



***safe***  ***meat***

---

Annual Report 2018-19



# Contents

<b>2</b>	Message from the Chair
<b>3</b>	Role of SAFEMEAT
<b>4</b>	SAFEMEAT Structure
<b>5</b>	SAFEMEAT Secretariat
<b>6</b>	SAFEMEAT Funding
<b>7</b>	Significant events in 2018-19
<b>9</b>	SAFEMEAT Business Plan
<b>11</b>	Progress against the Business Plan

# Message from the Chair

Dear Stakeholder

I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report for SAFEMEAT for the 2018-19 financial year.

SAFEMEAT continues to support Australia's red meat and livestock industry by promoting best practice management systems and implementing strategies for the safe and hygienic production of red meat and pork in Australia.

Its success can be measured through progress made on key initiatives such as the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS), National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) and the adoption of important industry programs such as Livestock Production Assurance (LPA), Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance (APIQ<sup>✓</sup>®), National Saleyards Quality Assurance (NSQA), National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) and Dairy Food Safety.

This Annual Report describes SAFEMEAT's progress in delivering against its role and summarises critical policy issues and work programs overseen by SAFEMEAT during 2018-19. These are reflected in the SAFEMEAT Business Plan.

Key outcomes during the year were:

- Finalising the recommendations resulting from the SAFEMEAT Terms of Reference Review, conducted in 2018;
- Contributing to work being undertaken by the National Biosecurity Committee to strengthen livestock traceability arrangements;
- Successfully utilising the new SAFEMEAT governance arrangements with the Advisory Group and the Jurisdictional Traceability Group to progress a range of issues and improve the efficiency of SAFEMEAT;
- Progressing outstanding actions from the *2014 Review of the PIC and Device Based Status Framework of NLIS report*;
- Endorsing and progressing the SAFEMEAT Communications Plan;
- Launching the SAFEMEAT induction manual for new members; and
- Introducing membership criteria to assess future full and observer membership requests.

SAFEMEAT welcomes members and stakeholders' contributions to our reviews and developments of regulatory and commercial structures. At times, this work is challenging, and we appreciate that people share their opinions and insights in an environment of trust, goodwill and common sense.

As stated in previous annual reports, SAFEMEAT is the most important vehicle for managing food safety and product integrity issues across the red meat, pork and livestock industries in Australia. The success of SAFEMEAT is thanks to the ongoing commitment and co-operation of its partner members.

I cannot stress enough the importance of maintaining the SAFEMEAT structure when there are significant public concerns about animal safety and welfare. In 2018-19, concerns raised with SAFEMEAT included the status of animals as fit-for-transport; the currency of SAFEMEAT protocols for stock feeding in drought conditions; and the importance of maintaining our world-leading position in livestock traceability and industry integrity systems.

As a strong industry and government partnership, SAFEMEAT needs to remain vigilant, focussed and committed to ensure we stay abreast of current and emerging issues so that the system can be activated quickly. Findings from legislative and cross species analysis undertaken across all jurisdictions in 2018-19 provided timely and practical feedback on livestock traceability in Australia. We will use this feedback to enhance the resilience and reliability of our system.

I would like to thank the SAFEMEAT Partnership and the member organisations for their continued commitment and contributions in 2018-19. I would also like to acknowledge the considerable efforts made throughout the year by Meat & Livestock Australia Ltd, Animal Health Australia, the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, state and territory departments, industry peak bodies, Integrity Systems Company and the Secretariat. Membership continuing to be drawn from the senior levels within these and other representative organisations helps to ensure SAFEMEAT objectives can be met.

Finally, I would like to announce my decision to retire at the end of 2019 and thank you all for giving me the opportunity to chair this important industry and government partnership.

Yours sincerely



**Ross Keane**

Chair

4 December 2019



A close-up photograph of a cow's face, showing its eye, ear, and nose. The cow has white fur with brown patches. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green field.

# Role of SAFEMEAT

The primary role of SAFEMEAT is to oversee and promote sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic product to the marketplace. SAFEMEAT promotes rationalisation of regulation and standards within the industry, drives the implementation of strategies to ensure meat safety and hygiene and monitors industry performance in respect of these.

SAFEMEAT is dedicated to promoting Australia's best practice management systems that ensure when customers purchase meat or livestock from Australia, they can have confidence in the quality and safety of their choice.

## **SAFEMEAT's role, specified in the Meat Industry Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), is to:**

- A** work with the objective of establishing world best practice in ensuring the safety of red meat and pork products.
- B** ensure each meat industry sector implements sound management systems to ensure safe and hygienic product is delivered to the marketplace.
- C** ensure adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.
- D** ensure that effective crisis management strategies are put in place by the appropriate meat industry sectors and, to this end, ensure that there is a fully integrated and effective communications network.
- E** monitor industry meat safety performance.

In undertaking this role SAFEMEAT works collaboratively with industry and governments to develop and provide relevant information about current and emerging meat safety and hygiene issues.

# SAFEMEAT Structure

The SAFEMEAT Partnership membership is established under Schedule 4 of the MoU.

SAFEMEAT Partners met on the following dates during 2018-19:

- 27 November 2018
- 26 June 2019

A list of SAFEMEAT Partners member organisations and representatives in 2018-19 is in *Appendix A*.

The SAFEMEAT Partnership is supported by the Advisory Group, previously known as the Policy Group. The Advisory Group met on the following dates during 2018-19:

- 9 October 2018
- 20 February 2019
- 29 May 2019

## The Advisory Group was established by SAFEMEAT Partners to provide a consultative platform for industry and government stakeholders to:

- A** develop unified policy for the Australian meat industry's integrity systems
- B** form recommendations for SAFEMEAT Partners on the policy, standards, rules and strategic direction of the Australian meat industry's integrity systems
- C** provide advice to integrity program owners (e.g. Integrity Systems Company) on operational matters pertaining to program implementation, and
- D** ensure collaborative approach to the delivery of safe and hygienic Australian meat to consumers.

A list of SAFEMEAT Advisory Group member organisations and representatives in 2018-19 is in *Appendix B*.

SAFEMEAT continued to draw expertise and guidance from its traceability and issue-specific sub-committees in 2018-19. To increase these group's efficiency and to promote greater alignment with SAFEMEAT Advisory Group objectives, groups reporting to the Advisory Group shared the same Chair. Membership of the two long-term traceability groups is as follows.

## The Jurisdictional Traceability Group

The Jurisdictional Traceability Group (JTG) supports the SAFEMEAT Advisory Committee and provides a consultative platform for government stakeholders to give advice on government policy and regulatory matters, and for promoting nationally consistent legislation, standards and interpretation of integrity system rules.

### Chair

Andrew Henderson

### Membership

- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- QLD Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Agriculture Victoria
- Primary Industries and Regions, SA
- Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (TAS)
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, WA
- Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries, NT
- Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
- Integrity Systems Company

## The Sheep Traceability Working Group

The SAFEMEAT Sheep Traceability Working Group (STWG) provides advice about the operations of, and improvements to, the National Livestock Identification System for Sheep and Goats (NLIS S&G) arising from the SheepCatcher tracing exercises. The STWG implements SAFEMEAT Partners responses to the recommendations in the *SheepCatcher II report*.

### Chair

Andrew Henderson

### Membership

- Animal Health Committee (representing jurisdictions)
- State NLIS coordinator
- Australian Livestock and Property Agents
- Australian Meat Industry Council
- Integrity Systems Company
- Sheep Producers Australia
- WoolProducers Australia
- **Secretariat:** Sheep Producers Australia

## The following issue-specific sub-committees met in 2018-19:

- Cotton Trash Working Group (Chaired by Bob Barwell, CCA)
- Hormone Growth Promotant Working Group (Chaired by Andrew Henderson)
- NLIS Statuses Working Group (Chaired by Andrew Henderson)
- Rodenticide Working Group (Chaired by Andrew Henderson)



# SAFEMEAT Secretariat

SAFEMEAT has a full-time contracted secretariat awarded through a competitive tender process.

In 2018-19, the SAFEMEAT Secretariat was provided by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, located at 18 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra.



**Australian Government**  
Department of Agriculture

# SAFEMEAT Funding

SAFEMEAT members covered their own costs to attend meetings and undertake projects.

Funding for the SAFEMEAT Secretariat was provided by Meat & Livestock Australia Ltd (MLA) through its wholly owned subsidiary the Integrity Systems Company (ISC).

The cost of running the Secretariat was \$273,243 (GST Inclusive) for the 2018-19 financial year.





# Significant events in 2018-19

SAFEMEAT made significant progress on streamlining and strengthening the integrity system via its committees and sub-committees in 2018-19. The key activities are outlined below.

## Recommendations to the National Biosecurity Committee on traceability reform:

SAFEMEAT, via the Jurisdictional Traceability Group (JTG), has continued to provide advice on short-term reform options to enhance existing national livestock traceability systems, as requested by the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC). Following the SAFEMEAT *Special Workshop on Traceability* held on 31 July 2018, the JTG has been developing recommendations that focus on specific traceability reforms, including:

- harmonisation of NLIS requirements across all states and territories with a focus on current inconsistencies and exemptions;
- a national approach to compliance and enforcement of livestock identification and movement recording; and
- a nationally consistent data collection and entry requirement system.

The JTG has drawn a number of recommendations from the Commonwealth's legislative analysis, which identifies inconsistencies and areas for greater harmonisation and alignment across jurisdictions' legislative frameworks. The JTG has worked closely with the Commonwealth throughout this process. The JTG will consider the Animal Health Committee cross-species analysis when received to draw out additional recommendations<sup>1</sup>.

Both the SAFEMEAT Advisory Group and SAFEMEAT Partners agreed to the majority of the existing proposed recommendations. Further consultation with stakeholders will be undertaken in 2019-20 to finalise an agreed SAFEMEAT response. An update on the SAFEMEAT recommendations was provided to NBC in May 2019 and Agriculture Ministers' Forum (AGMIN) in September 2019. It is expected that SAFEMEAT will submit a full set of recommendations, including a draft implementation plan, to NBC and Agriculture Senior Officials Committee (AGSOC) in early 2020.

## Development of an eID Assessment Methodology

On 6 December 2018, Sheep Producers Australia (SPA) requested the JTG assess the performance of Victoria's electronic identification (eID) system of sheep against the national standards. SPA intended to use the assessment results to inform their ongoing consideration of a national eID traceability system. Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales JTG members undertook traceback and verification comparative studies in April and May 2019. Western Australia and Victoria then worked on an eID comparison methodology to assess sheep traceability systems, with the intention to provide it to SPA for their consideration in November 2019.

## NVD Content Changes

The JTG considered changes to National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) in 2018-19. These changes included the removal of the Agents Declaration; the inclusion of Destination PIC on all NVDs; and rewording of Questions A and B of Part A of the Sheep and Lamb NVD. The rewording of these questions will better clarify what a producer needs to answer to satisfy the requirements underpinned by state legislation. Issues about and misunderstanding of these questions have been ongoing for producers and the states and territories. The JTG is still considering its advice to SAFEMEAT Advisory Group on the inclusion of 'time off feed' and 'time off water' as fields on all NVDs.

## Cotton Trash NLIS Status

At its May 2019 meeting, the SAFEMEAT Advisory Group endorsed the Cotton Trash Working Group to develop and implement a new NLIS early warning status for animals accessing cotton trash. The Cotton Trash PIC (CTP) and Cotton Trash Animal (CTA) statuses were released on 27 June 2019. The statuses automatically transfer to third party properties upon receiving the animals, informing buyers that livestock may have had access to cotton trash and may be subject to a withholding period.

## Cowcatcher III

Throughout 2018-19, Animal Health Australia continued to work on finalising the results of the Cowcatcher III exercise undertaken in June 2018. Updates have been provided to SAFEMEAT throughout 2018-19 and the final report is expected to be provided to SAFEMEAT Advisory Group for endorsement in 2019-20.

## Review of the SAFEMEAT Partners' Terms of Reference

The SAFEMEAT Terms of Reference Review final report was received in October 2018. The report made 50 recommendations about future-proofing SAFEMEAT's scope and its leadership on industry-specific issues. It also made operational and administrative recommendations to ensure SAFEMEAT aligns with the revised governance structure agreed to as part of the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review.

SAFEMEAT considered all 50 recommendations and will begin implementation on 47 agreed recommendations in 2019-20. The remaining three recommendations will not be implemented by SAFEMEAT on the basis that the recommendations' intents are already covered under other governance frameworks.

<sup>1</sup> The cross-species analysis was provided to the JTG by Animal Health Committee (AHC) on 12 July 2019 for consideration. The JTG has conducted additional research and analysis that informed the development of key draft recommendations for discussion. The SAFEMEAT Advisory Group considered these at its 22 October 2019. The Advisory Group determined that further consultation on the draft recommendations should be undertaken via the Peak Industry Council membership frameworks. This process is currently underway. Feedback from this process will assist Partners in finalising a full set of recommendations for NBC.

## Significant events in 2018-19 (continued)

### SAFEMEAT Communications Plan

SAFEMEAT Partners considered and endorsed the Communications Plan, developed by ISC and Currie Communications in consultation with SAFEMEAT, at the November 2018 Partners meeting. The Communications Plan identified two objectives to guide communication activities for SAFEMEAT:

- To strengthen the understanding of SAFEMEAT's role amongst stakeholders and the broader meat and livestock industry; and
- To improve information flow regarding SAFEMEAT decisions through member and stakeholder organisations.

The Communications Plan identifies key program resources to be developed, including an upgraded SAFEMEAT website, industry structure infographics and factsheets.

### SAFEMEAT Induction Manual

SAFEMEAT Partners endorsed the *SAFEMEAT Induction Manual for new members* at the November 2018 Meeting. The manual provides an overview of SAFEMEAT's primary role, membership structure and expectations of members, governance and the role of SAFEMEAT in incident responses.

### SAFEMEAT Membership Criteria

Following a membership request from the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia in February 2019<sup>2</sup>, SAFEMEAT developed and endorsed a set of SAFEMEAT membership criteria to assess all requests for full or observer membership status. The criteria also outline SAFEMEAT's funding structure and provides clarity on how members contribute financially.

### Other committees

Other SAFEMEAT Working Group outcomes achieved or nearing completion in 2018-19 include:

#### Sheep Traceability Working Group

The SAFEMEAT Sheep Traceability Working Group (STWG) was established in July 2017 by SAFEMEAT Partners to implement improvements to the National Livestock Identification System for Sheep and Goats arising from the agreed recommendations in the *SheepCatcher II* report. The working group has developed an implementation strategy to deliver against these recommendations and will be releasing an interim progress report in late 2019. In line with its mandate the STWG has also initiated a project to re-examine the cost-benefit analysis of the 2014 Decision Regulation Impact Statement (Implementation of improvements to the National Livestock Identification System for sheep and goats) for options relating to identification of sheep and goats. The STWG also continues to work with ISC to develop an extension strategy that communicates the importance of traceability for sheep and goats and improving supply chain traceability compliance.

#### Formation of the HGP Working Group

In 2018-19, SAFEMEAT established the HGP Risk Mitigation Working Group to continue the work of the dissolved HGP Systems Steering Committee. The group's work aimed to address the risk of HGP detection in exported products causing market access disruption and improve the reliable segregation and supply of non-HGP treated beef for both domestic and international markets. The group began work on an HGP Communications Plan as well as a work plan to action a number of recommendations made by Export Meat Industry Advisory Committee and arising from Meat & Livestock Australia's *HGP Systems Draft Review* December 2018.

#### NLIS Statuses Review Working Group

The NLIS Statuses Review Working Group has undertaken a significant amount of work during the 2018-19 period to progress outstanding actions from the *2014 Review of the PIC and Device Based Status Framework of NLIS report*. The group made a number of recommendations to SAFEMEAT Partners, including:

- archiving, inactivating and terminating specific statuses;
- amending the NLIS terms of use to remove the NRS from making policy decisions;
- linking FMI and FMV to the EW1 status;
- requesting jurisdictions provide the legal instruments that allow the allocation of the statuses IM1 and IM2; and
- implementing a status review by SAFEMEAT every five years.

The group also identified the need to better communicate the system capabilities to users and get better engagement from industry groups to improve overall traceability outcomes.

<sup>2</sup> The SAFEMEAT Advisory Group endorsed observer membership for Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia at their meeting on 22 October 2019.



# SAFEMEAT Business Plan

The strategic directions of SAFEMEAT are set out in its Business Plan. It outlines the strategic approach to managing red meat and pork safety and hygiene within Australia and seeks to achieve this through targeted projects under the following nine key programs of industry priority:

- 1** Standards and Regulations
- 2** Emergency Management
- 3** Animal Diseases
- 4** Residues
- 5** Pathogens
- 6** Systems Development and Management
- 7** Communications and Education
- 8** Emerging Issues
- 9** SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review

### **Under each key program there are defined projects with milestones, funding arrangements and responsibilities:**

#### **1. Standards and Regulations**

This program contributes to the implementation of nationally consistent standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.

SAFEMEAT supports the development and adoption of harmonised and scientifically-based national and international standards and promotes reduced regulation in the sector whilst maintaining the necessary requirements to produce safe food, ensure consumer protection, and prevent market disruption.

#### **2. Emergency Management**

This program ensures that effective emergency management strategies are in place and activated at appropriate times to protect animal and human health and to minimise market disruption from food safety and related emergencies. SAFEMEAT is working towards enhancing the capability of red meat, pork and dairy industry sectors to deal with food safety and related emergencies.

#### **3. Animal Diseases (as they relate to food safety)**

This program enables the red meat and pork sectors to deal effectively with food safety issues arising from disease outbreaks in cattle, sheep, goats and pigs while minimising market disruption and promoting domestic consumer confidence in meat products. SAFEMEAT contributes, where appropriate, to the development and implementation of national policies and programs designed to protect Australia from exotic animal diseases.

#### **4. Residues**

This program develops and implements sound management strategies and systems to deliver safe and hygienic food with adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to residues.

SAFEMEAT actively promotes the observance of withholding periods and export slaughter intervals in order to prevent residues being present above the corresponding maximum residue limit for all markets. It considers cost-efficient and equitable funding implications to minimise market disruption arising from residue violations. SAFEMEAT aims to reduce the overall number of incidents related to chemical residue violations.

#### **5. Pathogens**

This program implements sound management systems for the red meat sector to deliver safe and hygienic food that meets consumer and regulatory requirements. This involves the development of pathogen and microbiological quality management programs with an emphasis on managing risk to maintain confidence in the microbiological safety of red meat products.

#### **6. Systems Development and Management**

This program enables SAFEMEAT to facilitate the development of key management systems to underpin red meat and pork safety and hygiene programs in order to provide a through-chain, 'world best practice' approach for managing food safety risks in the red meat and pork industries. SAFEMEAT aims to position the industry at the forefront of meeting domestic and overseas requirements for meat.

#### **7. Communication and Education**

This program facilitates communication, education and awareness of meat safety and hygiene issues to the red meat and pork livestock industries, the broader community, and international markets. By establishing a fully integrated and effective communication network, SAFEMEAT aims to encourage ongoing development of expertise on meat safety and hygiene within the industry, government and academia and promote greater awareness of food safety and hygiene within the broader community.

#### **8. Emerging Issues**

This program enables SAFEMEAT to monitor and implement a range of strategic initiatives about emerging issues to ensure that the industry is best positioned to meet changing market and consumer demands.

#### **9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review and governance improvements**

This program aims to deliver more robust industry assurance programs that incentivise participation and uptake, promote more efficient delivery, and encourage continual improvement.

The delivery of a responsive and fully integrated through-chain risk management system, accompanied by technology enhancements to drive operational efficiencies will ensure Australia's systems continue to be recognised as world's best practice, underpinning the sustainability and prosperity of the meat and livestock industries into the future.

### **New approach to Business Plan being developed**

The Advisory Group agreed to delay development of a revised approach to the SAFEMEAT Business Plan for 2019 until the recommendations from the SAFEMEAT Terms of Reference Review were finalised. The recommendations were finalised in June 2019 and it is anticipated work will commence on the new Business Plan later in 2019.

The revised approach will focus on delivery of key SAFEMEAT outcomes that are aligned to the Meat Industry Strategic Plan (MISP) for the three year period to 2020 and consolidate SAFEMEAT activity into fewer program areas with timeframes and key performance indicators.

# Progress against the Business Plan

Progress SAFEMEAT achieved in the 2018-19 FY against the current nine key programs in the Business Plan is detailed below.

## 1. Standards and Regulations

SAFEMEAT, through its member network, continued to promote international acceptance of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) based quality assurance schemes. It did this to support the recognition and acceptance of major industry and government HACCP based initiatives, which underpin Australia's position as a world leader in the export of meat and meat products.

SAFEMEAT continues to work with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and contributes to assessments on national agricultural and veterinary chemical registration issues, particularly where export slaughter intervals and withholding periods need to meet sensitive export market requirements.

SAFEMEAT's work with the NBC on developing advice for short-term traceability reform options to enhance existing national livestock traceability systems aims to promote and facilitate a harmonised approach to traceability legislation.

## 2. Emergency Management

During 2018-19, no incidents arose which necessitated SAFEMEAT to initiate any emergency management arrangements under the SAFEMEAT Incident Response Manual (IRM).

At the June 2019 meeting, SAFEMEAT Partners endorsed a Terms of Reference for the review of the SAFEMEAT IRM to address a number of issues identified in the Rodenticide Working Group's Review Report, including:

- whether the early stage process to respond to an event that could potentially damage livestock industries and export markets is adequate;
- whether the governance, working arrangements and communications channels during an incident, particularly for a multi species response, are accurately reflected in the IRM; and
- how the SAFEMEAT IRM interacts with the various Incident Management Plans across the sector such as PorkSAFE, ALFA and RMAC Plans, and AUSVETPLAN.

SAFEMEAT recognises the importance of facilitating appropriate linkages between SAFEMEAT emergency management arrangements and other related arrangements including AUSVETPLAN, the National Food Incident Response Plan and industry emergency response plans. The revised IRM will consider the broader regulatory and policy environment, including interactions and effects on industry body crisis response plans, government regulations, and SAFEMEAT member/stakeholder policies.

The expected completion date for the revised IRM is November 2019 for endorsement at SAFEMEAT Partners in December 2019.

## 3. Animal Diseases (as they relate to food safety)

SAFEMEAT, through its representative bodies and associated technical committees, continued to actively promote Australia's food safety measures to maintain market confidence in the safety of Australian livestock products.

SAFEMEAT kept a watching brief, and provided advice as appropriate, on international and domestic developments regarding zoonotic diseases that have the potential to impact on Australia's livestock and meat industries.

## 4. Residues

Since its establishment in 1998, SAFEMEAT has had a key role in:

- identifying potential residue problems and developing appropriate strategies to deal with them, which are cost efficient and equitably funded;
- minimising market disruption arising from residue incidents; and
- actively promoting the observance of WHPs and ESIs to prevent residues being present above the corresponding maximum residue limits (MRL) requirements in export markets.

SAFEMEAT also assists in progressing residue monitoring activities through the:

- National Organochlorine Residue Management Program (NORM) program;
- National Antimicrobial Residue Minimisation (NARM) program;
- Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (TART) program;
- Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (START) program;
- Pig Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (PTART) program;
- Cotton Trash Working Group;
- NLIS Statuses Working Group; and
- Hormone Growth Promotant (HGP) Risk Mitigation Working Group.

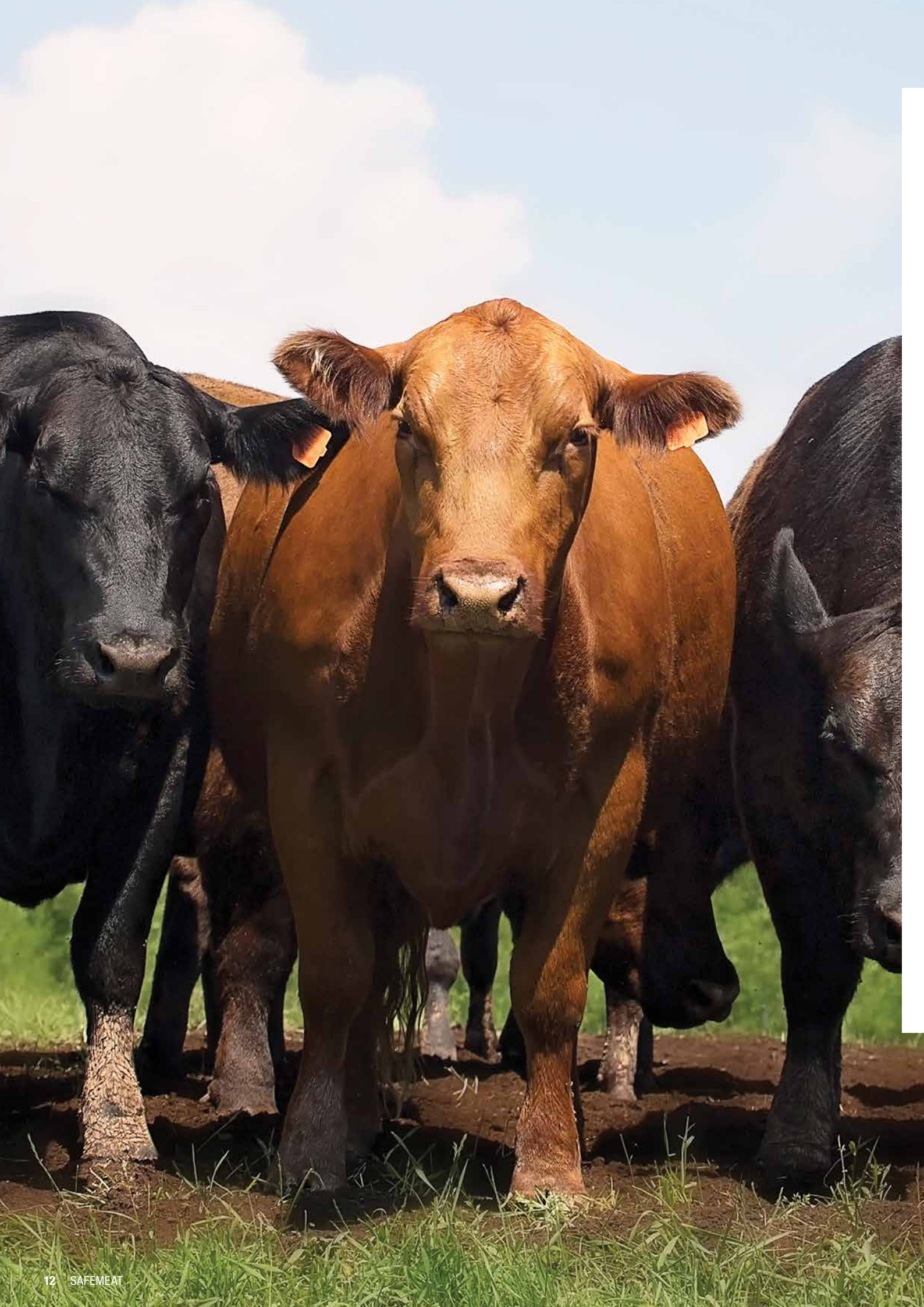
The management of residue risks is partly controlled through the assignment of statuses for individual animals or for 'at risk' properties. Meat processors are expected to take action where these statuses are flagged. SAFEMEAT continued to work with all jurisdictions in 2018-19 to ensure these statuses are managed consistently across the nation.

SAFEMEAT also formed the HGP Risk Mitigation Working Group in 2018-19 to progress improvements in HGP management and systems and further the work of the dissolved HGP Systems Steering Committee. This Group will review and progress options available to the Australian beef industry to improve the reliable segregation and supply of non-HGP treated beef for Australian and international markets.

SAFEMEAT also implemented a new NLIS early warning status for animals accessing cotton trash in June 2019. The Cotton Trash PIC (CTP) and Cotton Trash Animal (CTA) statuses inform buyers that livestock may have had access to cotton trash.

In May 2019 SAFEMEAT and Integrity Systems Company released an issues brief on LPA and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The release of PFAS into the environment has become a concern globally and the use of perfluorooctane sulfonate, perfluorooctanoic acid and perfluorohexane sulfonate is being reduced in Australia. SAFEMEAT considered the issue at their February 2019 meeting and agreed that no action was required by producers regarding PFAS to meet LPA program requirements or when completing NVDs at that time.

The issue of national consistency in interpreting and applying NLIS rules by the jurisdictions continued to be raised and strategies to overcome these differences are regularly discussed and acted on where appropriate in various SAFEMEAT forums.



## Progress against the Business Plan (continued)

### 5. Pathogens

The work under this key program continued to be supported by MLA's research and development (R&D) program.

R&D projects are conducted by MLA in the areas of chemical usage, microbiological food safety, and post-mortem inspection.

A key component of this program relates to microbiological food safety, examines the use of scientific approaches to understanding food-safety risks, and develops systems and new technologies to manage identified risks.

The Program Advisory Group (comprising representatives of peak industry councils, DoA, MLA and Australian Meat Processor Corporation) provides additional guidance and oversight of the MLA microbiological program.

SAFEMEAT continued to support research to address antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the red meat supply chain. SAFEMEAT maintains a watching brief on antimicrobial resistance while the revised National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy for 2020 and beyond is finalised.

The 2018-19 activities in MLA's food safety research and development program continue to be reported against specific projects, budget allocations and timelines and are linked, where appropriate, to the SAFEMEAT Business Plan.

The MLA food safety program, generally aligning with SAFEMEAT Key Program 5, is now aligned with two Red Meat Industry Strategic Plan 2020 imperatives, namely:

- reducing technical barriers to trade; and
- livestock and produce assurance through integrated integrity systems.

### 6. Systems Development and Management

There were a number of NLIS developments during 2018-19.

In June 2019 SAFEMEAT endorsed ISC's proposal to progress a comprehensive review of the NLIS Terms of Use (TOU), with the objective of:

- aligning the TOU with the current SAFEMEAT governance arrangements;
- modernising the TOU in line with future direction of the integrity system; and
- ensuring a best practice approach to database access and management.

In 2018-19 ISC developed a communications plan to accompany the rollout of Early Warning System enhancements to enable early warning statuses to be disclosed to saleyards, producers, agents and other NLIS participants. This process is expected to be finalised by the end of 2019.

### 7. Communication and Education

In 2018-19, SAFEMEAT continued to:

- meet face-to-face to address all matters related to its role;
- hold teleconferences as circumstances determine (these were particularly relevant for the working groups progressing agreed activities);
- keep AGSOC and AGMIN informed of significant developments;
- produce educational material as needed;
- maintain linkages to other committees by providing them with updates on the progress of the work outlined in the Business Plan;
- provide presentations on SAFEMEAT roles and responsibilities;
- post material on current issues on the SAFEMEAT website;
- review content and structure of the SAFEMEAT website to improve access to relevant material; and
- respond to media enquiries as they arise.

SAFEMEAT endorsed the SAFEMEAT Communications Plan at its Partners meeting in November 2018 and has since been working on the development of a range of communication tools, including SAFEMEAT communiques and an upgraded SAFEMEAT website, which is expected to be launched early 2020.

### 8. Emerging Issues

In 2018-19, SAFEMEAT maintained a watching brief on food chain security and critical infrastructure protection issues and participated in forums to discuss matters of concern.

In 2018-19 SAFEMEAT continued to be receive regular briefings on current and emerging market access issues for Australian exports by DoA. These briefings allow SAFEMEAT to communicate about specific issues to relevant industry stakeholders and coordinate an industry-wide response.

### 9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review

Since endorsing the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review report '*Towards an integrated integrity system*' in November 2015, SAFEMEAT has made significant progress on implementing the subsequent recommendations. Ongoing activities being undertaken by SAFEMEAT in 2018-19 include:

- the development of an integrated electronic National Vendor Declaration (eNVD) system. ISC developed a proposal for fast-tracking supply chain adoption of the eNVD system for the NBC's consideration in May 2019; and
- implementation of governance recommendations.

# Appendix A

## SAFEMEAT Partners member organisations and representatives in 2018-19

### Independent Chair

Ross Keane

### Industry Members

#### Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd

David Inall  
Craig Hough

#### Australian Livestock Exporters' Council

Mark Harvey-Sutton  
Alastair James

#### Australian Lot Feeders' Association

Bryce Camm  
Christian Mulders

#### Australian Meat Industry Council

Noel Kelson  
Dr Mary Wu

#### Australian Pork Limited

Deb Kerr

#### Cattle Council of Australia

Tony Hegarty  
John McGovern

#### Goat Industry Council of Australia

John Falkenhagen

#### Sheep Producers Australia

Allan Piggott  
Ian McColl

### Regulator members

#### Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Malcolm Thompson  
Fran Freeman  
Dugald MacLachlan

#### Jurisdictional Agriculture Authority Representative

Dr Allison Crook (Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries)

#### Jurisdictional Meat Industry Authority Representative

Peter Day (State Food Authority)

### Observers

#### Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association

Andy Madigan

#### Australian Livestock Markets Association

Ken Rogers

#### Animal Health Australia

Kathleen Plowman  
Dr Robert Barwell

#### Dairy Australia

Susannah Tymms

#### Meat & Livestock Australia Ltd

Jason Strong

#### Integrity Systems Company

Dr Jane Weatherley  
Jo Quigley

#### LiveCorp

No representatives attended 2018-19

#### Australian Meat Processor Corporation

No representatives attended 2018-19

### Guests

#### Chair SAFEMEAT Advisory Group

Andrew Henderson

#### Cattle Council of Australia (Chair of Cotton Trash Working Group)

Bob Barwell

#### Department of Agriculture

Jo Laduzko  
Vanessa Burgess  
Justine Gilbert

#### Secretariat

Matt Calverley  
Tom Black  
Usha Sriram-Prasad  
Stacey McIntosh  
Tara McDonough



# Appendix B

## SAFEMEAT Advisory Group member organisations and representatives in 2018-19

### Independent Chair

Andrew Henderson

### Industry Members

#### Australian Dairy Farmers

Craig Hough

#### Australian Livestock Exporters Council

Mark Harvey-Sutton  
Alastair James

#### Australian Livestock Markets Association

Kate McGilvray

#### Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association

Andy Madigan

#### Australian Lot Feeders' Association

Christian Mulders

#### Australian Meat Industry Council

Robert Barker  
Dr Mary Wu

#### Australian Pork Limited

Deb Kerr  
Alister Oulton

#### Australian Renderers' Association

Dennis King

#### Cattle Council of Australia

Peter Hall  
John McGoverne

#### Goat Industry Council of Australia

Rick Gates  
John Falkenhagen

#### Sheep Producers Australia

Bill O'Halloran  
Bonnie Skinner

### Regulator Members

#### Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Dr Anna Somerville  
Dr David Cunningham  
Dugald MacLachlan

#### Jurisdictional Meat Industry Authority Representative

Dr Brendan Tatham (PrimeSafe Victoria)

#### NSW Department of Primary Industry

Dr David Cusack  
Lisa Burrows

#### QLD Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

Michael (Bomber) Lancaster

#### Agriculture Victoria

Ben Fahy

#### Primary Industries and Regions SA

Petra Lennon

#### Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (TAS)

Stuart Chilcott

#### Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development WA

Beth Green

#### Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries NT

Greg Crawford

### Observers

#### Chair of SAFEMEAT Partners

Ross Keane

#### Animal Health Australia

Dr Robert Barwell  
Dr Simon Humphrys

#### Australian Meat Processor Corporation

Matthew O'Bryan

#### Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Dr Jason Lutze  
Dr Maggie Hardy  
James Deller

#### Dairy Australia

Louise Sundermann

#### Integrity Systems Company

Dr Jane Weatherley  
Jo Quigley  
Damon Holmes

#### LiveCorp

No representatives attended 2018-19

#### Meat & Livestock Australia

Dr Ian Jenson

#### National Residue Survey

Clare Jones

#### Wool Producers Australia

Heidi Reid  
Joe Keynes  
Ash Cooper

#### Stock Feed Manufacturers Council of Australia

Duncan Rowland

### Guests

#### Cattle Council of Australia

Bob Barwell (Chair of Cotton Trash Working Group)

#### Department of Agriculture

Dr Carol Sheridan  
Claire Berry  
Dr Joffrid Mackett  
Justine Gilbert  
Ray Gavin  
Tim Whitnall (ABARES)

#### Bureau of Meteorology

Joel Lisonbee (BoM)

#### Secretariat

Matt Calverley  
Tom Black  
Usha Sriram-Prasad  
Stacey McIntosh  
Tara McDonough

### Annual Report Acronyms

<b>AGMIN</b>	Agriculture Ministers' Forum
<b>AGSOC</b>	Agriculture Senior Officials' Committee
<b>AHA</b>	Animal Health Australia
<b>AMPC</b>	Australian Meat Processor Corporation
<b>APIQ<sup>✓</sup>®</b>	Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance
<b>APL</b>	Australian Pork Limited
<b>APVMA</b>	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
<b>CVD</b>	Commodity Vendor Declaration
<b>CVO</b>	Chief Veterinary Officer
<b>DoA</b>	Department of Agriculture
<b>eNVD</b>	electronic National Vendor Declaration
<b>ESI</b>	Export Slaughter Interval
<b>EW1</b>	Early Warning 1 (status)
<b>HACCP</b>	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
<b>HGP</b>	Hormonal Growth Promotant
<b>ISC</b>	Integrity Systems Company
<b>JTG</b>	Jurisdictional Traceability Group
<b>LPA</b>	Livestock Production Assurance
<b>MISP</b>	Meat Industry Strategic Plan
<b>MLA</b>	Meat and Livestock Australia
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MRL</b>	Maximum Residue Limit
<b>NARM</b>	National Antimicrobial Residue Minimisation Program
<b>NBC</b>	National Biosecurity Committee
<b>NFAS</b>	National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme
<b>NLIS</b>	National Livestock Identification System
<b>NORM</b>	National Organochlorine Residue Management Program
<b>NSQA</b>	National Saleyards Quality Assurance
<b>NVD</b>	National Vendor Declaration
<b>PIC</b>	Property Identification Code
<b>PTART</b>	Pig Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and Development
<b>START</b>	Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
<b>STWG</b>	Sheep Traceability Working Group
<b>TART</b>	Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
<b>WHP</b>	Withholding period







**safe** ✓ *meat*

**Australian Government Department of Agriculture**

18 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra ACT, Australia

**phone:** +61 2 6272 2456

**email:** SAFEMEAT@agriculture.gov.au

**[safemeat.com.au](http://safemeat.com.au)**