

SNAPSHOT

VISUAL MONITORING OF CARCASSES AND CARTON MEATS – A SYSTEM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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Project Description

The current system of visual monitoring is onerous both in terms of resources and costs and has been developed via a series of add-ons largely required by the Australian regulator. The present project involved a team of industry representatives to design a system of visual monitoring that reflects the relative risk of the products each establishment sells.

Project Content

Data on visual monitoring of product was used from the previous project (AMPC 2018-1070) – a total of 1,645,537 data points from carcasses, bulk meat, primals and offal. Analysis of the data, coupled with extensive industry consultation and a 2012 Departmental review assisted in the development of three position papers:

1. Options for a visual monitoring system
2. What other countries do
3. The evolution of the Australian visual monitoring.

These papers informed an iterative process, involving industry and the Department of develop a draft Meat Hygiene Assessment: Product Monitoring (3rd edition) guideline (MHA 3), together with a Principles and Guidance document that underpins the rationale and statistical elements of MHA 3.

Key aspects of MHA 3 are:

- A focus on food safety, based on Zero Tolerance, pathology and contamination-related defects.
- The elimination of non-food safety (Minor and manufacturing) defects.
- Retention of pre-boning room inspection checks.
- Retention of ZTs and pathology as per current definition.
- Ascription of risk-based ratings to individual products.

Project Outcome

The project outputs are the following documents:

- Position papers
 - Options for a visual monitoring system

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- What other countries do
- Meat Hygiene Assessment: Product Monitoring (3rd edition)
- Meat Hygiene Assessment (3rd Edition): Principles and Guidance document

Benefit for Industry

This project has developed a Meat Hygiene Assessment system that is risk-based, allowing an establishment to focus on food safety plus areas of risk to their business while making more efficient use of labour. Meat Hygiene Assessment: Product Monitoring (3rd edition) has in-principle agreement from industry and the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. To test its utility, both industry and Department recommended a trial of Meat Hygiene Assessment: Product Monitoring (3rd edition), making use of the ten establishments which participated in the industry trial in AMPC Project 2018-1070.

