



Risk Management Proposal

Natural Sausage Casings

MEACASIC.ALL

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1 Purpose

- (1) The purpose of this document is to:
 - a) Show how options have been assessed for the management of risk organisms in natural sausage casings.
 - b) Provide recommendations for import requirements.

2 Background

- (1) Natural sausage casings are produced from animals (cattle, pigs, sheep or goats) that have passed post-mortem and ante-mortem inspection according to the OIE's *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Code*) describing 'Control of biological hazards of animal health and public health importance through ante- and post-mortem meat inspection'. After removal of gut contents, the intestines are cleaned and scraped. Sheep and goat casings use the inner submucosal layer of tissue, whereas cattle casings contain all tissue layers of the intestinal tract and exclude only the ileum (using all other sections of the animal gut). Pig casings use the submucosal layer of the small intestines and all layers of the large intestine.
- (2) After removing gut contents, cleaning and scraping, casings are stored at room temperature in either dry salt or saturated brine. As an alternative treatment the dry salt or saturated brine may be supplemented with sodium phosphates for a minimum of 30 days. The pH of casings is between 7.5 and 8, with an increased pH of 10 for phosphate-supplemented salt or brine.
- (3) Natural sausage casings for human consumption derived from the intestines of animals are considered a risk commodity, with the potential to harbour exotic diseases. The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has prepared the following import risk analyses (IRAs) addressing biosecurity risks associated with sausage casings:
 - a) Sausage Casings from Small Ruminants, Rapid Risk Assessment (Final - 1 July 2010) <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/files/regs/imports/risk/sausage-casings-eu-ra.pdf>
 - b) Supplementary Import Risk Analysis: Sausage Casings of Bovine and Porcine Origin (Final - March 2015) <http://fcs.maf.govt.nz/webtop/drl/objectId/090101b380dd9421>
- (4) MPI has developed a generic Import Health Standard (IHS) for *Sausage Casings for Human Consumption from All Countries* based on these analyses.
- (5) In accordance with MPI processes, the IHS contains generic import requirements. These requirements manage the biosecurity risk of importing sausage casings from all countries. The generic IHS serves as the basis for country-to-country (bilateral) negotiations of country-specific veterinary certificates. A guidance document will be issued by MPI and this will provide commodity specific guidance information including samples of country specific bilaterally-agreed veterinary certification for trade in sausage casings of bovine, porcine, caprine and ovine origin.
- (6) MPI will agree country-specific veterinary certificates with the exporting country's Competent Authority once MPI is satisfied with the exporting country's export systems. Negotiations will take into account the verifiable health status of the exporting country, the national systems, legislation and IHSs in the exporting country for regulatory oversight of the sausage casing industry, and the capabilities and preferences of the exporting country's Competent Authority. The assessments will be based on the *Code* Section 3, Quality of Veterinary Services.

3 Objective

- (1) The objective is to effectively manage biosecurity risks associated with the import of sausage casings, consistent with New Zealand's domestic legislation and international obligations.

4 Options assessment

- (1) Under Article 3.3 of the World Trade Organisation Agreement on the *Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures* (the SPS Agreement), risk management measures which provide a level of

protection greater than provided by international standards may be imposed only when they can be scientifically justified on the basis of a risk assessment.

- (2) For a detailed analysis of potential hazards and their risks please refer to the risk assessments listed in section 2 above, which contain the relevant risk assessments and an analysis of management options for each risk organism.
- (3) Of the potential hazards from natural casings derived from sheep, goats, pigs and cattle, the import risk analyses concluded that disease specific risk management measures could only be justified for classical swine fever virus (CSFV) in porcine casings.

5 General requirements for all importations of sausage casings

- (1) The natural casings must be derived from pigs, cattle, sheep and goats that have passed ante- and post-mortem inspection according to the *Code*, Chapter 6.2 (2014). After cleaning and scraping, the casings are stored at room temperature in either dry salt or saturated brine for a minimum of 30 days.
- (2) The casings are derived from the specific location in the following animals:
 - a) Pigs: the submucosal layer of the entire intestinal tract.
 - b) Cattle: all intestinal layers of the entire intestinal tract with the exception of the ileum.
 - c) Sheep: the submucosal layer of the small intestines.
 - d) Goats: the submucosal layer of the small intestines.
- (3) Sausage casings must be subject to a number of cleaning steps that remove unwanted gut contents. Tissue layers are removed from all casings except those from cattle.
- (4) After cleaning and scraping, the casings must be stored at room temperature unless otherwise specified, in either salt or saturated brine for a minimum of 30 days.

6 Considerations for Specific Requirements for the Identified Risk Organism

Specific requirements for identified risk organisms are located in Part 2 of the IHS.

- (1) Risk management requirements specified in Part 2 of the IHS are presented as one or more of the following:
 - a) Country, zone or compartment freedom and residency requirements.
 - b) Country, zone or compartment status and residency requirements.
 - c) Treatment options.
- (2) Options presented are considered to effectively manage the risk and may be included in the IHS.
- (3) Where specific Articles of the *Code* have been referred to in the IRA the IHS may not state these, as Article numbers may change with each *Code* review. The *Code* is legally incorporated by reference in the IHS. The guidance document will tabulate the specific Articles from the *Code* and the *OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals* (The *Manual*) when required.
- (4) Compartment freedom requirements for herd freedom from CSF are specific to that particular disease in swine. Compartments are only approved after MPI assessment of submissions according to requirements specified in the IHS.

7 Recommendations for the Identified Risk Organism

7.1 CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER VIRUS (CSFV)

7.1.1 Options presented in the IRA: Supplementary Import Risk Analysis: Sausage Casings of Bovine and Porcine Origin

The CSF risk status of the pig population of a country, zone or compartment should be determined on the basis of the criteria outlined in the *Code* chapter for Infection with Classical Swine Fever Virus, General criteria for the determination of the CSF status of a country, zone or compartment (Chapter 15.2, Article 15.2.2).

Option 1

Casings derived from pigs could be imported only from countries, zones or compartments recognised by New Zealand as free from CSF.

Option 2

For the inactivation of CSFV in casings of pigs, the following procedures could be used: salting for at least 30 days either with phosphate supplemented dry salt or saturated brine ($A_w < 0.80$) containing 86.5% NaCl, 10.7% Na_2HPO_4 and 2.8% Na_3PO_4 (weight/weight/weight), and kept at a temperature of greater than 20°C during this entire period.

7.1.2 Discussion

Eradication of CSF in New Zealand occurred after outbreaks were discovered in 1930 and 1953. Since that time, New Zealand has not had a case of CSF.

The OIE now includes CFSV as a listed disease. Applications for official disease-free status are being evaluated over the period May 2014 to May 2015. Requirements for CSF-free status of a country, zone or compartment have been outlined in the *Code*.

7.1.3 Recommendation

- (1) Natural sausage casings derived from cattle, sheep and goats are not subjected to risk management measures for CSFV.
- (2) Natural sausage casings derived from pigs may be imported provided that they have been:
 - a) Derived from animals continuously resident in countries, zones or compartments recognised to be free from CSF for the 12 months prior to slaughter according to the *Code* recommendations for considering a country or zone to be CSF free; or
 - b) Salted for at least 30 days with phosphate supplemented dry salt or saturated brine ($A_w < 0.80$) containing 86.5% NaCl, 10.7% Na_2HPO_4 and 2.8% Na_3PO_4 (weight/weight/weight) and kept at a temperature of greater than 20°C during this entire period.