

Dairy Industry Update

NEW STANDARD

Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code

Chapter 4 - Primary Production Standards

Standard	Primary Production and Processing Standard for Dairy Products (Australia only)	 20 KB
4.2.4		

Extensive consultation was undertaken by FSANZ during the development of the Primary Production and Processing Standard for Dairy Products, and following its gazettal on the 5th October 2006, a two year period was provided to enable industry adequate time to implement the requirements.

The Western Australian dairy industry currently comprises 196 farm milk production units and 32 milk processors or dairy produce stores, of which 8 are export registered. These food businesses are located principally in the coastal areas between Perth and Albany.

Under Commonwealth legislation, export registered milk processing establishments are required to implement a documented HACCP based food safety plan as part the approved arrangement with the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS). The Food Unit audits these approved arrangements under an agreement with AQIS. Other milk processors have developed food safety plans to improve product safety or as a supplier requirement.

The AQIS approved arrangement requires export processing establishments to source milk from farms that have appropriate systems in place that satisfy food safety and relevant overseas country requirements.

The purpose of the Primary Production and Processing Standard for Dairy Products is to require dairy primary production, transport and processing businesses to implement a food safety plan.

It should be noted food businesses are required to comply with other sections of the Food Standards Code including those relating to labelling requirements. Ongoing work with domestic processing and dairy primary production businesses is occurring in order to support and ensure compliance with the new standards. It is intended the Food Unit of the Department of Health will provide the audit function and be the enforcement agency in the immediate future.

DAIRY INDUSTRY IN AUSTRALIA – HOW SAFE ARE WE!



Extract from *Draft Assessment Report, Proposal P296, Primary Production and Processing Standards for Dairy*, Food Standards Australia New Zealand

In Australia, illness from dairy products is rare. Between 1995-2004, there were only eleven reported outbreaks directly attributed to dairy products, eight of which were associated with consumption of unpasteurised milk.

In other Australian outbreaks, dairy products were an ingredient of the responsible food vehicle identified as the source of infection. However, dairy products are a component of many foods and it is often difficult to attribute the cause of an outbreak to a particular food ingredient. Microbiological survey data for pasteurised dairy products in Australia show a very low incidence of hazards of public health significance in these products.

While commercial dairy products have rarely been identified as sources of food-borne illness in Australia, there have been a number of reports of outbreaks associated with consumption of dairy products internationally. Unpasteurised dairy products are the most common cause of these dairy-associated outbreaks of illness.

FSANZ undertook an extensive study into the risk of dairy products which was released in August 2006. The Risk Profile of Dairy Products in Australia brings together information on microbiological and chemical risks that may be associated with dairy products. The scope of the Risk Profile includes the identification and examination of risks along the dairy supply chain from milk production through to consumption of dairy products. The risk profile was undertaken within the framework of existing dairy regulations and risk management practices in Australia and comprises two separate parts:

- **Part A: Microbiological Risk Profile**
- **Part B: Chemical Risk Profile**

The purpose of this risk profile was to inform the development of the Primary Production and Processing Standard for dairy products.

KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the **Microbiological Risk Profile (Part A)** can be summarised as:

- Australian dairy products have an excellent reputation for food safety, and this is supported by the lack of evidence attributing food-borne illness to dairy products;
- A wide range of microbiological hazards may be associated with raw milk and dairy products, but these do not represent a problem under current management practices which:
 - control animal health;
 - ensure adherence to good milking practices;
 - require effective heat treatment e.g. pasteurisation; and
 - have controls to prevent post-pasteurisation contamination in the dairy processing environment.

The key findings of the **Chemical Risk Profile (Part B)** can be summarised as:

- There are extensive regulatory and non-regulatory measures in place along the dairy industry primary production chain resulting in minimal public health and safety concerns regarding the use or presence of chemicals in dairy products.
- Extensive monitoring of chemical residues in milk over many years has demonstrated a high level of compliance with the regulations.
- There are a number of areas where further research or monitoring would assist in providing further reassurance that the public health and safety risk is low.
- Continuation of the current management practices, particularly monitoring programs for chemicals along the primary production chain, will ensure that the dairy industry continues to maintain a high standard of public health and safety.



The full report can be accessed on the FSANZ website - <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au>

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Food Standards Australia New Zealand is currently performing a risk assessment of raw milk and raw milk products considering development of an extension to the dairy standard. This should address issues in relation to production and sale of raw milk products in Australia arising from inconsistent legislation currently applying to domestic and imported dairy products, applications to FSANZ to permit raw milk products and any public health and safety issues from consumption of raw milk products.

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