged meat that requires reheating before consumption).</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
pathogenic bacteria	Bacteria capable of causing disease in humans.
potable water	Water that is acceptable for human consumption.
premises	A building or structure, where meat is processed or stored for human consumption.
processed meat	Any product of a manufacturing process that contains abattoir meat or game meat and that is intended for human consumption.

Term	Definition
processing	Any activity in the storage, production and sale of meat and meat products.
protective clothing	Items of clothing such as aprons, head covering, capes and smocks that prevent meat or meat product contact surfaces from ordinarily coming into contact with any portion of a person's body or ordinary clothing.
ready-to-eat meat	<p>Meat products intended to be consumed without further heating or cooking, and includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. cooked or uncooked fermented meat,</li> <li>b. pâté,</li> <li>c. dried meat,</li> <li>d. slow cured meat,</li> <li>e. luncheon meat,</li> <li>f. cooked muscle meat including ham and roast beef, and</li> <li>g. other ready-to-eat meat that is susceptible to the growth of pathogens or the production of toxins.</li> </ol>
sanitise	<p>Apply heat and/or chemicals, or other processes, to a surface so that the number of micro-organisms on the surface is reduced to a level that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. does not compromise the safety of the food with which it may come into contact, and</li> <li>2. does not permit the transmission of infectious disease.</li> </ol>
shelf stable	Processed meat products that do not require chilling or freezing to maintain food safety and suitability.
site of microbiological concern	<p>When used in relation to meat or a meat product means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> <li>b. in any other case — the thermal centre of the meat or meat product.</li> </ol>
sterilise	In relation to equipment or utensils used in the hygienic processing of meat, means cleaned and immersed in water heated to not less than 82°C until sterilisation is effected, or treated by other effective means.
validate	Obtain evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of a system of controls.
verify	Apply methods, procedures, tests and other evaluations in addition to monitoring to determine whether a requirement is complied with or a matter is met.

## 1. Food Safety Programs

### Outcome required

Retail meat businesses need to develop and implement a documented Food Safety Program which complies with this document, the NSW standard for construction and hygienic operation of retail meat premises, addressing relevant food safety issues and incorporating the application of HACCP principles<sup>2</sup>.

**1.1** A retail meat premises must use HACCP principles to establish a documented Food Safety Program which must:

- a. identify any hazards that could jeopardise product safety and suitability during production
- b. implement good manufacturing practices (GMPs) to control the identified hazards
- c. minimise any risks to safety and suitability
- d. monitor the effectiveness of the GMPs in protecting safety and suitability
- e. implement corrective actions when GMPs are ineffective, and
- f. keep records of monitoring and corrective actions.

**1.2** All retail meat premises must operate in accordance with an approved Food Safety Program through all phases of production from the receipt of raw product until delivery of the finished product.

The program must comply with:

- a. the principles and guidelines set out in Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application, published by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, or
- b. Standard 3.2.1 – Food Safety Programs of the Food Standards Code, and
- c. any other requirements notified in writing by the Food Authority to the applicant for a licence or the holder of the licence for the food business concerned (Clause 46 of the Regulation).

**1.3** To assist businesses to comply, the NSW Retail Meat Food Safety Program has been prepared by the NSW Food Authority to help provide information and guidance to retail meat businesses on how to meet their regulatory requirements.

The NSW Retail Meat Food Safety Program & Retail Diary – which includes 1 years' worth of dedicated monitoring forms – is available for free download. Alternatively, printed copies can be purchased from the Food Authority by contacting the helpline on 1300 552 406 to order.

The NSW Retail Meat Food Safety Program & Retail Diary is available in:

- English
- Arabic
- Chinese Simplified
- Chinese Traditional
- Korean
- Turkish
- Vietnamese.

<sup>2</sup> The principles and guidelines as set out in the document entitled Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) *System and Guidelines For Its Application* published by the Codex Alimentarius Commission



## 2. Food safety practices and general requirements

### 2.1 Skills and knowledge of staff

#### Outcome required

Staff handling food in a retail meat premises have appropriate skills and knowledge.

#### 2.1.1 General requirement

A retail meat premises must ensure that all staff undertaking, or supervising food handling operations have:

- a. skills in food safety and food hygiene matters, and
- b. knowledge of food safety and food hygiene matters, commensurate with their work activities.

#### 2.1.2 Hygiene training course

It is a requirement of the licence that one staff member has completed a recognised food handling hygiene course and is able to produce a certificate proving course completion during audits.

### 2.2 Receiving of meat

#### Outcome required

Retail meat premises only receive meat that is safe and suitable.

**2.2.1** A retail meat premises must not store or sell meat or processed meat for human consumption, or as an ingredient of processed meat, unless:

- a. the meat or carcass has been supplied from a licensed abattoir, meat processing plant or game meat processing plant, or
- b. the supplier has indicated, by documentation, packaging or branding of the meat or carcass, that it has been passed as being fit for human consumption.

**2.2.2** A retail meat premises must not sell meat or processed meat for human consumption if it has been condemned as unfit for human consumption.

## 2.3 Storage of meat and meat products

### Outcome required

Meat and meat products are stored in an appropriate manner which protects it from contamination and minimises the growth of pathogenic bacteria.

**2.3.0.1** A retail meat premises must store meat and meat products:

- a. under temperature control, and
- b. ensure that frozen food remains hard frozen during storage (an air temperature of  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  or less is recommended).

**2.3.0.2** A retail meat premises must store meat and meat products in such a way that:

- a. it is protected from the likelihood of contamination, and
- b. the environmental conditions under which it is stored will not adversely affect the safety and suitability of the food.

### 2.3.1 Temperature control

#### Outcome required

Product temperature is controlled to minimise microbial growth.

**2.3.1.1** The surface temperature of carcasses (other than poultry carcasses) stored in chilling facilities must be maintained at not more than  $7^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

**2.3.1.2** The temperature of lesser portions of meat (smaller than quarter carcasses) including poultry carcasses and meat stored in chilling facilities must be maintained at not more than  $5^{\circ}\text{C}$  where:

- a. meat (including carcasses) is removed from a refrigerated facility for processing such as boning and slicing, and the surface temperature of the meat rises above  $7^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Such meat must be returned to the refrigerated facility without undue delay,
- b. processing of meat above  $7^{\circ}\text{C}$  may be performed in a facility constructed to maintain an air temperature of not more than  $10^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and
- c. the temperature requirements in part (a) and (b) do not apply to meat during any of the following processes:
  - i. Canning, cooking, and subsequent cooling, drying, fermenting or any other validated process which has controls/ hurdles in place (time/temperature, preservatives) to prevent the growth of microorganisms.

## 2.3.2 Chillers and freezers

### Outcome required

Chillers and freezers are constructed to maintain meat and meat products at the required temperature and prevent cross contamination.

**2.3.2.1** Chiller and freezer capacity must be adequate to accommodate the total quantity of product likely to be held on the premises at any one time.

**2.3.2.2** Facilities for the chilling and storage of carcasses (including sides and quarter carcasses) must be constructed to enable the surface temperature of carcasses to be maintained at 7°C or less.

**2.3.2.3** Facilities for the chilling and storage of meat other than carcasses must be constructed to enable the temperature of meat to be maintained at 5°C or less.

**2.3.2.4** Equipment for the accurate monitoring and display of chiller and freezer temperatures should be provided and always operate while chillers and freezers are in use.

**2.3.2.5** Cooling unit discharge must be connected to the drainage system or be collected and disposed of in a hygienic manner.

**2.3.2.6** Chillers must be constructed to ensure ready-to-eat meat is stored separately to raw meat to prevent cross contamination.

**2.3.2.7** Facilities must be provided (such as racks or stands) to store cartons and containers of products (tubs, trays, presses etcetera) in such a manner that the cartons and containers and the product stored within is protected from contamination through floor contact, splash and drip from other products. The design of such facilities must not impede the effective cleaning of the chiller or freezer.

## 2.3.3 Thawing of meat

### Outcome required

Meat and meat products are thawed in a manner that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of the meat.

**2.3.3.1** Carcase meat and meat products must only be thawed under controlled conditions consistent with the temperature control requirements of Clause 2.3 of the Standard.

**2.3.3.2** Thawed meat and meat products must not be re-frozen unless the temperature has not exceeded 5°C at any point during the thawing process.

## 2.3.2 Storage of hazardous substances

### Outcome required

Hazardous substances are stored in a manner that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat and meat products.

**2.3.4.1** Hazardous substances must be stored in an area designated for that purpose and must be handled only by staff authorised under the Food Safety Program.

**2.3.4.2** Except when necessary for hygienic or processing purposes, no substance which could contaminate food must be used or stored in meat handling areas.

**2.3.4.3** The cleaning or sanitising of rooms, equipment or utensils by water, detergents and sanitisers, must be carried out in a manner that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat and meat products.

**2.3.4.4** Detergents and disinfectants must be suitable for use in meat handling areas and must not impart any unacceptable flavours or odours or leave any toxic residues.

**2.3.4.5** Each container of hazardous substances must be appropriately labelled to indicate the contents and instructions for use.

## 2.4 Processing of meat and meat products

### Outcome required

Procedures are implemented to minimise or eliminate the risk of physical and microbiological contamination of meat during processing. The operations of a retail meat premises ensures that:

- only safe and suitable food is processed,
- food is protected from contamination,
- if necessary, pathogenic bacteria that may be present in the food are reduced to safe levels, and the time that food remains at temperatures that permit the growth of pathogenic bacteria is minimised.

**2.4.0.1** Processing must be performed in such a manner that the safety and suitability of the meat is not jeopardised. Such processing must ensure that:

- a. meat is not contaminated through splashing from a contaminated source,
- b. the safety and suitability of meat is protected during loading, unloading and transport,
- c. where meat is immersed or washed during processing, such activity is not a source of contamination which would jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat,
- d. the true nature of safety and suitability of meat is not concealed nor compromised by the use of any substance or material (see also 2.4.4 Addition of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) below), and
- e. meat is not processed in a manner that could allow cross contamination which jeopardises the safety and suitability, either directly or indirectly, of:
  - i. any other food product by that meat, or
  - ii. that meat by vermin, or
  - iii. that meat from any other source, or
  - iv. ready-to-eat meat by uncooked meat, and
- f. smoke or steam used in direct contact with food or food contact surfaces does not contaminate the meat.

**2.4.0.2** Bread crumbs, batters, marinades and the like, once used, must be discarded at the end of each day's operation and must not be reused. Where recommended by the manufacturer, marinades and the like must be stored under refrigeration.

**2.4.0.3** Pickling or corning liquids for injection into meat products must be derived from wholesome materials and be injected in a hygienic manner. Where automatic pickle injectors are used all pickle remaining in the reservoir at the completion of operations each day must be discarded and not reused.

**2.4.0.4** The retail meat premises must not be used to sell or store for sale any pet food unless the pet food is packed in a sealed package. Unpacked meat offered for sale as pet food must have been

processed and handled in accordance with the Standard and comply with all relevant legislation for food for human consumption.

**2.4.0.5** Inedible meat must be identified, isolated, handled and disposed of in a manner that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of any other meat or food item.

**2.4.0.6** Ready-to-eat meat and meat products are not contaminated by meat and meat products that are not ready-to-eat.

**2.4.0.7** The storage, handling, processing and packaging of cooked meat takes place in areas that are used for cooked meat only and are clearly identified as being for use for cooked meat only.

## 2.4.1 Processing of cured meat products

### Outcome required

Cured meat products are cured in a way that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of the meat or meat products.

**2.4.1.1** The curing of meat and meat products must take place under controlled time and temperature conditions, which minimise the potential for growth of pathogenic bacteria to a level that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of the meat or meat products.

**2.4.1.2** The curing liquid is stored at not more than 5°C. Fresh brine solutions should be used for every batch.

**2.4.1.3** Brine injector machines should be cleaned and sanitised after each day's operation and needles cleaned regularly between batches. Immersion-curing equipment should be cleaned and sanitised between batches.

**2.4.1.4** Saline, nitrite and nitrate levels are maintained at concentrations that minimise food safety hazards and preserve the safety and suitability of the meat and meat products and comply with Standard 1.3.1 – *Food Additives* of the Food Standards Code.

## 2.4.2 Processing of cooked meat products

### Outcome required

Cooked meat products are cooked to reduce the number of pathogenic bacteria to a level that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of the meat products and then cooled to minimise the potential for microbial growth.

**2.4.2.1** A cooked meat product must:

- a. have had its core temperature maintained at 65°C for at least 10 minutes or an equivalent combination of time and higher temperature during production, or
- b. use an alternative time and temperature control for cooking the meat or meat product that is approved by the Food Authority.

**2.4.2.2** After cooking, the meat or meat products must be cooled in a manner that prevents or reduces the growth of pathogenic bacteria to a level that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of the food:

- a. cured meat products are cooled so that the temperature at the site of microbiological concern is:
  - i. reduced from 52°C to 12°C within 7.5 hours, and
  - ii. reduced to 5°C within 24 hours of completion of cooking, or

- iii. cooled at an alternative time and temperature that is approved by the Food Authority.
- b. uncured meat products are cooled so that the temperature at the site of microbiological concern is:
  - i. reduced from 52°C to 12°C within 6 hours, and
  - ii. reduced to 5°C within 24 hours of completion of cooking, or
  - iii. cooled at an alternative time and temperature that is approved by the Food Authority.

### 2.4.3 Processing of uncooked comminuted fermented meat (UCFM) products

#### Outcome required

Uncooked comminuted fermented meat products are processed in a manner to minimise microbial outgrowth.

**2.4.3.1** Uncooked comminuted fermented meat (UCFM) products must only be processed in accordance with Standard 4.2.3 – *Production and Processing Standard for Meat*.

**2.4.3.2** Written approval from the Food Authority is required to produce UCFM products.

### 2.4.4 Processing of dried meat products

#### Outcome required

Dried meat products are dried in a manner to minimise microbial outgrowth.

**2.4.3.1** Dried meat products that are not cured must be dried at a temperature that will minimise microbial growth. An air temperature to achieve a core of 50-55°C or more is recommended.

**2.4.3.2** Dried meat products must achieve a water activity of no more than 0.85 in the finished product.

### 2.4.4 Addition of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)

#### Outcome required

The addition of sulphur dioxide to meat products complies with Food Standards Code requirements.

**2.4.5.1** Standard 1.3.1 – *Food Additives* of the Food Standards Code provides that a food additive may only be added to food where expressly permitted, otherwise its presence is an offence.

**2.4.5.2** Up to 500 mg/kg of sulphur dioxide and sodium and potassium sulphites may be added to sausage and sausage meat containing raw, unprocessed meat.

**2.4.5.3** The Food Standards Code does not permit the use of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and sodium and potassium sulphites in raw meat, poultry and game.

## 2.5 Display of meat and meat products

### Outcome required

Display and serving facilities are constructed to maintain the required temperature, safety and suitability of all meat and meat products.

**2.5.1** The temperature of meat (other than shelf stable meat products) displayed for retail sale must not exceed 5°C.

**2.5.2** Facilities for displaying chilled meat and meat products must be constructed to:

- a. maintain the temperature of chilled product at or less than 5°C,
- b. maintain the temperature of frozen product at or less than -15°C so they remain 'hard frozen',
- c. display the operating temperature of serving facilities so it can be monitored, and
- d. prevent the public from contacting unwrapped meat.

**2.5.3** The temperature of chilled display facilities must be verified and calibrated annually by the business or a contractor.

**2.5.4** Cooling unit discharge must be directed to the drainage system or be collected and disposed of in a hygienic manner.

**2.5.5** Meat which is prepared by cooking and is to be displayed for sale:

- a. as a hot product, must have an internal temperature of not less than 60°C, or
- d. as a cold product, must be cooled as rapidly as possible and must be placed in a facility with an ambient temperature of not more than 5°C, or
- e. as a cold product, must have a temperature of not more than 5°C.

**2.5.6** The temperature of meat and meat products must be monitored regularly and recorded using a probe thermometer that can be inserted into the food. This thermometer must be:

- a. readily available
- b. accurate to  $\pm 1^\circ\text{C}$
- c. calibrated at least annually or as required by the Food Safety Program.

## 2.6 Packaging of meat and meat products

### Outcome required

The packaging of meat does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of the food. Packaged meat is identified to enable effective traceability.

**2.6.1** Retail meat premises must only pack meat and meat products in material that:

- a. is free from substances that may make the food unsafe or unsuitable,
- b. is clean and free from any foreign matter, and
- c. has not previously been used for any purpose except in the case of:
  - i. tubs, crates, and similar containers which are constructed in accordance with Clause 3.9 of the Standard
  - ii. meat intended for animal food. The outer packaging must comply with (a) and (b) and may be reused if fully lined with new packaging material
  - iii. meat intended for over-the-counter sale, the outer packaging complies with (a) and (b) and may be reused if previously used for meat and if fully lined with new packaging material. Meat must not be displayed for sale or packaged for resale in reused packaging material.

**2.6.2** A person must not supply meat to a customer unless such meat is supplied in a manner which does not jeopardise its safety and suitability, for example in the case of over-the-counter sale, totally enclosing the meat in packaging material or in a suitable container.

**2.6.3** Pre-packaged meat must be prepared by totally enclosing the meat in a sealed package which must:

- a. be constructed and sealed in a specified manner to prevent the escape of any exudate and, in the case of meat that was frozen when packaged, the escape of any exudate that might occur if that meat was thawed,
- b. be constructed of durable material specified to resist breakage of the package during normal handling practices,
- c. be sealed in a specified manner whereby such packaging cannot be opened and resealed without such action being evident, and
- d. be labelled with the name and street address of the premises in which the meat was packaged.

**2.6.4** Where the integrity of the packaging of pre-packaged meat has been compromised during its exposure to handling by the public such pre-packaged meat must be removed from sale and condemned.

**2.6.5** Any meat displayed in a manner whereby it can be handled by the public must be in the form of pre-packaged meat.

**2.6.6** The operator must ensure that where meat is packed in cartons and containers for resale, such cartons and containers must display the following information:

- a. the name and street address of the premises in which the meat was packed
- b. the animal species from which the meat or meat product is derived
- c. the trade name or the description of the meat or meat products contained in the package
- d. a nutrition information panel if marinades or other ingredients are used
- e. the weight, and
- f. one or more of the following:



- i. date of packaging and a statement of the shelf life of the packaged food, or
- ii. use-by date, or iii. best before date.

2.6.7 Where meat is packed on the premises for retail sale, such packages must be labelled in accordance with the requirements of the Food Standards Code.

## 2.7 Transportation of meat and meat products

### Outcome required

The transportation of meat and meat products does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of the meat.

2.7.1 The operation of a meat van and facilities used for transporting meat and meat products must comply with the requirements of:

- a. The Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (AS4696:2023), and
- b. During retail deliveries, the operator must ensure the safety and suitability of meat and meat products is maintained.

## 2.8 Disposal

### Outcome required

Food for disposal does not contaminate food for human consumption.

2.8.1 'Food for disposal' means food that:

- a. is subject to recall
- b. has been returned
- c. is not safe or suitable for human consumption, or
- d. is reasonably suspected of not being safe or suitable for human consumption.

2.8.2 A retail meat premises must ensure food for disposal is held and kept separate until it is:

- a. destroyed or otherwise used or disposed of so that it cannot be used for human consumption.,
- b. returned to its supplier
- c. further processed in a way that ensures its safety and suitability, or
- d. ascertained to be safe and suitable.

2.8.3 A retail meat premises must clearly identify any food for disposal that is to be held and kept separate.

2.8.4 A meat retail premises must not sell food that has already been served to another person unless the food was completely wrapped when served and has remained completely wrapped.

## 2.9 Food recall

### Outcome required

A system for the recall of unsafe or unsuitable food is in place.

**2.9.1** A retail meat premises that is engaged in the wholesale supply, manufacture or importation of meat and meat products must:

- a. have in place a written system to ensure the recall of unsafe food, and
- b. comply with this system when recalling unsafe food.

## 2.10 Health and hygiene requirements

### Outcome required

Hygiene controls are implemented for all operations to effectively prevent physical and microbiological contamination of product and risks to health and safety of personnel.

**2.10.0.1** All protective clothing and personal equipment used in a retail meat premises must be:

- a. durable
- b. non-toxic
- c. corrosion resistant
- d. easily cleaned
- e. resistant to flaking or fraying, and
- f. of a finish that makes contamination clearly visible.

**2.10.0.2** The operator must ensure that:

- a. premises, vehicles, appliances, clothing, protective clothing and equipment are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised at the end of each day's operation. Equipment and parts of premises being used for normal continuous processing practices are exempt from this requirement provided that they are subject to a regular cleaning and sanitation program as detailed in the Food Safety Program (examples are brine tanks, cool rooms and drying rooms)
- b. whenever premises, vehicles, appliances, clothing, protective clothing or equipment become contaminated in a way that could jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat during processing, they must be immediately cleaned or, where applicable, replaced
- c. cleaning activities do not contaminate meat, meat products or meat product contact surfaces, and
- d. animals do not enter premises, other than guide dogs which are permitted in customer areas only.

**2.10.0.3** At the commencement of each day's operation, a person must not begin using the premises, vehicles, appliances, protective clothing or equipment for processing unless they are clean.

## 2.10.1 Health and hygiene of food handlers

### Outcome required

Hygiene controls are implemented to ensure that personnel do not contaminate food.

**2.10.1.1** Staff handling food will take all reasonable measures not to handle food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food in a way that is likely to compromise the safety and suitability of food.

### 2.10.2 Health of staff handling food

**2.10.2.1** Food handlers who have a symptom that indicates the handler may be suffering from a foodborne disease, or knows he or she is suffering from a foodborne disease, or is a carrier of a foodborne disease, will, if at work:

- a. report that he or she is suffering from the disease, or knows that he or she is carrying the disease, to his or her supervisor,
- b. not engage in any handling of food where there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of the disease, and
- c. if continuing to engage in other work on the food premises, take all practicable measures to prevent food from being contaminated as a result of the disease.

**2.10.2.2** Food handlers who suffer from an infected skin lesion or discharges from the ear, nose or eye will, if at work:

- a. and if there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of suffering the condition, report that he or she is suffering from the condition to his or her supervisor, and
- b. if continuing to engage in the handling of food or other work, take all practicable measures to prevent food being contaminated as a result of the condition.

**2.10.2.3** Food handlers will notify the supervisor if the food handler knows or suspects that he or she may have contaminated food.

### 2.10.3 Hygiene of food handlers

**2.10.3.1** Food handlers will, when engaging in any food handling operation:

- a. take all practicable measures to ensure his or her body, anything from his or her body, and anything he or she is wearing does not contaminate food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food
- b. take all practicable measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food
- c. ensure outer clothing is of a level of cleanliness that is appropriate for the handling of food that is being conducted
- d. only use on exposed parts of his or her body bandages and dressings that are completely covered with a waterproofed covering.
- e. not eat over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food
- f. not sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food
- g. not spit, smoke or use tobacco or similar substances in areas in which food is handled, and
- h. not urinate or defecate except in a toilet.

**2.10.3.2** Food handlers will wash their hands:

- a. whenever their hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food
- b. immediately before working with ready-to-eat cooked meat, and
- c. immediately after using the toilet.

**2.10.3.3** Food handlers will, when engaging in a food handling operation that involves unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food, wash their hands:

- a. before commencing or re-commencing handling food
- b. immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, eating, drinking or using tobacco or similar substances
- c. after touching their hair, scalp or a body opening
- d. d) after using devices (such as a mobile phone).

**2.10.3.4** Food handlers will, whenever washing their hands:

- a. use the hand washing facilities provided
- b. thoroughly clean their hands using soap or other effective means, and warm running water, and
- c. thoroughly dry their hands on a single use towel or in another way that is not likely to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the hands.

## 2.11 Cleaning, sanitising and maintenance

### 2.11.1 Cleanliness

#### Outcome required

A retail meat premises is kept clean.

**2.11.1.1** A retail meat premises must be maintained to a standard of cleanliness so there is no accumulation of:

- a. garbage, except in garbage containers
- b. recycled matter, except in containers
- c. food waste
- d. dirt
- e. grease, or
- f. other visible matter.

**2.11.1.2** A retail meat premises must maintain all fixtures, fittings and equipment, to a standard of cleanliness where there is no accumulation of:

- a. food waste
- b. dirt
- c. grease, or
- d. other visible matter.

### 2.11.2 Maintenance

#### Outcome required

Premises and equipment is maintained to ensure that the hygienic processing of meat and meat products is not jeopardised.

**2.11.2.1** The maintenance of premises and equipment must:

- a. facilitate hygienic processing
- b. ensure equipment is in a proper state of operational adjustment
- c. ensure that defects or damages are repaired in accordance with good practice, and
- d. ensure repaired items are in good working order.

**2.11.2.2** The Food Safety Program in place at the retail meat premises will include regular maintenance reviews and structured programs for correction of identified deficiencies.

### 2.11.3 Pest control

#### Outcome required

The retail meat premises is maintained free of insects and other pests which may cause contamination of meat and meat products.

**2.11.3.1** A retail meat premises must have an insect and vermin control program that:

- a. prevents the entry of insects and vermin
- b. immediately controls any insects and vermin detected within the premises
- c. where necessary, minimises the survival of insects and vermin within the premises, and
- d. ensures that insects and vermin, insect control equipment and any use of pesticides do not contaminate meat and meat products, ingredients, packaging materials and product contact surfaces.

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## 3. Food premises and equipment

### 3.1 Design and construction of retail meat premises

#### Outcome required

- Construction of retail meat premises does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat and meat products.
- Construction facilitates hygienic processing and prevents contamination of meat and meat products.

**3.1.1** The design and layout of the premises and its equipment must facilitate the hygienic processing of meat and meat products and any inspection or auditing necessary during or after production. ('Inspection' includes inspection or monitoring of product by the operator during production, 'auditing' includes internal audit).

**3.1.2** Construction must be designed to:

- a. provide adequate space for food production and the fixtures, fittings and equipment used
- b. prevent access by and harbourage of pests
- c. keep out dust, dirt, fumes, smoke and other contaminants
- d. minimise the accumulation of dust, water, litter or waste materials, and
- e. restrict entry to the processing areas of the premises to authorised staff only.

**3.1.3** Retail meat premises must be constructed so that the hygienic processing and sale of meat and meat products is not jeopardised. Construction must:

- a. use materials that will not become a source of contamination, such as toxic materials, flaking paint, untreated iron fixtures, porous material which may harbour bacteria, and
- b. not inhibit hygienic processing, for example meat contacting non-product surfaces, such as walls, door jambs, etcetera, and
- c. allow effective cleaning, preventing unsealed joints, rough surfaces, angled corners.

### 3.2 Water supply

#### Outcome required

An adequate supply of potable water is available to facilitate the hygienic processing of meat and meat products.

**3.2.1** Premises must be provided with:

- a. hot and cold potable water in quantity and under pressure as necessary to ensure all activities involved in the production of wholesome meat and meat products can be conducted effectively.

### 3.3 Solid and liquid waste disposal

#### Outcome required

Solid and liquid waste is effectively stored and removed in a manner which does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat and meat products.

**3.3.1** Liquid and solid waste material must be handled, stored, treated and disposed of in a facility and manner that does not jeopardise the water supply or the safety and suitability of meat or that such waste material does not become food or a breeding place for insects and vermin or create odours.

**3.3.2** Separate facilities must be provided for the storage of waste (other than edible fat and bone) and inedible material prior to removal from the premises.

**3.3.3** Wherever practicable, facilities must be designed to prevent access to waste or inedible material by pests, and to avoid contamination of food, potable water, equipment, buildings or roadways on the premises.

### 3.4 Storage of garbage and recyclable matter

#### Outcome required

Adequate storage facilities are available for garbage and recyclable matter.

**3.4.1** Retail meat premises must have facilities for the storage of garbage and recyclable matter that:

- a. adequately contain the volume and type of garbage and recyclable matter,
- b. enclose the garbage and recyclable matter so they do not provide a breeding ground for pests, and
- c. are designed and constructed so that they may be easily and effectively cleaned.

### 3.5 Ventilation

#### Outcome required

Adequate natural or mechanical ventilation is available to minimise the likelihood of airborne contamination of meat.

**3.5.1** Ventilation must maintain product safety and suitability and remove excessive heat, steam and condensation and prevent the entry of odours, dust, vapour or smoke.

**3.5.2** Where smokehouses or cookers are used in premises, heat, steam, smoke and other emissions must be vented to the outside of the premises in a manner that does not jeopardise the hygienic processing of meat and meat products.

## 3.6 Lighting

### Outcome required

Sufficient natural and/or artificial light is available to carry out food handling operations, cleaning and sanitising and other activities on the premises.

**3.6.1** Lighting must be adequate to enable hygienic processing, inspection and auditing. For guidance on sufficient lighting, refer to *Australian Standard 1680.1-2006 Interior and workplace lighting: General principles and recommendation*.

**3.6.2** Shatterproof protective shields must be provided over exposed lights.

**3.6.3** Light fittings must be constructed in a way that prevents contamination of meat or product contact surfaces by dirt, dust or other matter falling from the light fittings.

## 3.7 Floors, walls and ceiling

### 3.7.1 Floors

#### Outcome required

Floors are constructed so they can be effectively cleaned, impervious to grease, food particles and water and do not provide a harbourage for pests.

**3.7.1.1** Floors must be constructed so that liquids do not accumulate. They should provide a rate of drainage consistent with the operations in the area.

**3.7.1.2** Where necessary, floor drainage must be directed to an external grease trap or other means of removing solids and suspended fats, which has surrounds capable of being easily cleaned.

**3.7.1.3** A drainage system must prevent odours, vermin, any objectionable material or storm water entering the premises through that system and prevent the accumulation of any water or waste product.

**3.7.1.4** Where smokehouses are not drained internally, a suitable drainage system must be provided at the smokehouse entrance to ensure liquid and solid waste is controlled to minimise the spread of such waste across floors.

**3.7.1.5** Solid and liquid waste including sewage must be disposed of in the manner required by the relevant authorities and in a manner that prevents contamination of potable water supplies and does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat and meat products.

**3.7.1.6** Sawdust, shell-grit, or other similar materials must not be used on floors.

### 3.7.2 Walls and ceilings

#### Outcome required

- Walls and ceilings are constructed so they are appropriate for the area and are provided as necessary to protect food.
- Walls and ceilings do not provide a harbourage for pests and must be capable of being effectively cleaned.
- Walls and ceilings used to protect food are sealed to prevent dirt, dust and pests getting into the area and are impervious to grease, food particles and water.



**3.7.2.1** Ceilings must be provided in all processing areas of the premises, be easy to clean and be constructed to prevent the accumulation of dirt and minimise condensation. Associated installations, equipment and fittings must facilitate effective cleaning.

**3.7.2.2** All the exposed internal surfaces of areas and equipment used for meat processing purposes must be:

- a. durable
- b. non-toxic
- c. smooth-surfaced (consistent with safety in the case of floors)
- d. corrosion resistant or capable of being maintained free of corrosion, for example meat rails where edible oil is regularly applied
- e. impervious (except for wooden chopping blocks maintained for the purpose of chopping only)
- f. resistant to, or protected from, impact
- g. easily cleaned and, where necessary, capable of being dismantled for cleaning
- h. resistant to chipping, flaking or fraying
- i. of a finish that makes contamination clearly visible
- j. constructed such that joints are effectively sealed
- k. constructed to minimise accumulation of dust, water, litter or waste materials on ledges, sills etc., and
- l. for wall to floor junctions, coved to enable effective cleaning.

## 3.8 Loading areas

### Outcome required

Loading areas are constructed to minimise contamination of meat.

**3.8.1** Access points for load-in and load-out must be constructed to ensure that the safety and suitability of meat and meat products is not jeopardised.

**3.8.2** In common loading areas, meat must be able to pass through without contacting non-meat product surfaces.

**3.8.3** Doors, door jambs and passageways must be constructed to ensure product passing through does not become contaminated.

## 3.9 Fixtures, fittings and equipment

### 3.9.1 General requirements

### Outcome required

- Fixtures, fittings and equipment are designed, constructed, installed and used so as to preclude the adulteration of product with any contaminants.
- Fixtures, fittings and equipment are constructed and installed in a way that allows effective cleaning of the premises and equipment and does not provide harbourage for pests.

- Food contact surfaces are made of a material that will not contaminate food, can be easily and effectively cleaned and sanitised and are impervious to grease, food particles and water.

**3.9.1.1** All fixtures, fittings and equipment used for meat processing purposes must be:

- a. durable
- b. non-toxic
- c. smooth-surfaced
- d. corrosion resistant
- e. impervious (except for chopping blocks maintained for the purpose of chopping only)
- f. easily cleaned and, where necessary, capable of being dismantled for cleaning
- g. resistant to chipping, flaking or fraying
- h. of a finish that makes contamination clearly visible, and
- i. constructed such that joints are effectively sealed.

**3.9.1.2** Equipment not designed for use in food production areas, such as shopping trolleys, are not permitted.

### **3.9.2 Carcase rails**

#### **Outcome required**

Carcase rails are constructed to minimise contamination of meat.

**3.9.2.1** To prevent any cross contamination, carcase rails must be constructed to ensure there is adequate carcase clearance over, or from, operational equipment and structures not designed for contact with carcasses or meat.

**3.9.2.2** Carcase rails may be constructed of mild steel providing they are maintained in a corrosion free state through the frequent application of an edible oil.

### **3.9.3 Butchers blocks**

#### **Outcome required**

Wooden chopping blocks are used in a manner that does not contaminate meat.

**3.9.3.1** Wooden chopping blocks must be free of splits, cracks and holes and must be maintained in a hygienic condition.

**3.9.3.2** Wooden chopping blocks must be for the purposes of chopping and flattening only.

### **3.9.4 Hand washing facilities**

#### **Outcome required**

Designated, appropriate hand washing facilities are available and accessible.

**3.9.4.1** A retail meat premises must have hand washing facilities which are:

- a. provided with warm running water
- b. provided with an effective sanitising agent (such as liquid soap)
- c. equipped with taps which are hands free operated
- d. provided with hand drying facilities that do not contaminate washed hands or the surrounding area, and
- e. connected directly to the drainage system.

**3.9.4.2** Hand washing facilities must be readily accessible, only used for the washing of hands, arms and face and at appropriate locations for use during processing to ensure that the safety and suitability of meat and meat products is not jeopardised.

**3.9.4.3** At or near each hand washing facility, a retail meat premises must provide:

- a. single use towels or other means of effectively drying hands that are not likely to transfer pathogenic microorganisms to the hands, and
- b. a container for used towels if needed.

### 3.9.5 Ovens and smokehouses

#### Outcome required

Equipment correctly installed, cleaned and maintained to ensure product is cooked correctly and is not a source of contamination.

**3.9.5.1** Retail meat premises that operate an oven or smokehouse must ensure:

- a. the oven or smokehouse is located in a building or structure that complies with the construction requirements outlined in the Food Standards Code,
- b. the construction and surrounds of the oven or smokehouse comply with the construction requirements outlined in the Food Standards Code, and
- c. that all practicable measures are taken to prevent cross contamination between cooked and raw products.

### 3.9.6 Storage facilities

#### Outcome required

- Adequate storage facilities are available for items that are likely to be a source of contamination.
- Storage facilities are constructed to ensure that stored items do not become contaminated and are not a source of contamination.

**3.9.6.1** Facilities must be provided for the storage of:

- a. all processing and packaging materials
- b. ingredients
- c. laundered protective clothing
- d. personal belongings including clothing not worn during working hours
- e. cleaning and sanitising products

- f. aprons and gear (such as knives, steels, etcetera) when employees are not in the processing area, and
- g. cleaned equipment such as product containers, trays, tubs, sausage sticks, presses and mobile equipment to protect them from contamination.

**3.9.6.2** Storage of material and ingredients must be in a manner to prevent contamination of such material which could jeopardise the safety and suitability of meat and meat products.

**3.9.6.3** Storage for shelf-stable and ready-to-eat meat products must be provided to prevent cross contamination.

**3.9.6.4** Clearly identified facilities must be provided for storing inedible material to prevent contamination of edible material.

### **3.9.7 Toilet facilities**

#### **Outcome required**

Toilet facilities are available for the use of food handlers either on the premises or readily accessible elsewhere. Toilet facilities are constructed and located so that their use does not provide a source of contamination.

**3.9.7.1** A retail meat premises must ensure that adequate toilets are available for the use of staff.

**3.9.7.2** Toilet facilities must be accessible at all times when staff are working.

**3.9.7.3** Toilets must have hand wash facilities to ensure that the safety and suitability of meat and meat products is not jeopardised.

**3.9.7.4** Location of amenities, where provided, must be adequate for the purpose and not jeopardise hygienic processing.

**3.9.7.5** Where amenities are provided at a retail meat premises they must be maintained and used by personnel in a manner that does not jeopardise the safety and suitability of any meat within the premises.

## References and further reading

### Acts

*Food Act 2003* (NSW) (available at [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)).

### Regulation

Food Regulation 2015 (available at [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au))

### Food Standards Code

Standard 3.2.1 – Food Safety Programs

Standard 3.2.2 – Food Safety Practices and General Requirements

Standard 3.2.3 – Food Premises and Equipment

Standard 4.2.3 – Primary Production and Processing Standard for Meat (available at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)).

### Other

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application

Codex Alimentarius Commission (2003) (available at [www.codexalimentarius.net](http://www.codexalimentarius.net))

### Food Industry Recall Protocol

Information on recalling food in Australia and writing a food recall plan

Food Standards Australia New Zealand 7th Edition May 2014

Guidelines for the safe manufacture of smallgoods 3rd Edition

Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd

Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011)

National Health and Medical Research Council (available at [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au))

### Building, Plumbing and Electricity Codes

A Guide to the Implementation and Auditing of HACCP

AS4696–2023, Australian Standard for the Hygienic production and transportation of meat and meat products for human consumption

AS1680.1–2006, Interior and workplace lighting: General principles and recommendations

AS/NZS ISO 9001:2016 – Quality System – Model for quality assurance in design, development, production, installation and servicing

## Notes

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