

STANDARD 4.2.3

PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING STANDARD FOR MEAT

(Australia Only)

Purpose and commentary

Reserved

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Clauses

Division 1 – Preliminary

- 1 Reserved**
- 2 Interpretation**

(1) Unless the contrary intention appears, the definitions in Chapter 3 of this Code apply for the purposes of this Standard.

Division 2 – Reserved

Division 3 – Production of ready-to-eat meat

- 3 Interpretation**

In this Division –

control means a measure that prevents, eliminates or reduces to an acceptable level, a food safety hazard.

HACCP plan means the –

- (a) Codex HACCP plan, Annex to CAC/RCPI 1969, Revision 4 (2003); or
- (b) HACCP plan outlined in Australian Standard AS-4696-2002.

handling means slicing, shaving or dicing, where it is followed by the packaging of the product in a modified atmosphere package.

producer of ready-to-eat meat means a food business that engages in the –

- (a) making, manufacturing, producing, extracting, processing, preparing, treating, preserving, packing, cooking, thawing or handling of ready-to-eat meat; or
- (b) handling of ready-to-eat meat for retail sale.

ready-to-eat meat means meat products intended to be consumed without further heating or cooking, and includes –

- (a) cooked or uncooked fermented meat; and
- (b) pâté; and
- (c) dried meat; and
- (d) slow cured meat; and
- (e) luncheon meat; and
- (f) cooked muscle meat including ham and roast beef; and
- (g) other ready-to-eat meat that is susceptible to the growth of pathogens or the production of toxins.

4 Requirements on producers of ready-to-eat meat

A producer of ready-to-eat meat must implement a food safety management system that identifies, evaluates and controls hazards, and meets the requirements in Table 1 or Table 2 to this clause.

Table 1 to clause 4

Document all stages of production
Identify all food safety hazards and controls through the use of a HACCP plan
Document compliance with Standard 3.2.2 of this Code
Document the management system set out in clauses 3.3 to 3.10 of the Australian Standard AS4696-2002

Table 2 to clause 4

Comply with a food safety management system recognised by the relevant authority
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Editorial note:

‘Hazard’ is defined in Standard 3.1.1 as a biological, chemical or physical agent in, or condition of, food that has the potential to cause an adverse health effect in humans.

‘Relevant authority’ is defined in Standard 1.1.1.

Examples of a food safety management system that a relevant authority may recognise are the Commonwealth Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Orders 2005 or the Australian Standard AS4696-2002.

5 Additional requirements for uncooked comminuted fermented meat

(1) In this clause –

audit means a review or examination of any, or all requirements of a food safety program which has been conducted by a person approved as being competent in food safety matters relating to UCFM.

batter mix means all the ingredients in the UCFM recipe that have been combined prior to filling a casing.

starter culture means a preparation of micro-organisms prepared for the purpose of fermenting meat which –

- (a) successfully competes for the nutrients in the meat medium; and
- (b) produces microbial inhibitors; and
- (c) is microbiologically safe; and
- (d) produces a controlled reduction of the pH of the meat mix.

UCFM means a comminuted fermented meat which has not had its core temperature maintained at 65°C for at least 10 minutes or an equivalent combination of time and higher temperature during production. To avoid doubt, a UCFM includes comminuted fermented meat which has been heat treated.

validation means obtaining evidence to confirm that the food safety management system is complete and effective and will deliver the expected food safety outcomes.

verification means the use of methods, procedures and tests in addition to monitoring to determine compliance with the food safety management system.

(2) Unless expressly provided elsewhere in this Code, a UCFM must not be sold unless it is produced in accordance with this clause.

(3) For the purposes of subclause 5(2), a UCFM may be sold where it is produced using an alternative technology or method specified elsewhere in this Code, provided that the equivalent food safety outcome in this clause is achieved.

(4) A UCFM must be produced in accordance with a food safety management system under clause 4 which –

- (a) has been verified and audited to ensure the number of *Escherichia coli* organisms in the final UCFM comply with the microbiological limits in Standard 1.6.1 in this Code; and

- (b) demonstrates that the production process handles the variations of *Escherichia coli* contamination in the ingoing raw meat ingredients.
- (5) As part of the validation or verification requirements of the food safety management system, the number of *Escherichia coli* organisms must be recorded for the –
- (a) raw meat ingredients used to make a UCFM; and
 - (b) product after fermentation and any subsequent process.
- (6) During UCFM production the following matters must be monitored and recorded at suitable frequencies –
- (a) the pH of a fermenting UCFM; and
 - (b) the temperature and time of fermentation of UCFM; and
 - (c) the temperature and time of maturation/drying of UCFM; and
 - (d) the temperature and time of smoking of UCFM; and
 - (e) the weight loss or water activity.
- (7) The measurements recorded under subclauses (5) and (6) must be kept for 12 months after the use-by date or best-before date of a UCFM.
- (8) The fermentation of a UCFM must be initiated through the use of a starter culture.
- (9) A previously fermented or fermenting meat must not be used as –
- (a) a starter culture; or
 - (b) an ingredient in a UCFM.
- (10) Meat and batter mix used in the preparation of a UCFM must, if stored by the manufacturer, be stored at 5°C or below prior to fermentation.
- (11) The pH of a fermenting UCFM must be measured in accordance with Method 1 in the Schedule.

Editorial note:

UCFM food businesses should note the skills and knowledge requirements in clause 3 of Standard 3.2.2.

Editorial note for New Zealand:

For New Zealand the processing of UCFM is regulated under the *Food Act 1981*.

SCHEDULE

Methods of Analysis

1 Meat Determination of pH.

Mince a representative portion of the sample of the UCFM and place that portion in a stoppered bottle with twice its weight of water. Shake at five-minute intervals for 30 minutes and determine the pH value of the liquid electrometrically at 20°C.

Alternatively, the pH can be determined through the use of calibrated, direct-contact pH probes or meters.