

Food Authority

Summary of meeting outcomes

Meat Industry Consultative Council - Summary of meeting outcomes

12 July 2023

The Meat Industry Consultative Council met via video conference on Wednesday 12 July 2023. Specific issues considered at the meeting are outlined below.

Attendees

Meat Industry Consultative Council: Clair House (Australian Meat Industry Council), Vaibhav Gole (Australian Pork), Susy Klein (Ingham's Enterprises Pty Ltd), Anthony Pavic (Baiada Poultry Pty Ltd), Verity Price (Australian Chicken Meat Federation), Georgie Trowbridge (NSW Farmers' Association).

NSW DPI – Biosecurity & Food Safety: Jo Coombe (NSW Chief Veterinary Officer and Group Director Animal Biosecurity) David Cusack (Manager, Food Standards and Programs), Eric Davis (Manager Food Policy & Partnerships), Kiowa Fenner (Director, Sheep and Goat Traceability), Jaime Garcia (Secretariat), Mark Mackie (Manager Regulatory Operations Unit), Helen Schaefer (Team Leader, Animal Welfare Policy & Programs), Lisa Szabo – Chair (Director Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority).

Invited attendees: David Banham (NSW Farmers' Association).

Apologies:

Ash Cooper, (NSW Farmers' Association), John Houston (Pepe's Ducks Pty Ltd), Mary Wu (Australian Chicken Meat Federation), Greg Vakaci (Director Compliance & Integrity Systems).

Members provided updates on key and emerging issues/concerns:

Nil

Food Safety Compliance Report

Mark Mackie provided an update on the meat industry compliance activities for the period July 2022 - 31 May 2023. 95% of licensed meat industry businesses recorded an acceptable audit and/or inspection result, no change in the previous year's comparable period. 2,240 audits and inspections were conducted in total. The focus on the retail meat sector resulted in an increase in audits and inspections towards the end of this period. This focus will continue into next year. These activities form a critical part of our risk mitigation measures.

A total of 107 sanctions were issued including improvement notices, penalty notices, warning letters, seizure notices, prohibition orders and prosecutions.

Animal welfare update

Helen Schaefer updated members on the following.

Livestock Processing Establishments Standards and Guidelines (S&G)

- The final meeting for the independently facilitated stakeholder advisory group (SAG) was held in December 2022. The drafting of the Standards has commenced.
- Public consultation on draft documents is expected to occur mid-late 2023.
- A Regulatory Impact Statement for the S&G will be prepared.
- Finalisation of the S&G is due 2024.

More information on national animal welfare policy and regulatory matters, can be found at [Animal Welfare Task Group \(AWTG\)](#)

Poultry S&G

- The “Australian Animal Welfare Standards & Guidelines for Poultry” were published in August 2022.
- Jurisdictions are currently considering implementation options.
- The Agriculture Senior Officials Group (AGSOC) met on 15 June and agreed to progress the poultry standards and guidelines to the Agriculture Ministers’ Meeting on 13 July 2023 for consideration.

Pre-slaughter CO₂ stunning of pigs

- Subsequent to vision aired on the ABC 7.30 report on 27 March and 26 April 2023, NSW DPI Animal Welfare, in collaboration with DPI Agriculture, completed two scientific literature reviews:
 - Pigs - CO₂ stunning responses
 - Pigs – CO₂ alternatives
- These reviews have been shared with the national Animal Welfare Task Group.
- They will also help inform the NSW Government response to the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment (Gassing Devices Prohibition) Bill 2023* which was introduced in the NSW Parliament by the Animal Justice Party on Wed 28 June 2023.
- Correspondence has been received by the office of the Minister for Agriculture and the NSW DPI from members of the public concerned about CO₂ stunning.
- Note: CO₂ stunning is in scope for the livestock processing Standards and Guidelines.

Virtual Fencing

- The issue of virtual fencing is currently being considered by the AWTG as directed by AGSOC.
- There are no updates to provide since the previous meeting in March.

Biosecurity update

Eric Davis provided an update on the recent detection of *Salmonella Enteritidis* (SE) on an egg laying farm in western Sydney. The SE strain detected is closely related to the 2018-19 NSW outbreak strain. The flock has been de-populated and is in the process of decontamination and disinfection. Manure and compost disposal will also occur as part of that process. The facility remains under quarantine.

All properties that have any connection with this farm, including neighbouring properties, have been traced, tested and returned a negative SE result. DPI is

considering whether current SE surveillance arrangements are adequate or need to be reconsidered. Food Standards Australia New Zealand is also currently reviewing the national egg standard to see whether it remains fit for purpose given it was created at a time when there was no history of SE in poultry flocks. This review will consider recent cases of SE in poultry flocks.

Jo Coombe discussed the possibility of conducting an Avian Influenza discussion exercise with poultry industries in the coming months. This exercise would include a run through the NSW Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) response plan. Industry expressed their interest in this exercise.

The date for the next meeting of the Meat Industry Consultative Council is to be advised.