



Welcome to the new year.

In this edition we feature:

- Allergens
- Meat & seafood transportation (Meat Transport Vehicles – MTVs)

Increased consumption of prepared foods over the past 10 years has meant a steady rise in the number of food recalls due to allergens. More complex recipes and food ideas has led to the use of multiple allergens in foods which can create serious issues for some individuals. The importance and impact of food allergens must be considered when preparing or processing food products, and in this issue we give you some tips on how to manage allergens in your business.

All vehicles transporting meat and seafood for human consumption in Victoria must be licensed by PrimeSafe. There is information available for those operating Meat Transport Vehicles to ensure they're meeting the requirements, and we encourage you to consider this carefully before renewing your licence for 2018-2019.

And finally, PrimeSafe welcomes Jennifer McDonald to the Board. Previously the CEO of Dairy Food Safety Victoria, we look forward to benefitting from Jennifer's extensive experience in food safety and public health as she transitions into a governance role.

I wish you all a successful 2018.

**Brendan Tatham**

PrimeSafe CEO

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## Allergens – what you need to know

- Australia has one of the highest allergy prevalence rates in the world.
- Food allergies now affects 1 in 10 infants, and 2 in 100 adults in Australia.

Allergens are food proteins that can cause serious, potentially life threatening, health issues for some individuals.

Food intolerance and allergy are two different conditions but can have similar symptoms such as dizziness, swelling of lips and throat, nausea, feeling bloated, itchy skin and eyes, diarrhoea and vomiting.

**Food intolerance** is a condition in which a person is unable to digest a particular type of food. Intolerance to foods can be unpleasant and complicate dietary habit but it rarely causes death.

**Food allergy** is a condition in which a person's immune system reacts to a particular food. This can cause serious complications or, in extreme cases death.

There are 11 common allergens noted by the Food Standards Code – **peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, sesame seeds, fish, shellfish, soy, wheat, sulphite** and **lupins** are to be declared on labels.

More information on allergens can be obtained from [FSANZ](#).



### Control of allergens

- Processed or packaged products containing allergens or traces of allergens, must meet allergen labelling requirements specified by the Food Standards Code.
- Businesses that process with ingredients containing allergens, must assess the risks of handling and cross contamination of allergen containing products.
- An allergen risk assessment can be conducted using validation systems (e.g. [Vital 2](#)).
- For fresh unpackaged products sold at retail premises, retailers must be able to provide allergen information to customers upon request.
- Appropriate signage is also recommended.

**Other measures when processing with allergens may include:**

- Segregation of allergen containing foods, ingredients and processing aids from allergen-free products;
  - Processing allergen-free products before allergen-containing products;
  - Washing surfaces, equipment and utensils after processing products containing allergens;
  - Swabbing and testing surfaces to ensure that they have been cleaned effectively;
  - Colour coding equipment and utensils when multiple allergens are present on the premises;
  - Labelling every product that contains allergens according to the requirements of the Food Standards Code; and
  - Reviewing ingredient supplier specifications to assist in product labelling
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## **Meat Transport Vehicles**

To obtain a PrimeSafe Meat Transport Vehicle (MTV) Licence, you are required to submit a licence application and pay the licence fee prior to inspection of the vehicle.

A MTV must be constructed and maintained to facilitate and not jeopardise the wholesomeness of meat and seafood. Vehicles must comply with [Chapter 25 of the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption \(AS 4696:2007\)](#).

The following describes some areas considered during the inspection of the vehicle:

- No rust, corrosion, exposed glass or fibreglass or flaking materials;
- Surfaces are smooth, impervious and corrosion resistant;
- Refrigeration unit capable of maintaining product at or below 5°C for meat products;
- Any drainage points should be plugged;
- Doors are adequately sealed; and
- Capable of withstanding repeated cleaning and sanitising

You can find more information on applying for a Meat Transport Vehicle on the [PrimeSafe website](#).



## Licensing

The licensing period for all Meat Transport Vehicles is 1 July to 30 June. It is important for all licensees to renew their licence by 30 June 2018 to continue operating their vehicle.

## How to renew your PrimeSafe licence for a meat and seafood transport vehicle



Each vehicle must be maintained within a food safety program. This can be the MTV food safety booklet or the facility's food safety program. Licensees are required to present their food safety booklet at the time of inspection unless the facility food safety program maintains the MTV records. A written letter must be provided to confirm that the vehicle is included in the food safety program of a PrimeSafe licensed facility.

PrimeSafe will send an application to renew your licence at the end of April 2018. If you have not received your renewal by mid-May, please contact the PrimeSafe office via [info@primesafe.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@primesafe.vic.gov.au) or (03) 9685 7333. The renewal form is a legal document and must be completed and returned to PrimeSafe along with the required payment.

Vehicles may be inspected by the following means:

- by PrimeSafe personnel at the locations identified in the information provided with the MTV form, or
- by an approved third party auditor of a PrimeSafe approved conformity assessment body, or
- as prearranged with PrimeSafe, or
- at the PrimeSafe office.

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## Reminders

### Renewal of licences

Licensees – processors, retailers, butchers or Meat Transport Vehicle operators – who fail to renew their licence before the end of the licensing period will be unlicensed and subject to payment of an additional application fee, and may face prosecution if they continue to operate their business without a licence.

### Listeria forum

A Listeria management forum has been scheduled for 20 March 2018 in Doncaster. Bookings for this forum are now open. Register your interest at [info@primesafe.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@primesafe.vic.gov.au).

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