Processed Meats Code of Practice

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Disclaimer

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER

Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this report is accurate.

NZFSA does not accept any responsibility or liability whatsoever for any error of fact, omission, interpretation or opinion that may be present, however it may have occurred.

Website

A copy of this document can be found at: http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/animalproducts/index.htm

Review of Code of Practice

This Code of Practice will be reviewed, as necessary, by the New Zealand Food Safety Authority. Suggestions for alterations, deletions or additions to this code of practice, should be sent, together with reasons for the change, any relevant data and contact details of the person making the suggestion, to:

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Amendment Record

It is important that this publication is kept up-to-date by the prompt incorporation of amendments.

To update this publication when you receive an amendment, remove the appropriate outdated pages, destroy them, and replace them with the pages from the new issue. Complete instructions will be given on the covering letter accompanying the amendment. File the covering letter at the back of the publication and sign off and date this page.

If you have any queries, please ask your local verifier.

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1   Introduction

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1.1   Purpose and Scope

This Code of Practice (COP) has been developed by the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) and the Pork Processors Association. It has been developed to assist meat processors comply with the requirements of the Food Act 1981 and the Animal Products Act 1999 (APA), and produce processed meats from mammals, ostriches and emus that are safe and suitable for their intended purpose. It provides guidance on Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), process control, and the application of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles for the production of processed meats, including smallgoods.

Processed meat, as defined in the Food Standards Code, means a meat product containing no less than 300 g/kg meat, where meat either singly or in combination with other ingredients or additives, has undergone a method of processing other than boning, slicing, dicing, mincing or freezing, and includes manufactured meat and cured and/or dried meat flesh in whole cuts or pieces.

Examples of processed meat products covered by this COP are:

- fresh sausages

- cooked comminuted meat products (e.g. luncheon, bologna, cooked sausages)

- uncooked comminuted fermented meat products (UCFM) (e.g. salami, pepperoni)

- cooked cured meat products (e.g. ham, corned beef, pastrami)

- cooked uncured meat products (e.g. roast beef)

- bacon

- dry-cured meat products (e.g. prosciutto)

- dried meat products (e.g. jerky, biltong)

- meat patties.

1.2   Contents

This COP is divided into four parts.

Part 1: Overview

Part 1 gives an overview of the COP and the requirements of the Food Act and the APA. It also provides web links to other relevant documents published by NZFSA.

Part 2: GMP – Hygiene and Sanitation, and Quality Assurance

Part 2 provides guidance on requirements and procedures for hygiene and sanitation, quality assurance, and other Food Safety Programme (FSP) and Risk Management Programme (RMP) requirements.

Part 3: GMP – Process Control

Part 3 provides guidance on processing requirements and controls for the main process steps involved in the production of processed meats.

Part 4: HACCP Application

Part 4 shows how the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) can be applied to the production of processed meats. HACCP models for various types of products are also provided.

1.3   Exclusions

This COP does not cover the following product categories:

- chilled or frozen raw meat, including those which have been boned, cut, sliced, diced, or minced

- canned meat products

- prepared meat meals; and

- meat preparations (breaded or battered meats; marinated meats).

This COP has been developed based on New Zealand requirements only and does not include overseas market access requirements. Exporters must ensure that they meet the requirements for an RMP and any overseas market access requirements relevant to their product and intended market.

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2   Requirements of the Food Act 1981 and the Animal Products Act 1999

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2.1   Legal Requirement for Food Businesses

Businesses involved in the production of processed meat products, including smallgoods, must operate under one of the following regimes:

- an approved FSP under Section 8G of the Food Act 1981

- a registered RMP under the Animal Products Act 1999; or

- the Food Hygiene Regulations 1974 and local authority (Council) registration.

Processors may choose to operate under the Food Hygiene Regulations, or obtain an exemption from the regulation by operating an FSP approved by the NZFSA. However, those that require an official assurance from the NZFSA in order to export any processed meat product must operate under the Animal Products Act and have a registered RMP.

FSPs and RMPs are documented programmes designed to identify and manage hazards and suitability factors, during a product's processing and sale, in order to ensure that the resulting product is safe and suitable for its intended purpose. The programmes are "legally binding" so they must be developed and implemented in accordance with relevant New Zealand legislation.

The major supermarkets in New Zealand require their suppliers to have an approved FSP or RMP, thus, most medium to large scale meat processors have an FSP or RMP. This COP has been written mainly for FSP and RMP operators, however, the guidance provided on GMP will also assist those operating under the Food Hygiene Regulations.

This COP addresses relevant legal requirements of the Animal Products Act and its subordinate legislation, Section 8G of the Food Act 1981, and the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. In relation to the Animal Products Act, only the Animal Products Regulations and the Animal Products (Specifications for Products Intended for Human Consumption) Notice are included, as these are the most relevant pieces of legislation for

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operations producing product for human consumption. Requirements from the Animal Products Act legislation are mandatory for businesses operating under an RMP, and they are strongly recommended for those operating under an FSP.

The Food Standards Code applies to all businesses regardless of whether operations are managed under an FSP, RMP or the Food Hygiene Regulations.

2.2   Contents of an FSP or RMP

The documented FSP or RMP must include the following:

2.2.1   Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP)

GMP (may also be referred to as good operating practice) includes the practices and procedures designed to ensure the consistent production of products that are fit for their intended purpose, and that meet relevant regulatory requirements. It includes several interacting components such as hygienic practices, process control and quality assurance systems. GMP is usually documented in supporting systems or GMP programmes of an FSP or RMP.

GMP is the foundation for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), and FSPs and RMPs.

GMP for the production of processed meats is discussed in Parts 2 and 3 of this COP.

2.2.2   Application of HACCP principles

The operator must apply HACCP principles, as appropriate to the product and process, to ensure a systematic approach to the identification and analysis of hazards and their control. This is covered in Part 4 of this COP.

2.2.3   Other FSP or RMP requirements

Other FSP or RMP requirements such as business identification, operator's details, and provisions for auditors or verifiers must also be documented in the FSP or RMP.

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2.3   FSP and RMP Components

There are differences in the required components of a FSP and RMP, but the key components are similar for both programmes, which are:

a.   Operator, business and FSP/RMP identification

b.   List of FSP or RMP documents

c.   Management authorities and responsibilities

d.   Scope

e.   Product, process and premises descriptions

f.   Any regulatory limits and operator-defined limits (i.e. product and processing criteria, including standards from the Food Standards Code)

g.   GMP (including control measures, monitoring procedures and corrective actions)

h.   Application of HACCP (identification, analysis and control of hazards to human health)

i.   Identification and competency of responsible persons

j.   Operator verification system

k.   Document control and record keeping procedures

l.   Recall procedures

m. Validation of the FSP or RMP

Operators should consult other NZFSA documents to obtain additional specific requirements for FSPs or RMPs.

Information about FSP development, assessment, and approval can be found in What Does a Food Safety Programme Look Like? and Approval of a Food Safety Programme.

The RMP Manual provides comprehensive information on the principles and components of RMPs and provides guidance for their development and registration.

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2.4   Use of the COP in the Development of an FSP or RMP

An operator is expected to develop and implement their FSP or RMP in accordance with this COP. This will:

- ensure that the operator complies with acceptable industry practices and procedures

- ensure that the operator meets relevant regulatory requirements; and

- simplify and reduce the cost of developing and evaluating (where appropriate) the FSP or RMP.

Operators must develop their own FSP or RMP that are specific to their own products, processes and premises. Relevant parts of the COP may be incorporated or referenced in their FSP or RMP, as appropriate.

3 Other Legislation

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This COP will assist processed meat operators meet some of the requirements of the Food Act and the Animal Products Act. Operators should not rely solely on this COP to provide them with information on all legal requirements. Operators are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar and comply with all legislation.

Legislation that is likely to be relevant to meat processors includes, but is not limited to, the following Acts and their associated regulations and specifications:

- Animal Products Act 1999

- Biosecurity Act 1993

- Building Act 2004

- Commerce Act 1986

- Consumer Guarantees Act 1993

- Fair Trading Act 1986

- Food Act 1981

- Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996

- Resource Management Act 1991

- Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

- Weight and Measures Act 1987

4 Other Sources of Information

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The NZFSA website contains other information which would be of value to meat processors. The following sections provide links to information that would be of particular relevance:

4.1 NZFSA Science Contracts

This page contains links to a wide range of scientific research undertaken by or on behalf of NZFSA. This can help assist operators understand current food safety issues which may be relevant to their product and process.

4.2 Microbial Pathogen Data Sheets

This page contains links to a series of microbiological data sheets that have been prepared for NZFSA by the Institute of Environmental Science and Research Limited (ESR). These can be used to help operators understand the characteristics of the microorganisms that need to be controlled by their process, their sources, growth parameters and examples of processing guidelines.

4.3 Risk Profiles

This page contains links to microbiological risk profiles that have been prepared for NZFSA by ESR. Risk Profiles provide information relevant to a food/hazard combination to help operators understand the microorganisms they need to control in their processes and their associated public health significance.

4.4 Hazard Database

The hazard database is under development. It provides information on food safety hazards in some New Zealand foods. The search results list the hazard(s) associated with the food, the source of the hazard, and actions an operator can take to control the hazard.