



eNews #1

Giving consumers confidence that food is safe to eat

Welcome to the PrimeSafe e-newsletter from Victoria's meat, poultry, seafood and pet meat regulator.

Victoria has a reputation for high quality meat and seafood, and businesses continue to innovate with new products and develop niche markets. To ensure that these opportunities bring business success and growth, consumers must continue to have confidence in the supply chain and the guarantee that their food is always safe to eat. It is all about the consistency of product integrity, quality and supply.

This e-newsletter will inform PrimeSafe licensees from the meat, poultry, seafood and pet meat industries about the latest risks and trends, and how regulation is accommodating these. It will also provide updates on best practice in the management of food safety.

Please forward this e-newsletter on to others, and if you wish to receive future editions, subscribe by following the link provided at the end of this e-newsletter.

Brendan Tatham

PrimeSafe CEO



[Visit PrimeSafe website](#)

Evolving to meet your needs

PrimeSafe's service delivery and operations has evolved to ensure businesses have the support and information necessary to drive their business forward. PrimeSafe has implemented the recommendations made by the 2015 Myers Review which requested PrimeSafe to consider a more tailored approach to food safety regulation.

The Review recommended that PrimeSafe improve its communications and audit processes, and further develop the recently created information and support function. To support this, PrimeSafe conducted an independent survey of licensees communications needs. The survey results further highlighted the Review's recommendations and the request for more frequently and easily understood information.

The survey also identified the need for additional information on a range of issues such as allergens and ready-to-eat products. In response, PrimeSafe plans to host more forums, review its website, and has created this e-newsletter to inform licensees about any changes made to regulations or industry practices.

Current and prospective licensees with specific enquiries are encouraged to contact PrimeSafe's Information and Support Services team on telephone: (03) 9685 7333 or info@primesafe.vic.gov.au

PrimeNotes to guide your plans

PrimeSafe has developed specific guides called PrimeNotes to provide additional information on a range of topics. These are a practical guide how the regulations can be met when undertaking specific processes.

Regular enquiries to PrimeSafe in the past included the determination of shelf life, the labelling of meat products, and the manufacture of dry aged beef. PrimeNotes were developed in response to some of these more common queries. Additional PrimeNotes will be developed to assist licensees to better understand meat and seafood processes, regulations and standards.

The PrimeNotes are regularly reviewed by consultation with industry and updated to reflect current regulation and industry practices. PrimeSafe has recently reviewed PrimeNotes for [Shelf Life and Labelling Requirements for Meat Products](#) and [Aging of Beef](#) that are available on the PrimeSafe website.

Forums for in-depth understanding

More than 30 businesses attended a PrimeSafe forum about Listeria management in July 2017.

Listeria is a food borne pathogen that is found frequently in raw foods and can create significant problems for consumers and the food industry, including serious illnesses, product recalls and short-term plant closures. There is a concern when Listeria is found in "ready to eat" products that are not heat treated prior to consumption especially by consumers that are vulnerable to the illnesses created by Listeria.

Additional information can be found in [PrimeNotes on Listeria](#).

Dry aging of beef is a process by which meat is subjected to a controlled environment, including consistent temperature, humidity and air flow. The controlled conditions allow the degradation of connective tissue and muscle protein, also promoting growth of a desirable mould called *Thamnidium*. Depending on the duration of the aging process the meat may be more tender and flavoursome than normal meat. There are some licensees that are approved to age beef. [See more information here](#).

A forum on dry aging of beef is planned for September 2017. Bookings for this event will open later in August. Contact PrimeSafe to register your interest at:

info@primesafe.vic.gov.au.



Help us to help you

PrimeSafe is keen to understand more about the needs of licensees, other industry stakeholders, and encourages regular feedback. A clear trend within our 2016 communications survey showed that licensees wanted more easy-to-understand information. If you have any ideas about the information you want and how you'd like to receive it, please contact us at info@primesafe.vic.gov.au.

Other food safety news

Country of origin labelling

The Australian Government Country of Origin Labelling schemes have come into effect. To ensure meat and seafood processors meet the new requirement, visit the [PrimeSafe website](#).

Shellfish quality assurance revised

Following a review of the Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program (ASQAP), Fisheries Victoria, now known as the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) in conjunction with PrimeSafe revised the Victorian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program (VSQAP). The VSQAP manual expands on the National regulatory compliance requirements. For more information on ASQAP, VSQAP and the Victorian Marine Biotxin Management Plan visit the [VFA website](#).

FSANZ contaminants review underway

Food Standards Australia and New Zealand is conducting a review of allowable level of contaminants across all foods. For further information contact FSANZ or visit [FSANZ](#).



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