

HGPs and beef production

Some countries and customers will not accept beef or beef products that are treated with hormonal growth promotants (HGPs).

To protect Australia's access to these markets – and the industry's global reputation – every farmer, grazier, lot feeder and livestock agent must use HGPs appropriately. This includes accurately recording HGP use along the beef supply chain.

What are HGPs?

HGPs are slow-release implants that contain natural or synthetic hormones used to improve growth rates and feed efficiency in cattle.

A list of HGP products available in Australia is available on the SAFEMEAT website.

How do HGPs work?

HGPs come in the form of implants placed under the skin on the back of the ear of cattle, continuously releasing low doses of hormones.

Why are HGPs used?

HGPs improve feed conversion in cattle, making individual producers and the Australian beef industry more competitive in international markets.

Why must HGP use be declared?

Some markets do not allow the use of HGPs at any stage of the production of meat. To supply these markets, it is important that robust systems are in place to provide processors, regulators and markets with confidence that the animals have never been treated with HGPs.


Are there consequences for getting it wrong?

Detection of HGPs by markets requiring HGP-free product, could result in Australia being excluded from that market and could jeopardise the industry's global reputation. Regaining market access could require industry to introduce more restrictive and expensive programs to demonstrate HGP-freedom.

Processors have rigorous programs to verify the accuracy of National Vendor Declarations (NVDs). False answers to NVD questions may result in property audits, suspension from the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program, government prosecution, and legal action against individual producers.

Know your responsibilities in using HGPs

Farmers, graziers, lot feeders and livestock agents must follow these steps to fulfil legal responsibilities and protect Australia's market access.

- 1. Have a registered PIC**
To purchase HGPs from an authorised seller, you must have a Property Identification Code (PIC).
- 2. At the time of purchase, complete an HGP purchaser declaration form and provide it to the supplier**
Your supplier should have copies of this form or you can access it on the APVMA website. This form includes details about you, the HGP supplier, which HGP products will be implanted into which cattle, and the details of the property where the cattle will be implanted.
- 3. Use HGP products according to the label directions**
Approved guidelines for use of HGP products are prominent on the label. Follow these guidelines which can include information on dosage, application, withholding periods and more.
- 4. Identify HGP-treated cattle with a triangular ear punch mark**
The prescribed ear punch mark shall be in the form of an equal sided triangle with sides of 20mm; applied so as to leave a space on all sides within the margin of the right ear.

If an animal has previously been treated with HGPs and has been ear punched with the prescribed mark, there is no requirement to add another mark.
Only the approved ear punch available from authorised retailers of HGPs may be used.
- 5. Keep a record each time an animal is treated with HGPs**
This includes date of treatment; description, location and number of livestock treated; and details of the product used (including trade name, batch number and dose).
Keeping records and identifying treated cattle with a triangular ear punch mark are legal requirements in all states and territories, and are requirements of the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program.
- 6. Declare animals treated with HGPs on the National Vendor Declaration (NVD) form**
See details on next page.

Declare HGP-treated cattle accurately on NVDs

National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) are legal document that are key to Australian beef's traceability and market access.

Answer the hormonal growth promotant (HGP) question correctly to avoid penalties and protect access to HGP-free markets.

It is an offence to represent HGP-treated cattle as being untreated and doing so can result in a penalty.

If you are unsure whether cattle have ever in their lifetime been treated with HGPs, tick 'Yes' on Question 1 of the NVD.

Have any of these cattle ever been treated with an HGP?

Tick **YES** on the NVD if:

- You are in doubt
- Records say yes
- Animals have a triangular hole in their right ear
- You can see or feel an old implant or steel bead in their left ear

1 Have any of the cattle in this consignment ever in their lives been treated with a hormonal growth promotant (HGP)?
(Use a second document for mixed consignments.)
Yes No

Tick **NO** if you are 100% sure animals have not been treated with HGPs.

Remember both male and female cattle can be treated with HGPs.

If in doubt, tick **YES**

