



AQIS MEAT NOTICE		EXPORT OF BEEF, SHEEP, BUFFALO, CAMEL & GOAT MEAT TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA	
NUMBER: 2007 / 14			
NSFS Ref 16, 17		Contact Officers:	
Date of Effect	Date of Expiry	Anand Deo	Steve Roberts
01 October 2007	Until Further Notice	Food Safety Manager Meat Operations	Senior Veterinary Officer Animal Products Market Access Branch
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meat Inspection Staff			
IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE to be completed by the On Plant Supervisor on the AQIS file			
Date Received _____		Date Discussed With Management _____	
Initial Implementation Date _____		Date Completed _____	
Establishment Management Initials _____		AQIS OPS Initials _____	

1. PURPOSE

To advise industry and AQIS staff on the revised requirements for the exports of meat and meat products derived from beef, sheep, buffalo, camel and goats to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

This notice replaces AQIS meat notice 2007/05.

2. BACKGROUND

The Saudi Government has revised the requirements for importation of eligible meat and meat products particularly in relation to freedom from Hormonal Growth Promotant (HGP) and the removal of spinal cord from carcasses or cartoned product. To satisfy Saudi health certification requirements, establishments must ensure compliance with the procedures outlined in this notice.

3. SCOPE

All export registered establishments slaughtering, processing or storing beef, sheep, buffalo, camel and goat meat for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

4. SAUDI REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Scope

The Saudi program must address identification, segregation and inventory control of all Saudi eligible products, from animal receipt through to the point of loading for export. Independent boning establishments are also required to have an approved Saudi Program for operations undertaken for Saudi eligible product.

4.2 Approved Arrangements

An export meat establishment intending to slaughter, process or store meat for the Saudi market must have a Saudi Program in its Approved Arrangement. The Saudi Program must be assessed and approved by the AQIS On-Plant Supervisor (OPS) and Area Technical Manager (ATM) for compliance with this notice.

All existing Saudi Programs should be reviewed to ensure they address the recent changes to Saudi overseas market requirements, namely:

- a) meat can be sourced from HGP-treated cattle; and
- b) spinal cord does not have to be removed from carcasses or cartoned product.

4.3 Saudi Listing

Administrative listings for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will continue (Saudi Beef, Saudi Buffalo, Saudi Camel, Saudi Sheep and Saudi Goat). Listing for a species will only be given where establishments have an approved Saudi Program covering that particular species.

In accordance with Saudi requirements, export abattoirs with the registered operation 'slaughter pigs' will not be granted an approved Saudi Program or listing.

4.4 Ante mortem

Ante-mortem inspection must be conducted by the official veterinarian within the 12 hours prior to slaughter. AQIS OPS and plant management must implement plant-specific arrangements such that this antemortem inspection requirement can be met.

4.5 Slaughter

All Saudi eligible animals must be slaughtered by a halal service provider approved by Saudi Arabia in accordance with AQIS Meat Notice 2006/19 or any superseding list.

4.6 Product Identification

- a) The size of stamps (official marks) on carcasses/parts is to be between 6-10 cm. The current large AI stamp is 6.5cm and therefore satisfies this requirement.
- b) Carcasses shall be identified with the slaughter date prior to exiting the slaughter floor.
- c) In addition to an "AI" mark, all carcasses/cartons that are eligible for the Saudi market must also have a "SA in Square" mark (specifications for the "SA in Square" are at Attachment 1). The "SA in Square" mark is not an official health mark, but must be used for the identification, separation and inventory control of Saudi eligible product. This is a continuation of current product stamping practice used at establishments for all Saudi eligible product.

- d) The issuance and use of the “SA in Square” mark must be controlled by AQIS OPS.

4.7 Temperature Requirements for Meat and Offal

Saudi Standards require the following:

- a) Offal must be refrigerated directly after slaughter at a temperature of -1 °C to 0 °C (minus 1 deg C to 0 deg C).
- b) Offal to be frozen must be placed under refrigeration for freezing as soon as possible and be progressively reduced to and then stored at -18°C or below;
- c) Boned products are to be refrigerated directly after boning at a temperature of -1 °C to 0 °C (minus 1 deg C to 0 deg C);
- d) Meat to be frozen must be placed under refrigeration for freezing as soon as possible and be progressively reduced to and stored at -18°C or below;
- e) Frozen meat and offal are to be stored at, loaded out and transported at -18°C or colder. (Frozen meat must have a core temperature of -18°C before loading into an export container).
- f) In the case of frozen meat and offal, once the shipping container has been sealed for export, the exporter must ensure that the container temperature set point is at -18°C or colder until arrival in Saudi Arabia.

4.8 Inter-establishment Transfer

Transfer of Saudi eligible product must be done with an accompanying Meat Transfer Certificate signed by an authorised signatory and endorsed with the words:

“This meat has been produced, stored, transported and despatched in accordance with Saudi requirements”.

4.9 Feeding of animals

Livestock must not have been fed animal feed containing products from dead animals (protein, fats/tallow, animal remains). Dairy products are exempt.

This requirement is stricter than legislated ruminant feed bans in Australia and therefore additional measures are required. The following procedures for each species will ensure compliance with Saudi requirements:

4.9.1 Sheep

The current version of the sheep National Vendor Declaration¹ (NVD) meets the requirements provided that the answer to Question 6 is 'No' and the Declaration is completed. No additional endorsement is required.

4.9.2 Goats

The current version of the goat NVD² meets the requirements provided that the answer to Question 5 is 'No' and the Declaration is completed. No additional endorsement is required.

¹ Sample Sheep and Lambs NVD/Waybill. Available: <http://www.mla.com.au/NR/rdonlyres/B6C98011-9F48-4141-B21E-597CAB02F434/0/LPASheepNVD.pdf>

4.9.3 Cattle

The Declaration in the current version of the cattle NVD³ must be completed, AND the producers must enter the following words under Question 9 ‘additional information’ as detailed in the NVD explanatory notes:

“Saudi Eligible”

4.9.4 Calves

Bobby calves sent direct to slaughter are Saudi eligible and must be accompanied by a completed Bobby Calf NVD⁴.

Bobby calf (definition): Young bovine animals under 6 weeks of age⁵.

Calves older than 6 weeks must be accompanied by a cattle NVD.

4.9.5 Camels

These will generally be wild caught stock that may have spent some time on feed prior to slaughter. As they are not required to be accompanied by an NVD, camels presented for slaughter must be accompanied by a statutory declaration stating that:

“These camels (consignment details) have never in their lives been fed animal protein, animal fats/tallow or animal remains.”

4.9.6 Buffalo

These may be wild caught stock that may have spent some time on feed prior to slaughter, or are farm bred and raised. As they are not required to be accompanied by an NVD, buffalo presented for slaughter must be accompanied by a statutory declaration stating that:

“These buffalo (consignment details) have never in their lives been fed animal protein, animal fats/tallow or animal remains.”

5. HEALTH CERTIFICATION

The average age of livestock (except for camel and buffalo) must be stated on the health certificate.

An endorsement will be included on the health certificate that aims to meet this requirement. The endorsement will be linked to Request For Permit (RFP) species/category information as shown in Table 1:

² Sample Goat NVD/Waybill. Available: <http://www.mla.com.au/NR/rdonlyres/E2090E9D-DA9E-4CE1-8993-A1157E29F03C/0/LPAGoatNVD.pdf>

³ Cattle NVD and Waybill Sample. Available: <http://www.mla.com.au/TopicHierarchy/IndustryPrograms/LivestockQualitySystems/NationalVendorDeclarations/CattleNVDWaybill.htm>

⁴ Sample Bobby Calf NVD. Available: <http://www.mla.com.au/NR/rdonlyres/0F309523-5A3B-4529-B81B-3FDEEA639F6F/0/NVDBobbyCalvesExample.pdf>

⁵ National Animal Welfare Standards for Livestock Processing Establishments Preparing Meat for Human Consumption, 1. The Standards. Available: <http://www.amic.org.au/SiteMedia/w3svc116/Uploads/Documents/829d68cf-f177-4602-aeeb-cf23db0e54a2.pdf>

Table 1 – Species and age categories

Species/Category	Average age of animals	
	less than 1 year	more than 1 year
Ovine – Australian lamb	✓	
- all other categories		✓
Bovine – veal	✓	
- all other categories		✓
Caprine – kid goat	✓	
- all other categories		✓

5.1 RFP procedures

When entering an RFP for the Saudi market, the following words must be included in the ‘exporter comments’ field of the RFP, based on Saudi program/s:

“Product complies with requirements for Saudi Arabia as per AQIS Notice Meat 2007/14.”

The authorised officer or company signatory validating the RFP must, if satisfied all necessary requirements have been met, put the following endorsement in the ‘inspector comments’ field:

“Saudi Complies”

After authorisation a print out of the RFP (showing the status at INSP, HCRD or COMP and statement regarding SAUDI eligibility) must be provided to the AQIS Authorised Officer prior to signing of the Halal Certificate.

6. HALAL CERTIFICATION

6.1 Halal Certificates

Certificates issued for Saudi Arabia shall include the following information:

“Slaughter dates: to

Average age of animals:

The meat is derived from animals examined by ante-mortem (up to 12 hours before slaughter) and post-mortem veterinary inspection, and found to be wholesome, free from disease and suitable in every way for human consumption.”

6.2 Notes

- a) The above statement/s may be added to the halal certificate by means of a stamp or manually. The halal certificate and ante-mortem/post-mortem statement must be endorsed by an AQIS authorised officer after verifying the details.
- b) Slaughter dates must match those on the RFP.
- c) Average age is to be included as shown in Table 1 above.

7. ADDITIONAL MEASURES

The Saudi essential requirements also include the following and exporters are advised to liaise with importers regarding the implementation of these measures:

7.1 Shipping

Wherever possible, meat shall be shipped directly to Saudi Arabia without calling at the port of a third country. Where this is not feasible, the shortest possible route shall be used. The transit port must not be suffering from contagious diseases provided for in the Saudi Veterinary Quarantine Regulation.

7.2 Air freight

Air freight consignments are to be shipped in containers that can be effectively sealed, such as the AKE type, and are to be sealed with an official security seal.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Establishment Management

- Amend the existing Saudi Program to address the changed requirements (meat can be sourced from HGP-treated cattle; no requirement to remove the spinal cord from carcasses).
- As applicable develop and implement a Saudi program in line with this meat notice and in consultation with the OPS/ATM.
- Ensure the Saudi Program is included in the relevant (i.e. overseas country requirements) section of the Approved Arrangement.

8.2 OPS

- Ensure ante mortem on animals presented as eligible for Saudi Arabia is carried out in accordance with Saudi Requirements
- Ensure the company's Saudi Program satisfies the requirements of this meat notice.
- Conduct appropriate monitoring/verification to ensure the Saudi Program is operating in accordance with this meat notice and the company's Approved Arrangement.
- Record monitoring/verification activities in the National Establishment Verification System.

8.3 ATM

- As appropriate approve amendments to the company's Approved Arrangement.
- Verify the OPS and company activities for compliance.

Carol Sheridan
Manager
Export Meat Program

Attachment 1: Design of the “SA in Square” Mark

1. The “SA in Square” mark is not an official health mark, but a mark used for the purposes of identifying meat, edible offal or meat products that are eligible for export to Saudi Arabia. “SA in Square” mark shall have the following design:



2. The dimension of the “SA in Square” mark shall be as per Table 2:

Table 2

Item	Dimension (mm)
Breadth of square mark	22
Height of square mark	22
Height of letters SA	3 (minimum)

3. Application of the “SA in Square” mark to goods of any kind, including any packaging or labelling applied or affixed to those goods, shall be taken as a declaration that the goods comply in every way with the Saudi requirements that apply to goods of that kind at the stage of preparation at which the mark is applied.

4. If goods that have been identified by the application of the “SA in Square” mark and are subsequently:

- (a) further prepared by processing in any way or the application of any packaging, labelling and the like; or
- (b) stored; or
- (c) otherwise handled, including being transferred to another establishment; or
- (d) exported,

the presence of the mark shall be deemed to be a declaration that the goods comply, and continue to comply, in every way with Saudi requirements that apply to goods of that kind up to and including the stage at which the subsequent preparation, storage, handling or export, as the case may be, takes place or occurs.

5. If the goods with “SA in Square” mark no longer comply with Saudi requirements, then the mark is required to be defaced, removed or otherwise obliterated.