

ANIMAL RAISING CLAIMS

Title: WAGYU BREED CONTENT

Date: 27/10/17

1. Purpose

An Animal Raising Claim is a claim made in the Trade Description or export documentation about the animal or supply chain specifically relating to Animal Husbandry conditions, feeding, handling, drug treatments and/or geographical references. An approved program within the QMS must be developed to provide integrity to the Trade Description where Animal Raising Claims are used and must be clearly defined and legally based.

The three core components of the Animal Raising Claim:

Program Approval: Approval by AUS-MEAT Limited for the Livestock Sourcing through to the application of final Trade Description, incorporated within the AUS-MEAT approved Quality Management System (QMS) (all markets)

Approved Arrangement: Approval by the Department of Agriculture based on Program Approval by AUS-MEAT under the MOU between the Parties (export purposes).

Market Access: Pre-conditions for specific market access or operational requirements to meet importing country requirements including label approval (where applicable).

2. Scope

This guideline document covers a breed claim in a Trade Description and/ or a declaration of a specified breed content as defined by a recognised Breed Association's requirements for the specific breed content.

e.g. The Australian Wagyu Association (AWA) refers to % content for various crossbred F1, F2, F3, F4 through to Fullblood.

3. Definitions

The definition of a particular breed is as described by the relevant recognised Breed Association/Society. In this case the [Australian Wagyu Association](#):

4. Background

An Animal Raising Claim is a claim made in the Trade Description or export documentation about the animal or supply chain specifically relating to animal husbandry conditions – in this case Breed Verification.

Breed verification programs are generally based on either Genotype information (genetic makeup – hereditary information) or Phenotype assessment (observable physical characteristics) as applicable for the particular breed (e.g. while there are clear published guidelines for phenotypic assessment of some breeds of cattle, no such guidelines exist for the various Wagyu blood lines).

An Approved Program within the Enterprise's QMS must be developed to provide integrity to the Trade Description where a Breed or Breed Content Animal Raising Claim is used. In Export Registered Establishments this program must be included within the Approved Arrangement and receive Department of Agriculture approval which may be based on AUS-MEAT Program Approval.

5. References

- Meat Notice MN 2016/02 – AUS-MEAT Responsibilities
- DAWR: [Approved Arrangement Guidelines](#), Meat
- Companies undertaking verification of specified Breed Content must:
 - *Identify a recognised breed association and*
 - *Submit the breed association’s requirements for the specific breed content assessment.*

e.g. Australian Wagyu Association - Wagyu Breed Verification Program that can be used to define the level of Wagyu content using genetic assessment and/or breeding traceability.

Guidance documents may also be available which have been compiled in conjunction with the relevant Breed Association e.g.:
Guidelines for assessing Wagyu content in Australia

6. Methodology

The minimum requirement for the inclusion of a Breed description in a Trade Description is for the animal to be ‘predominately’ the Breed being claimed i.e. at least one parent must be “Fullblood” e.g. registered sire. This must be clearly described on relevant Point of Slaughter documentation which may take the form of the livestock description box on the National Vendor Declaration (NVD) or any other suitable form such as a Livestock purchase contract or the like provided sufficient information is available e.g. “Wagyu X Any Breed cross bred” (Note a description of Wagyu cross alone would not provide sufficient information.)

First Party Declaration (Self Attestation)

Livestock Sourcing Program

- To include Vendor Declaration of breed and/or claimed level of breed content.
- Defined breed and or breed content verification standards
- May include Livestock Contract documentation with defined breed and or breed content verification standards
- May include genetic validation as applicable e.g. recognised Breed Association (Breedplan), Herd Book Registers, DNA testing - lifetime traceability

Second Party Verification Establishment (on plant) Systems

Point of Slaughter Certification

- Verification(Genotype information) using prescribed standards or Industry codes of practice as applicable for particular breed.
- Point of Slaughter Certification (records of Genotype information) may require counter signing by the Department of Agriculture
- Separation program (identification and traceability)
- Trade Description is accurate and complete
- Compliance with importing country requirements (Label approval etc)

Third Party Certification

Each component along the supply chain may be subject to verification by an accredited Certification body (such as Australian Wagyu Association) with provision of 3rd party audits on a risk basis. Development and maintenance of approved supplier lists and producer registration programs would assist the supply chain verification process

Livestock Breeders (direct consignment)

- Vendor declarations (livestock buying contracts, declarations including NVD's)
- Breeding program – sire / dam breeding stock
- Breed Association verification programs
- Production and turnoff records
- Lifetime traceability
- Introduced livestock purchases (outside stock)

Feedlot

- Induction records for breed eligibility including Vendor declarations
- Identification and phenotypic verification as applicable
- Lifetime traceability through to processing (Abattoir)

Saleyard Procurement

- Traceable sales documentation supported by completed Vendor declarations including required Breed content information.

Approved Arrangement

An Approved Program with specific coverage:

- Livestock Sourcing program including Vendor declaration of breed content
- Point of Slaughter verification (Genotype information)
- Point of Slaughter certification (records of Genotype information) may require countersigning by Department of Agriculture
- Defined Breed Content standards (Breed Association criteria)
- Separation program (identification and traceability)
- Genetic validation (Breed Association registers, DNA testing, Lifetime traceability)
- Trade Description compliance (accurate and complete)
- Compliance with importing country requirements (Label approval etc.)

7. Monitoring

The Approved Program must include monitoring, corrective action and record keeping procedures to maintain the integrity of the program.

The monitoring method(s), monitoring frequency and how the monitoring is recorded need to be described with any measurements or observations to assess whether the program is operating within defined limits (how is it done, when is it done, how often is it done). This must be specific and state the pass/fail criteria. The frequency of monitoring must be defined.

All Approved Programs are subject to a detailed verification audit by AUS-MEAT at least twice per year, however more frequent audits may be required.

8. Market Access

[US Label Approval](#) – All raising claim labels and labels including a language other than English on the label or on the carton or packaging must be approved by the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) prior to use. A copy of the relevant section of the Approved Arrangement (AA) endorsed by the Department of Agriculture may be provided to FSIS with the draft label approval submission to demonstrate justification for label claim (Reference: MICOR – US Entry)

[EC Regulation No. 1760/2000](#) – establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products.

Canada: CFIA [Food Labelling for Industry](#)

Japan: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries ([MAFF](#)) 'Labeling Guidelines for Distinctive Meats such as Wagyu'.

Note: Refer MICOR for any other importing country requirements and further information.

9. Records

The Approved Program (part of the Approved Arrangement) will identify any records that need to be maintained for verification purposes.

10. Industry Standards / Recognised Programs

- **AWA** licensing, implementation and verification of the Wagyu breed verification program

11. Responsibility and Verification

Department of Agriculture: ensures the legislative requirements for trade description are met by the verification of the trade description system and relevant functions.

AUS-MEAT Limited performs verification processes whereby AUS-MEAT takes day to day operational responsibility, including that for corrective action, for all trade description other than those basic descriptions that importing country authorities may require the Department of Agriculture, as the government regulating authority, to oversight.

Note: AUS-MEAT's role is to verify the 'implementation of the Raising Claim program'. AUS-MEAT does NOT directly certify the actual Breed content of individual animals through any approved Animal Raising Claim program – this is the Enterprises' responsibility through the various checks and balances of programs within the Approved Arrangement or in conjunction with a Certification body such as AWA.