



**safe** ✓ **meat**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

2015-16



Cover image

# Orange Braised Beef Cheeks

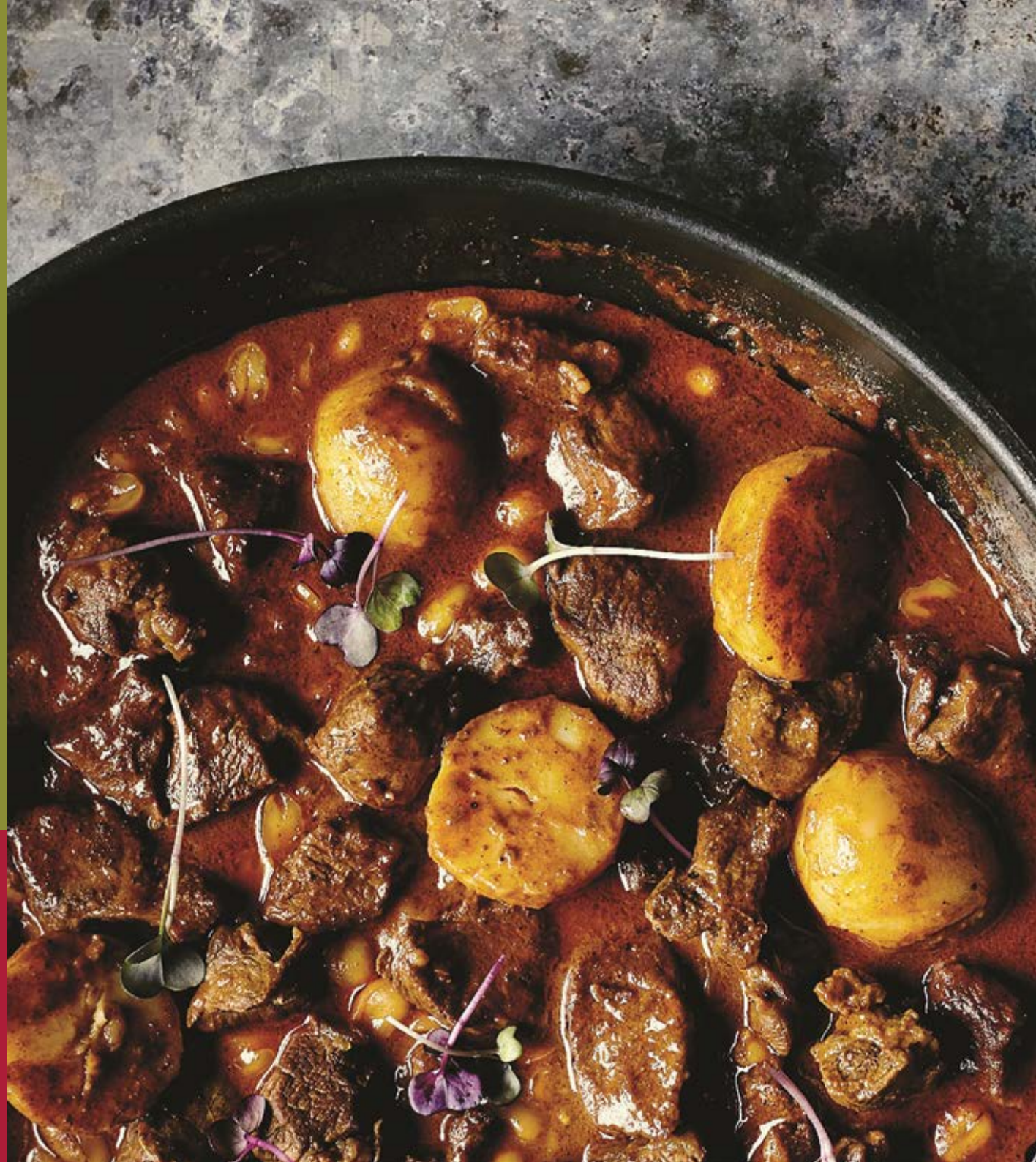
Recipe

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Goat  
Massaman  
Curry Recipe

## Message from the Chairman

I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report for SAFEMEAT for the 2015–16 financial year.

SAFEMEAT continues to meet many challenges which can only satisfy the diverse range of regulatory and commercial needs of all members and stakeholders who contribute to our deliberations through a combination of trust, good will and common sense.

SAFEMEAT continues to promote best practice management systems and implement 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 Systems (NLIS), National Vendor Declarations (NVD) and the adoption of important industry programs such as Livestock Production Assurance (LPA), Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance (APIQ), National Saleyards Quality Assurance (NSQA), National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) and Dairy Food Safety.

This Annual Report describes SAFEMEAT's progress against its terms of reference and summarises critical policy issues and work programs overseen by SAFEMEAT during 2015–16. These are reflected in the SAFEMEAT Business Plan.

### A number of key outcomes during the year were:

- » Commencing work on the Implementation Pathway established as an outcome of the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review and the Steering Group's report titled 'Towards an Integrated Integrity System'
- » Continued improvement in NLIS systems for cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. This includes progressing the SAFEMEAT-endorsed NLIS Cattle Standards (replacing the previous Operational Rules), endorsing a new NLIS Pig Standard, further developing the proposed business rules for enhancement of NLIS (Sheep and Goats) following the release of the Australian Government's NLIS Sheep and Goat Decision Regulation Impact Statement, and working with stakeholders to enhance NLIS compliance in the live animal export sector
- » Monitoring of progress in the adoption of strengthened measures to improve NLIS compliance in the meat processing sector
- » Successful implementation of the program to phase-out all but the current LPA NVDs effective from 16 November 2015
- » Approving the dairy industry application for on-farm food safety system equivalency against SAFEMEAT's national assessment criteria and approval process
- » Finalising the investigation into the use of cotton trash and failed cotton crops as a potential emergency drought feed
- » Participation in the OIE Performance of Veterinary Services Evaluation of Australia

The contribution of the many committees and working groups within SAFEMEAT continues to provide a valuable mechanism for industry to maintain a high level of food safety and market access for its products. This work has enabled targeted approaches to improving industry quality assurance programs through education, and fostering a partnership approach between industry and governments. Examples of this can be found in the monitoring of residues in livestock and the improving levels of compliance with NLIS requirements throughout the livestock supply chain.

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

I cannot stress enough the importance of maintaining the SAFEMEAT structure and to guard against complacency in times when there are no significant issues of concern or crises. As a strong industry and government partnership, we need to remain vigilant, focussed and committed to ensure we stay abreast of current and emerging issues so that the system can be activated at short notice if this becomes necessary.

## Message from the Chairman continued...

I would like to thank the SAFEMEAT Partnership and the SAFEMEAT Executive and their respective member organisations for their continued commitment and contributions in 2015–16. I would also like to acknowledge Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd (MLA), Animal Health Australia, the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, State and Territory jurisdictions, the various industry peak bodies and the Secretariat for their considerable efforts made during the year. It is important that membership continues to be drawn from the senior levels within representative organisations to ensure SAFEMEAT objectives are able to be met.

Yours sincerely

**Ross Keane**  
Chairman

14 December 2016

SAFEMEAT continues to be the most important vehicle for managing food safety and product integrity issues across the whole red meat, pork and livestock industries in Australia.



Beef Sirloin Superfood Salad Recipe

## Role of SAFEMEAT

The primary role of SAFEMEAT, as specified in the Meat Industry Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), is to oversee and promote sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic product to the market place. 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 Terms of Reference

- (a) To work with the objective of establishing world best practice in ensuring the safety of red meat and pork products.
- (b) To ensure each meat industry sector implements sound management systems to ensure safe and hygienic product is delivered to the market place.
- (c) To ensure adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.
- (d) To 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) To develop and provide relevant information about current and emerging meat safety and hygiene issues.

### SAFEMEAT Structure

The SAFEMEAT Partnership met on the following dates during 2015–16:

- » 17 November 2015
- » 22 June 2016

#### The SAFEMEAT Partnership members for 2015–16 were:

- » **Chair** Mr Ross Keane
- » **Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd**  
Mr Noel Campbell, then Ms Simone Jolliffe
- » **Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources**  
Mr Daryl Quinlivan; and Dr Mark Schipp
- » **Australian Livestock Exporters' Council**  
Mr Simon Crean
- » **Australian Lot Feeders' Association**  
Mr Don Mackay, then Ms Tess Herbert
- » **Australian Meat Industry Council**  
Mr Noel Kelson, and Dr John Langbridge, then Mr Christian Mulders
- » **Cattle Council of Australia** Mr Howard Smith
- » **Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (representing State/Territory Agriculture Departments)** Dr Allison Crook
- » **Safe Food Queensland (representing State/Territory Meat Industry Authorities)**  
Dr Barbara Wilson
- » **Sheepmeat Council of Australia** Mr Jeff Murray
- » **Australian Pork Limited** Ms Deb Kerr
- » **Goat Industry Council of Australia**  
Mr Rick Gates

#### Observers:

- » **Animal Health Australia** Ms Kathleen Plowman and Mr Duncan Rowland
- » **Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association** Mr Andy Madigan
- » **Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd**  
Mr Richard Norton
- » **Red Meat Advisory Council**  
Mr Angus Hobson, then Ms Anna Campbell
- » **Wool Producers Australia** Mr Steven Harrison
- » **Australian Livestock Markets Association**  
Ms Kate McGilvray
- » **Dairy Australia** Dr Robin Condon

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.



## Role of SAFEMEAT continued...

The SAFEMEAT Partnership is supported by the Executive Group. The Executive Group met on 17 September 2015 and 28 April 2016 to implement and monitor the Business Plan work program. Teleconferences or special meetings to address particular issues were also held during the year and involved industry, government and the Executive Group.

### In 2015–16 the Executive Group comprised the following members:

- » **Chair** Mr Stephen Bailey
- » **Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd** Mr David Basham
- » **Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources** Dr Robyn Martin
- » **Australian Livestock Exporters Council** Ms Alison Penfold
- » **Australian Lot Feeders' Association** Mr Dougal Gordon, then Ms Polly Bennett
- » **Australian Meat Industry Council** Dr John Langbridge, then Mr Christian Mulders
- » **Cattle Council of Australia** Mr Bob Barwell
- » **PrimeSafe Victoria (representing State/Territory Meat Industry Authorities)** Dr Brendan Tatham
- » **Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries** Dr Allison Crook (representing State/Territory Agriculture Departments)
- » **Sheepmeat Council of Australia** Dr Kat Ferme and Mr Mark Harvey-Sutton
- » **Australian Pork Limited** Ms Deb Kerr
- » **Goat Industry Council of Australia** Mr Duncan Bruce-Smith
- » **Dairy Australia** Dr Robin Condon
- » **Australian Renderers Association** Mr Dennis King
- » **Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association** Mr Andy Madigan
- » **Australian Livestock Markets Association** Ms Kate McGilvray
- » **Wool Producers Australia** Ms Jo Hall

### Observers:

- » **Animal Health Australia** Mr Duncan Rowland
- » **Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd** Ms Christine Pitt and Ms Jo Quigley
- » **Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority** Dr Jason Lutze
- » **Red Meat Advisory Council** Mr Angus Hobson, then Ms Anna Campbell

The SAFEMEAT Executive has a number of sub-committees to progress specific SAFEMEAT activities. In 2015–16 the sub-committees were:

- » **National Vendor Declaration (NVD) Management Committee** Chair: Mr Stephen Bailey (SAFEMEAT)
- » **NLIS (Cattle) Advisory Committee** Chair: Mr Peter Milne (SAFEMEAT)
- » **NLIS Monitoring Committee** Chair: Mr Stephen Bailey (SAFEMEAT)
- » **NLIS (Sheep and Goats) Advisory Committee** Chair: Mr Ian Feldtmann (SAFEMEAT)
- » **NLIS (Pork) Consultative Committee** Chair: Mr Andrew Johnson (Australian Pork Limited)
- » **NLIS Standards Committee** Chair: Mr Keith Adams (SAFEMEAT)
- » **SAFEMEAT Bobby Calves Residue Solutions Taskforce** Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)
- » **Stockfeed Working Group** Chair: Mr Dugald MacLachlan (Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources)
- » **Targeted Testing Working Group** Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)



- » **Device-Based Status Working Group** Chair: Mr Peter Merrell (Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources)
- » **Cotton Trash Working Group** Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)

### SAFEMEAT Secretariat

The SAFEMEAT Secretariat for 2015–16 was provided by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, 18 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra.

### Funding

Funding to attend meetings and undertake projects is provided by the individual SAFEMEAT members.

Funding for the SAFEMEAT Secretariat is provided through Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd, the Australian Meat Processor Corporation, LiveCorp and Australian Pork Ltd. The cost of running the Secretariat was \$200,000 for the 2015–16 financial year.

## Significant Events in 2015–16

Significant progress was made on implementing the recommendations of the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review.

Implementation of Review recommendations has been driven by an expertise-based Steering Group. The Final Report of the Steering Group — *Towards an Integrated Integrity System* — was presented to SAFEMEAT Partners and stakeholders on 21 August 2015. On 17 November 2015 SAFEMEAT Partners endorsed the Implementation Pathway recommended in the Final Report.

The Implementation Pathway comprises the following core elements:

- » Governance
- » Funding
- » Standards
- » Strengthened program elements
- » Monitoring and compliance
- » Education and communications
- » System enhancements

The full report can be found on the SAFEMEAT website.

Key elements to implementing the pathway — the development of a Transition Plan and a Funding Plan (for the future funding of industry's integrity systems) — are currently being progressed with key stakeholders.

With successful implementation, the delivery of a responsive and fully integrated through-chain risk management system, accompanied by technology enhancements to drive operational efficiencies, will ensure that 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.

Progress on specific Steering Group activities are reported on page 15.

Annual reviews of the SAFEMEAT Business Plan and Incident Response Manual were completed to reflect all current activities.

To ensure that Australia continues to meet the export requirements of our international trade partners, and to address issues with outdated NVD versions, SAFEMEAT determined that, from 16 November 2015, only the current LPA NVD (version 0413) can be used for all livestock movements. Through the coordinated efforts of all stakeholders, the NVD phase-out program was completed successfully.

SAFEMEAT continued its work through specific working groups to:

- » investigate the potential use of cotton trash as drought feed
- » coordinate activities to resolve a residue issue in some pig offals
- » address inconsistencies between published SAFEMEAT and Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) Export Slaughter Interval (ESI) advice
- » develop a national standard for the registration of goat depots to control the movement of untagged harvested goats going direct to slaughter

Antibacterial residues in bobby calves have been a concern for a number of years and continue to be detected in the structured residue monitoring program. Improvements have been noted over recent calving seasons as a result of the actions taken by industry and regulatory agencies in relation to these detections.

NLIS involved substantial work for members this year through the various NLIS committees. This included:

- » progression of the SAFEMEAT-endorsed NLIS Cattle Standards (to replace the 2005 Operational Rules)
- » finalisation and endorsement of the NLIS Pig Standards which will facilitate national mandatory pig movement reporting
- » working with the Australian Livestock Exporters' Council, jurisdictions and Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to improve compliance with NLIS requirements in the livestock export sector
- » working with the Livestock Production Assurance Advisory Committee (LPAAC) to ensure a greater level of scrutiny of producer compliance with NLIS requirements relating to property-to-property movements.

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 in various SAFEMEAT forums.

In October 2014, Agriculture Ministers agreed that State and Territory governments will make necessary improvements to NLIS Sheep and Goats by building on the systems already in place. Each jurisdiction is required to aim for improved traceability, either by enhancing the current mob-based system or by introducing electronic identification ear tags. The NLIS Sheep and Goats Advisory Committee's working group has continued to refine a draft business plan comprising strategies and actions to foster a nationally consistent approach.

The development of an integrated electronic NVD system continued under the oversight of the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Steering Group.



# SAFEMEAT Business Plan



The strategic directions of SAFEMEAT are set out in its Business Plan. The Business Plan outlines the strategic approach to managing red meat and pork safety and hygiene within Australia and seeks to achieve this through a number of 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 Recommendations

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

## 1. Standards and Regulations

The purpose of this program is to contribute to the implementation of nationally consistent standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene. In doing this, SAFEMEAT will support the development of harmonised and scientifically-based national and international standards and promote minimisation of regulations that are necessary to produce safe food, ensure consumer protection, and prevent market disruption.

## 2. Emergency Management

The purpose of this program is to ensure that effective emergency management strategies are in place and activated at appropriate times to minimise market disruption.

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

This program is designed to ensure the red meat and pork sectors deal effectively with food safety issues arising from disease outbreaks in cattle, sheep, goats and pigs.

The objectives are to minimise market disruption arising from the public health aspects of animal disease outbreaks and to contribute, where appropriate, to the development and implementation of national policies and programs designed to protect Australia from exotic animal diseases.

**Click for more information on animal diseases.**

## 4. Residues

This program aims to develop and implement sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic food with adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to residues.

SAFEMEAT will actively promote 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 is the objective of this program that any potential residue problems will be identified and appropriate management strategies will be developed and implemented, taking into consideration cost-efficient and equitable funding implications. This will minimise market disruption arising from residue violations.

**Click for more information on residues.**

The Business Plan outlines the strategic approach to managing red meat and pork safety and hygiene within Australia.



## SAFEMEAT Business Plan continued...

### 5. Pathogens

The purpose of this program is to implement sound management systems 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 risk management as appropriate.

**Click for more information on pathogens.**

### 6. Systems Development and Management

This program enables SAFEMEAT to facilitate the development and establishment 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.

### 7. Communication and Education

The purpose of this program is to facilitate communication, education and awareness of meat safety and hygiene issues by all stakeholders. Specifically, to establish a fully integrated and effective communication network within and outside SAFEMEAT, to encourage the ongoing development of expertise on meat safety and hygiene within the industry, government and academia and to raise the level of awareness of food safety and hygiene within the broader community.

### 8. Emerging Issues

The purpose of this program is to monitor and implement a range of strategic initiatives in relation to emerging issues to ensure that the industry is positioned to meet changing market and consumer demands as they arise. Issues such as advancements in biotechnology policy are closely monitored, both domestically and internationally, to ensure a well-informed industry.

### 9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Recommendations

The purpose of this program is to action recommendations to deliver more robust industry assurance programs that incentivise participation and uptake, promote greater efficiency in their 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 that 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.



## Progress Against the Business Plan

The progress SAFEMEAT made against the 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 to assist with the recognition and acceptance of major industry and government initiatives in order to maintain and enhance Australia's position as a world leader in the export of meat and meat products.

The Primary Production and Processing Standard for Meat and Meat Products came into effect on 31 July 2015. SAFEMEAT provided input directly into its development and individual SAFEMEAT members were also involved as representatives of their respective industry bodies.

On an on-going basis SAFEMEAT works with the APVMA and contributes to assessments, as required, on national agricultural and veterinary chemical registration issues, particularly where ESIs and withholding periods (WHPs) need to meet sensitive export market requirements.

SAFEMEAT has endorsed the NLIS Cattle Standards and NLIS Pig Standards which will be submitted to the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee (AGSOC) and the Agriculture Ministers Forum (AGMIN) for approval. This will ultimately result in pig movement reporting to the NLIS database becoming mandatory in all jurisdictions during 2017.

SAFEMEAT agreed to establish a working group to provide guidance to the NSQA on having its draft National Standard for the Operation of Australian Saleyards recognised by the State/Territories as an equivalent system for ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements.

SAFEMEAT is a contributor to the development of the Australian Feed Standard for Food Producing Animals.

### 2. Emergency Management

During the year, no incidents arose which necessitated SAFEMEAT to initiate any emergency management arrangements under the SAFEMEAT Incident Response Manual. However, on an ongoing basis, SAFEMEAT working groups continue to refine strategies to deal with the market access impacts of food safety incidents should they arise.

The SAFEMEAT Incident Response Manual is reviewed annually to ensure that it is appropriately structured to address any emergencies.

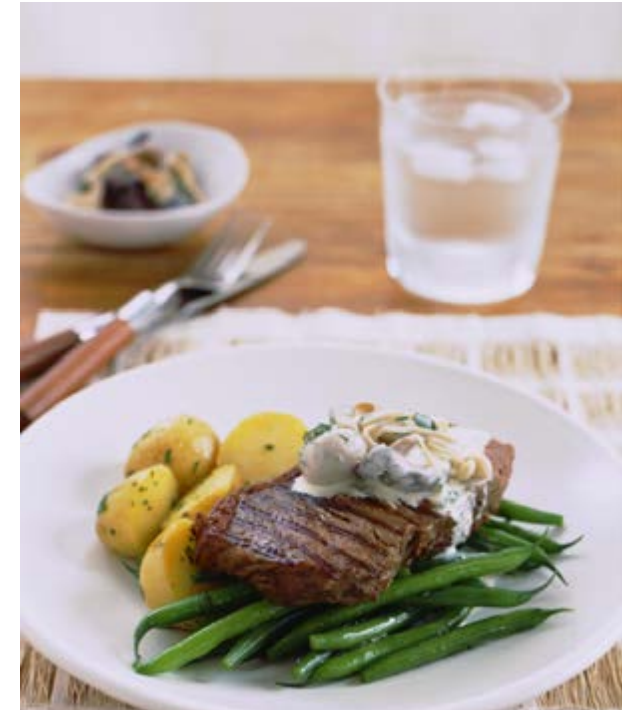
SAFEMEAT recognises the importance of facilitating appropriate linkages between SAFEMEAT emergency management arrangements and other related arrangements including AUSVETPLAN, the National Food Incident Response Plan and industry emergency response plans.

### 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 in order 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.

It is to be noted that Japan was recognised as a 'Category 1' Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) food safety risk in September 2015. Fresh (chilled or frozen) beef or beef products require a biosecurity risk assessment to be completed before importation can be permitted. The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has commenced a policy review for fresh (chilled or frozen) beef or beef products for human consumption from the USA, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand and Vanuatu.



Animal Health Australia (AHA) provided a strong platform for the national co-ordination of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) related projects, focussing on the collection of surveillance data (National TSE Surveillance Program) and inspections of the stock feed chain (Ruminant Feed Ban) in order to maintain Australia's internationally recognised status of "negligible risk" for BSE.

**The SAFEMEAT Incident Response Manual is reviewed annually to ensure that it is appropriately structured to address any emergencies.**

## Progress Against the Business Plan continued...

### 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 taking into consideration cost efficient and equitable funding implications
- » minimising market disruption arising from residue incidents
- » actively promoting the observance of WHPs and ESIs in order to prevent residues being present above the corresponding Maximum Residue Limit (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
- » Device-Based Status Working Group

The NARM Program continued during 2015–16. Export NARM sampling for 2015–16 consisted of a total of 15,875 samples, of which 16 contained residues and 10 were violative residues (violative residues are those that exceed the relevant Australian Standard and are subject to trace-back investigation).

Domestic NARM sampling for the spring and autumn period found 0.29% of calves with violative residues during the spring and 0.28% of calves with violative residues during autumn.

During 2015–16, the National Residue Survey (NRS) reported that approximately 970 cattle had been tested under their random sampling program for antibacterials, including 22 bobby calves. No violative residues were detected in the samples from bobby calves.

The Bobby Calf Residues Solution Taskforce has continued to work on a range of options to help minimise the number of residue violations in bobby calves.

The TART for cattle and the sheep equivalent, START, continued to operate in 2015–16. There were no detections in the 4 sheep samples, and no violative levels in the 20 cattle samples.

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 is working with all jurisdictions to ensure these statuses are managed in a nationally consistent manner.

SAFEMEAT has worked with Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC), the jurisdictions and the processing sector to develop a response mechanism where breaches of Australia's HGP requirements are detected or suspected.

SAFEMEAT maintained specific working groups to:

- » investigate the potential use of cotton trash as drought feed however, due to market risk perceptions, its use was not endorsed for stock feed. SAFEMEAT is currently preparing advisory information on cotton trash, which can still be purchased as mulch, to be made available to livestock producers
- » coordinate a joint government/industry response to a residue detected in some pig offals. This issue has been resolved



- » address inconsistencies between SAFEMEAT and APVMA ESI advice, with now only a single ESI list maintained on the APVMA website

SAFEMEAT agreed to establish a working group to assess the potential impacts of fire retardant chemicals where their use has been linked to livestock production areas and, where risks are identified, propose management strategies to minimise or eliminate those risks.

SAFEMEAT is coordinating, with Australian Renderers Association (ARA) and Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA), a communication strategy (including factsheet) on the safe and appropriate use of recycled fats and oils in animal feeds in recognition of potential residue risks that could occur.

**The Bobby Calf Residues Solution Taskforce has continued to work on a range of options to help minimise the number of residue violations in bobby calves.**



## Progress Against the Business Plan continued...

### 5. Pathogens

The work under this key program continues 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, biotechnology and post-mortem inspection.

One of the key components of this program is related to microbiological food safety and 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, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, MLA and Australian Meat Processor Corporation (AMPC)) provides additional guidance and oversight of the microbiological program.

In recognition of current issues concerning the presence of antibiotic resistance bacteria in the red meat supply chain, SAFEMEAT continued to support research to address the prevalence of antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the supply chain.

The 2015–16 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:

- » Reducing technical barriers to trade
- » Livestock and produce assurance through integrated integrity systems



## Progress Against the Business Plan continued...

### 6. Systems Development and Management

There were a number of NLIS developments during 2015–16.

The NLIS (Cattle) Standards (to replace the 2005 Operational Rules) — endorsed by SAFEMEAT in June 2015 — are being progressed for submission to AGSOC and AGMIN. These provide a minimum set of standards which can be adopted into legislation and enable jurisdictions to impose additional requirements if necessary. They set out the responsibilities of all participants in the production chain and enable NLIS to become auditable via industry food safety and quality assurance schemes.

Following issues in 2013 in progressing the then draft NLIS Pork Business Rules, in June 2016 SAFEMEAT endorsed their replacement with a newly drafted NLIS Pig Standard. This now enables a submission to be made to AGSOC and AGMIN seeking agreement for the mandatory adoption of NLIS Pigs including pig movement reporting in all jurisdictions in 2017. This will bring the pig industry in line with the cattle, sheep and goat industries under State/Territory legislation.

PigPass, the traceability system for pigs which is an important part of the Australian Pork Supply Chain Integrity Program, is now being integrated with the NLIS database. PigPass will remain the ‘front-end’ for entering movement details with automatic and immediate upload into the NLIS database which will be the central national repository of movement records for all species of livestock.

SAFEMEAT has continued to address long-standing issues regarding NLIS compliance in the live animal export sector through a number of SAFEMEAT committees. The factors affecting compliance relate to internal exporter processes and inconsistencies between species and jurisdiction regulation.

With the support of SAFEMEAT, Australian Livestock Exporters Council (ALEC) has commenced the development of task and sector specific NLIS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Work Instructions for livestock exporters and the development of industry awareness materials.

SAFEMEAT has negotiated with the goat industry for new accreditation conditions for goat depots which will allow the movement of untagged feral goats from depots direct to abattoirs. This addresses concerns raised by a number of jurisdictions about the origins and traceability of feral goats which cannot be tagged because of health and safety concerns.

The NLIS Standards Committee has continued its involvement in a number of areas, including working with Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) on a project on device integrity, examining the incidence of lost and non-reading tags at saleyards and working with the pig industry regarding the possible NLIS accreditation of pig tags. As at 30 June 2016, there were no new devices submitted for consideration.

Work is continuing on the review commissioned by MLA into all Property Identification Code (PIC) and device-based statuses. The NLIS Monitoring Committee has been requested for input to assist a working group develop options for adopting the recommendations of the review.

The NLIS Database Refresh project — a 3-stage project (Foundation, Build and Transition) to develop a new technology platform for the NLIS Database as well as a new Web site — is currently in the Build phase. The remainder of the Build phase has 5 major milestones, along with a final contingency release in December 2016, which also incorporates the Transition phase where the current production NLIS Database will be fully decommissioned.



## Progress Against the Business Plan continued...



The NLIS (Sheep and Goats) Advisory Committee focussed its activity on maintaining the current NLIS (Sheep and Goats) mob-based system, while at the same time maintaining a working group to consider the strategies and actions necessary to address the outcomes of the Decision Regulatory Impact Statement "Implementation of Improvements" to the National Livestock Identification System for Sheep and Goats. The key focus is on ensuring AGMIN targets of 98% compliance for short run and 95% compliance for long run targets are met.

Tag-free options for the movement of rangeland goats have been under active consideration with a communication strategy developed for industry operators, a working group formed to develop an agreed standard for goat depot registration, re-defining the definition of rangeland goat in the Goat NVD and the creation of a goat depot NLIS account.

Exercise Sheepcatcher II — a traceability audit against the National Livestock Traceability Standards — commenced in June and will be benchmarked against the first Exercise Sheepcatcher conducted in 2007. Animal Health Australia is coordinating this activity.

SAFEMEAT was provided with regular reports of NLIS monitoring activity conducted by State and Territory jurisdictions during 2015–16.

Financial third party service availability was extended to the sheep and goat industries, mirroring that which is currently in place for the cattle industry.

Progress on implementing a national PIC register has become the responsibility of Animal Health Committee.

**SAFEMEAT was provided with regular reports of NLIS monitoring activity conducted by State and Territory jurisdictions during 2015–16.**



## Progress Against the Business Plan continued...

NLIS Database statistics are as follows:

### Cattle

#### From July 1 2015 to June 30 2016

- » 5,647,041 database transactions
- » 29,933,556 devices transferred

#### As at 1 July 2016

- » 37,161 PICs with devices transferred or issued
- » 75,635 database accounts

<b>Total active devices</b>		<b>61260262</b>
Active devices	61260262	
<b>Total inactive devices</b>		<b>108450245</b>
Devices recorded as killed	93125054	
Devices on EEEEEEEE	7025013	
Devices moved to 'DECEASED'	62516	
Devices on AAAAAAAA	978159	
Devices flagged as Inactive	7259503	
<b>Total devices on database</b>		<b>169710507</b>

### Sheep

#### From July 1 2015 to June 30 2016

- » 25,710,173 million sheep in 125,286 mobs moved
- » 20,622,482 million sheep in 178,728 mobs killed (mobs through saleyard+P2P)
- » 13,308 database accounts with Sheep selected

### Goat

#### From July 1 2015 to June 30 2016

- » 1,721,091 goats in 6059 mobs moved
- » 1,227,096 goats in 7737 mobs killed (mobs through saleyard+P2P)
- » 3,930 database accounts with Goats selected

## 7. Communication and Education

SAFEMEAT continues to:

- » meet face-to-face (Partners twice yearly and Executive twice yearly) to address all matters related to its terms of reference
- » hold teleconferences as circumstances determine (these were particularly relevant for the working groups on drought feeding (cotton trash) and ESI list rationalisation)
- » 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 such as to the OIE Performance of Veterinary Services Evaluation
- » post material on current issues on the SAFEMEAT website
- » respond to media enquiries as they arise

## 8. Emerging Issues

SAFEMEAT maintains a watching brief on food chain security and critical infrastructure protection issues and participates in numerous forums to discuss matters of concern.

SAFEMEAT is regularly briefed on current and emerging market access issues for Australian exports by the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. Such briefings assist in communicating issues specific to certain markets to the relevant industry stakeholders and in coordinating an industry wide response.

Antimicrobial resistance has re-emerged as an issue and SAFEMEAT endorsed incorporating further work into research programs to address the prevalence of antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the red meat supply chain.

## 9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Recommendations

At its 17 November 2015 meeting, SAFEMEAT Partners unanimously endorsed the recommendations outlined within the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Steering Group's report — *Towards an integrated integrity system*, subject to the funding arrangements for industry's integrity system being resolved, and the development of a more detailed transition plan to underpin the implementation pathway.

The Steering Group identified that a sustainable red meat integrity system into the future must be based on a sound strategic foundation, delivered through strong governance and empowered management, and underpinned by secure and adequate resourcing.

The Steering Group identified a range of actions to implement the required changes and deliver a fully auditable and responsive whole-of-chain risk management system that maintains market access, food safety, product integrity (including traceability and animal welfare) and biosecurity.

Several actions are already underway and others will be implemented by SAFEMEAT, integrity program owners and MLA, as well as by the proposed Integrity System Policy Group and the Integrity System Company.

**SAFEMEAT maintains a watching brief on food chain security and critical infrastructure protection issues.**





## Progress Against the Business Plan continued...

**Since handing down its report, the Steering Group has continued to have oversight over the following activities:**

- » Development of an integrated electronic NVD system (incorporating ownership and management, data capture and storage standards, system business rules, licensing of software providers). MLA has been coordinating field trials for the eNVD system. The trials aim to demonstrate the accuracy and effectiveness of the eNVD system, and to identify any refinements, fixes or enhancements prior to its broader roll-out. In consultation with trial-licensed software vendors, MLA has been evaluating the eNVD system within commercial environments, across a range of market segments, supply chains and operational scenarios.
- » Development and implementation of an integrated communication strategy for industry's integrity programs. The strategy will support the implementation of a number of program enhancements including the implementation of the eNVD, enhancements to the LPA program accreditation and recommitment process, single portal for producer access to the integrity system databases, and the implementation of the NLIS refresh project. The communication strategy will track producer attitudes to the integrity programs, changes in practices and behaviour as well as general understanding of the programs.
- » LPA eLearning tool and strengthened LPA recommitment and accreditation process. The strengthened LPA accreditation process will commence in September 2016 and will require new LPA participants to complete the eLearning tool and assessment as a part of their accreditation. The strengthened LPA recommitment process is planned from January 2017, with all LPA participants required to complete an LPA assessment once every three years. The initial recommitment will be staggered over a two year period.



### Lamb Sichuan Recipe

# Acronyms

<b>AGMIN</b>	Agriculture Ministers Forum
<b>AGSOC</b>	Agriculture Senior Officials Committee
<b>AHA</b>	Animal Health Australia
<b>ALEC</b>	Australian Livestock Exporters Council
<b>AMPC</b>	Australian Meat Processor Corporation
<b>APIQ</b>	Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance
<b>APVMA</b>	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
<b>ARA</b>	Australian Renderers Association
<b>ALFA</b>	Australian Lot Feeders' Association
<b>BSE</b>	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
<b>CSIRO</b>	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
<b>ESI</b>	Export Slaughter Interval

<b>HACCP</b>	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
<b>LPA</b>	Livestock Production Assurance
<b>LPAAC</b>	Livestock Production Assurance Advisory Committee
<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>NFAS</b>	National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme
<b>NLIS</b>	National Livestock Identification System
<b>NORM</b>	National Organochlorine Residue Management Program
<b>NRS</b>	National Residue Survey

<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>RMAC</b>	Red Meat Advisory Council
<b>SOPs</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>START</b>	Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
<b>TART</b>	Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
<b>TSE</b>	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy
<b>WHP</b>	Withholding Period



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