

# US Pallet Label Pilot

US Pilot for pallet  
labels as an alternate  
system of shipping  
mark

Project Code  
2019-1039

Prepared by  
Management for Technology

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## Project Description

There is a significant amount of Australian red meat exported into the US that is wasted due to label or shipping mark non-compliance. There were protocols in place that allowed for remarking services by Government officials designed to resolve these issues, but these are scheduled to be discontinued by November 2021.

The US pallet pilot project was formed to develop a protocol through which Australian Exporters can have their red meat consignments accepted by US import establishments by use of the pallet labels, without an Australian Government official being present.

## Project Content

The project detailed the pilot protocol, level of compliance by participating Australian red meat exporters and US inspection facilities, and the ongoing revisions developed in response to issues encountered.

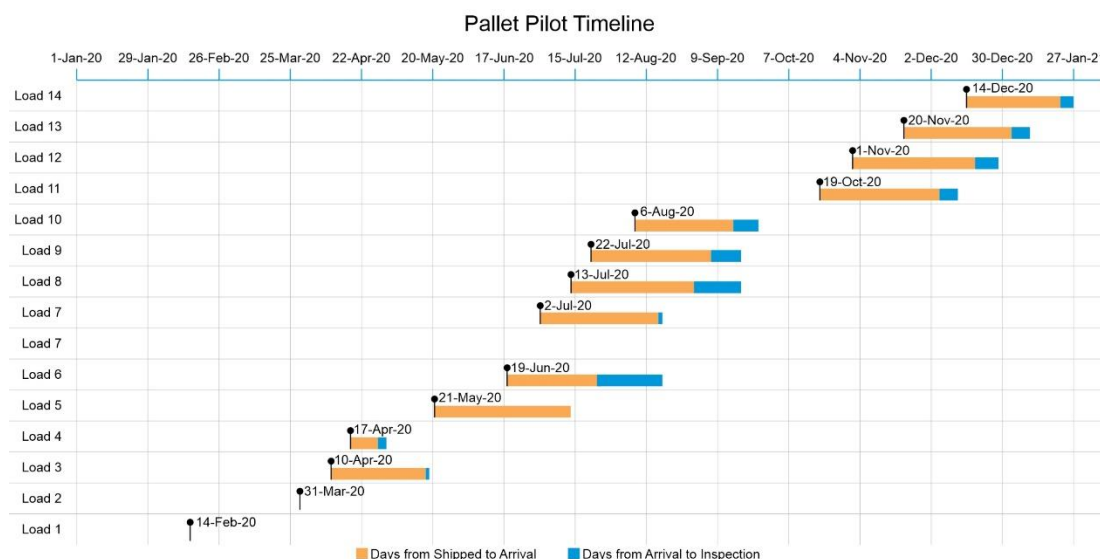
The report confirms that consignments of pallets with a single red meat product type have been shipped to US, with the consignment details verified through an online portal (Meat Messaging).

The pilot is considered a success and it is recommended that the protocol be extended to more Australian red meat exporters.

## Project Outcome

The pilot has been proved successful, with the FSIS acknowledging the successful consignments. Thirteen out of 14 total consignments were successfully received and inspected. A timeline of the consignments can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Timeline of pilot consignments shipping, arrival, and inspection dates.



## Pilot Protocol

The protocol used in these consignments allowed a US inspection agent to verify a shipments details during inspection using +a pallet label instead of a shipping mark.

The pallet SSCC barcode was used as a link between the pallets and its relevant information, including product, product details (i.e., weight, packing date, number of trade units). An example of the pallet label, including a pallet SSCC ID and barcode, can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Example Pallet Label used to train pilot participants.

<b>PREPARED BY: Really Good Meats Company Pty Ltd</b>		<b>NOTE 10</b>
1 Slaughter Road, SLAUGHTERVILLE, Slaughterville QLD 9999 Australia		
<b>MESSAGE SSCC: (00)993487310070933932</b>		<b>NOTE 2</b>
<b>PALLET SSCC: (00)893487310003784856</b>	<b>Group: 24 of 24</b>	<b>NOTE 1</b>
Product CTIN (01)99348731009997 BONELESS BEEF PRODUCT OF AUSTRALIA EST NO: AAAA		<b>NOTE 3</b>
*C-F* 85CL BULK	(02)99348731009997(3102)054440(13)180719(37)000020	<b>NOTE 9</b>
KEEP FROZEN -25 DEGREES CELSIUS		<b>NOTE 6</b>
Total Net Weight: <b>544.40 KGM 1200.20 LB</b>	No. of Units: <b>20</b>	<b>NOTE 7</b>
<b>NOTE 5</b>	Oldest Packed Date: <b>19-Jul-18</b>	Newest Packed Date: <b>19-Jul-18</b>
		
PALLET SSCC (00)893487310003784856		
Count of Production Dates: 19-Jul-18 x 20	<b>NOTE 4 - Area for Stamp</b>	

Source. Meat Messaging n.d.

The pilot had to gather a list of potential participants for the pilot, including Australian exporters and US import inspection facilities and customers. The participant list, along with a draft of the protocol, was sent to FSIS.

### Monitoring compliance of participants

In total, three Australian Exporters, two US inspection facilities, and three customers contributed to the pilot. This is only a small proportion of the original list, that detailed more US inspection facilities and customers, and one more exporter.

Monitoring compliance uncovered several operational issues. These included:

- ◆ Lack of understanding project details and significance early in the pilot. This caused errors in implementing the protocol on the first consignment, leading to its failure.
- ◆ Ripped tops of cartons during unloading, due to absence of slip sheets. This caused damaged to goods.
- ◆ Damaged plastic wraps found at unloading, due to QA practices before shipment. This caused damage to pallet labels.
- ◆ Smear ink, due to inappropriate label materials.

The pilot was also able to resolve all of the above issues.

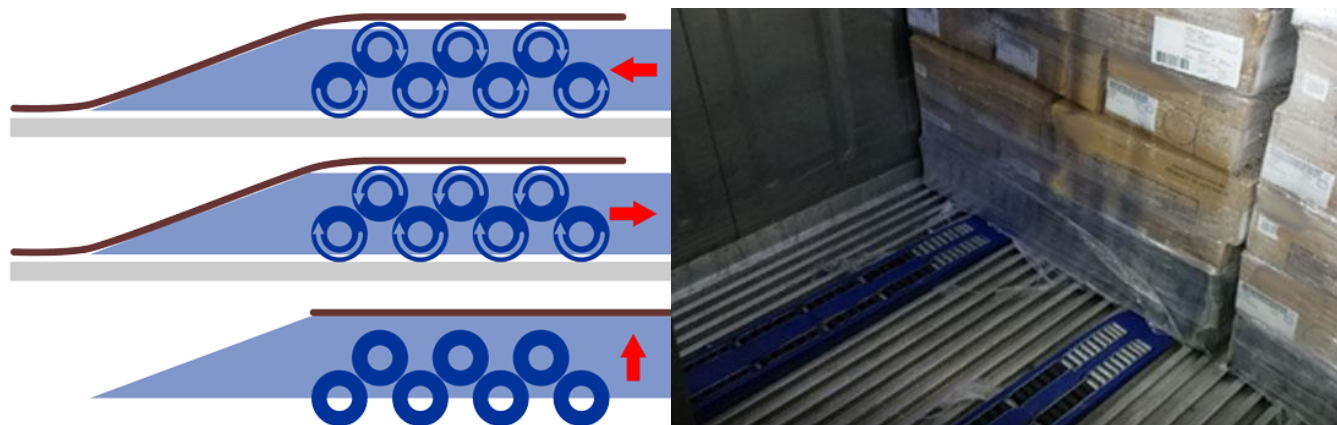
A combination of information sessions delivered to participants, and training materials on the Meat Messaging web portal helped fill any knowledge gaps amongst the participants.

Slip sheets were found to be crucial to protect both the cartons and the pallet labels attached. The figure below shows the step-by-step process that was recommended to Australian Exporters. This was able to resolve instance of damaged goods and labels.

Figure 4. Step-by-step pallet wrapping process for Australian Exporters.



Figure 3. Example of roller forks used in the unloading process. Use of them led to slip sheets required for all pallets being exported.



Finally, exporters were informed to use non-glossy label materials for all future consignments that were part of the pilot, to avoid instances of smeared ink. Inspection facilities were also advised to use non-glossy labels that could be attached on top of smeared stamps and to reinspect, for any consignments that were being processed at the time.

#### Future actions

A process by which additional exporters can adopt the protocol is being discussed, with oversight from the Australian Government and FSIS.

A protocol by which US inspection agents are authorised to use the pallet SSCC label for these exporters was drafted and is being considered into an FSIS Directive. It limits the exporters through an application process, over seen by the Australian Government and FSIS. It is also recommended that the pallet label verification protocol be extended to any consignment of a red meat product, so long as it is the only product in a container.

### **Benefit for Industry**

Based on our estimates, the total savings to the industry could be approximately A\$15m, if it is adapted out to all red meat exports to the US.

The project will allow an additional avenue through which Australian exporters can seek to have their product accepted into the US for reasons that do not impact health and safety.

It would be able to eliminate instances of rejection based on certification inspection failures stemming from damaged, or missing shipping marks, and reduce the hours of labour spent on remarking.

### **Useful resources**

**Meat Messaging** ([www.meatmessaging.info](http://www.meatmessaging.info)) – web-based portal used by exporters and import facilities.