



ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT



2025-26





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MESSAGE from the Chair

Dear Stakeholder

I am pleased to present the SAFEMEAT's activities and performance report for the 2025–26 financial year.

The reporting year has again seen SAFEMEAT delivering collaborative outcomes that have significant benefits for industry, the commonwealth and state & territory jurisdictions. Key outcomes are outlined in the body of this report.

SAFEMEAT's work can be challenging at times, and we appreciate members' willingness to contribute their expertise, insights and resources. Members' work on issues such as livestock traceability and residue management underpins Australia's world leading red meat integrity system.

On behalf of SAFEMEAT Partners I would like to thank you all for your considerable efforts and continued support throughout 2025–26.

I would also like to recognise Dr Peter Barnard's efforts chairing the SAFEMEAT Advisory Group and many working groups over the past year. The dedication and capability of Noelle Cornish, as the key person in the SAFEMEAT Secretariat, is gratefully acknowledged.

The value of SAFEMEAT as a vehicle for managing food safety and product integrity issues and as a consultative platform for the red meat and livestock sector in Australia cannot be underestimated.

Together, I am confident that we can continue to progress the important work that SAFEMEAT does to support Australia's reputation as a world leading producer of high quality and safe red meat and pork.

Yours sincerely

John Webster
Chair
SAFEMEAT Partnership





SAFEMEAT is a consultative partnership between industry and government that represents Australia's red meat livestock and processing industries. SAFEMEAT provides a platform for engagement and collaboration on policy that contributes to ensuring Australian meat and livestock products adhere to the highest standards of safety.

Our role:

SAFEMEAT provides oversight and strategic guidance for the red meat and livestock integrity system across the production supply chain, supporting the highest standards of safety for Australian red meat.

The arrangements for the establishment and operation of the SAFEMEAT Partnership are found under Schedule 4 of the Red Meat Memorandum of Understanding. SAFEMEAT's role, as defined in its Terms of Reference, is to:

- work with the intent to ensure adequate, nationally consistent and harmonised standards and regulations relating to food safety, hygiene and integrity within the meat and livestock sectors;
- monitor and plan for risk which may impact the integrity and safety of Australia's meat and livestock sectors and the safety of food products from meat producing livestock;
- monitor and address emerging or market-driven issues in relation to the integrity and safety of food products from meat producing livestock;
- monitor industry performance in relation to the safety and integrity of food products from meat producing livestock; and
- ensure that effective crisis management strategies are in place by the appropriate industry sectors and, to this end, ensure that there is a fully integrated and effective communications network.

A COLLABORATIVE PLATFORM:

SAFEMEAT provides its members with a forum to develop unified policies for the Australian red meat and livestock industry's integrity systems, ensuring that there is a streamlined, integrated and collaborative approach to the delivery of safe Australian meat and livestock products.

PROMOTES BEST PRACTICE:

SAFEMEAT is dedicated to promoting Australia's best practice management systems, rationalisation of regulation and standards within the industry, and driving the implementation of sound strategies and incident management principles to ensure the integrity of Australian red meat and livestock products.

The system includes on-farm assurance and through-chain traceability programs and reflects Australia's commitment to biosecurity and food safety.

MONITORS TRENDS AND ISSUES:

SAFEMEAT proactively monitors emerging meat safety and integrity issues that may impact on Australian red meat and livestock products and provides strategic input and advice to ensure that risks are mitigated, and market related opportunities are maximised.



The SAFEMEAT Secretariat is currently provided by, and located in, the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The Secretariat provides support to the Advisory Group Chair and SAFEMEAT Partners Chair and is responsible for ensuring the timely and effective operations of SAFEMEAT through the delivery of Secretariat services.

SAFEMEAT funding

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

The SAFEMEAT Secretariat and the contracted time commitments and expenses of the Advisory Group & Partners Chairs were funded by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA).







SAFEMEAT Partners

SAFEMEAT Partnership (Partners) provides the overarching strategic policy direction and makes the final determinations on the activities SAFEMEAT undertakes in the meat and livestock sector.

SAFEMEAT Partners met on the following dates during 2025–2026:

- 27 August 2025
- 16 December 2025
- 1 April 2026

INDEPENDENT CHAIR:

John Webster

COMMONWEALTH PARTNERS

- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

STATES AND TERRITORIES PARTNERS

- Departments of Primary Industries or Agriculture (one representative)
- States or Territories Meat and Livestock Authorities (one representative)

NATIONAL INDUSTRY BODIES PARTNERS

- Cattle Australia (CA)
- Sheep Producers Australia (SPA)
- Goat Industry Council of Australia (GICA)
- Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA)
- Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC) – two representatives
- Australian Livestock Exporters' Council (ALEC)
- Australian Pork Limited (APL)
- Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF)

SERVICE PROVIDER ORGANISATIONS (OBSERVERS)

- Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA)
- Integrity Systems Company (ISC)
- Australian Meat Processor Corporation (AMPC)
- Australian Livestock Export Corporation (LiveCorp)
- Animal Health Australia (AHA)
- Dairy Australia
- AUS-MEAT

OTHER OBSERVER ORGANISATIONS

- Australian Livestock & Property Agents Association (ALPA)
- Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC)
- Saleyards Australia
- Wool Producers Australia (WPA)





SAFEMEAT Advisory Group

SAFEMEAT Partners is supported by the SAFEMEAT Advisory Group. The Advisory Group met on the following dates during 2025–2026:

- 23 July 2025
- 1 December 2025
- 10 March 2026

The Advisory Group was established by Partners to form recommendations on the development, implementation and review of policy, standards, rules and strategic direction of the Australian red meat and livestock industry's integrity systems.

INDEPENDENT CHAIR:

Dr Peter Barnard

INDUSTRY BODIES

- Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF)
- Australian Livestock Exporters Council (ALEC)
- Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA)
- Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC)
- Australian Pork Limited (APL)
- Australian Renderers' Association (ARA)
- Cattle Australia (CA)

- Goat Industry Council of Australia (GICA)
- Sheep Producers Australia (SPA)

GOVERNMENT BODIES / REGULATORS

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

One State Food Authority
representative

A representative from each
State/Territory Government:

- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, NSW
- Department of Primary Industries, QLD
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, VIC
- Department of Primary Industries and Regions, SA
- Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, TAS
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, WA
- Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade, NT

OBSERVERS

- Animal Health Australia (AHA)
- Saleyards Australia
- Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association (ALPA)
- Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association (ALRTA)
- Australian Meat Processor Corporation (AMPC)
- Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA)
- Dairy Australia (DA)
- Integrity Systems Company (ISC)
- Australian Wild Game Industry Council (AWGIC)
- Australian Livestock Export Corporation (LiveCorp) (LC)
- Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA)
- National Residue Survey (NRS)
- Stock Feed Manufacturers Council of Australia (SFMCA)
- Wool Producers Australia (WPA)
- AUS-MEAT
- Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC)





SAFEMEAT Working Groups

Over the past year SAFEMEAT has continued to draw expertise and guidance from its traceability and issue-specific sub-committees.

JURISDICTIONAL TRACEABILITY GROUP

The Jurisdictional Traceability Group (JTG) supports the SAFEMEAT Advisory Group 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.

PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS) WORKING GROUP

The PFAS group developed guidance to producers with PFAS affected properties to identify and manage the risk of PFAS in the animals they raise.

NATIONAL VENDOR DECLARATION (NVD) WORKING GROUP

The NVD working group established Terms of Reference for an independent Review of the role of the National Vendor Declaration in future assurance systems. Funded by an Agricultural Traceability Grant, the review was completed in 2026.

NLIS SYSTEM TRANSFER WORKING GROUP

The NLIS System Transfer Working Group was formed to further improve compliance on producer-to-producer livestock transfers.

NLIS DATA ACCESS WORKING GROUP

The NLIS Data Access Working Group was established to examine the data and report access permissions for industry account types to support trade, market access and traceability requirements.

3-HOLE PUNCH WORKING GROUP

The 3-hole Punch Working Group was established to consider the optimal approach for identification of cattle treated with Silirum® vaccine for bovine Johne's disease.

NLIS CATTLE STANDARDS REVIEW WORKING GROUP

The NLIS Cattle Standards Working Group provides strategic oversight of the Standards to ensure they remain contemporary with current regulatory, industry and technological settings; aligned with the broader NLIS framework and continue to be effective in supporting national livestock traceability outcomes.

BEEF-DAIRY WORKING GROUP

The Beef-Dairy Working Group was established to review the quality assurance systems underpinning the integration of beef from dairy origin (bobby calves, cull cows, dairy beef) into the red meat integrity system and recommend future approaches to Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) and Dairy Quality Assurance equivalency.



SAFEMEAT has been an effective forum for industry-government engagement on red meat traceability and integrity and continues to play that role as needs evolve.

SAFEMEAT's strategic priorities encompass seven key programs:

1. Standards and Regulations
2. Systems Development and Management
3. Emerging Issues / Risks
4. Emergency Management
5. Meat Safety & Hygiene
6. Communication and Education
7. SAFEMEAT Good governance

KEY PROGRAM	PURPOSE
Standards and Regulations	To contribute to the implementation of national compliance with standards and regulations.
Systems Development and Management	To facilitate the development and establishment of key management systems to underpin animal traceability. To deliver robust industry assurance programs.
Emerging Issues / Risks	To monitor and implement strategic initiatives on emerging issues / risks. To establish key performance indicators and then monitor and recommend any required enhancements to industry performance.
Emergency Management	To ensure effective crisis management strategies are in place and activated when required.
Meat Safety & Hygiene	To facilitate the development and establishment of key management systems to underpin meat safety and hygiene programs including: • Robust, consistent standards and regulations on residues. • Meet consumer expectations and regulatory requirements on pathogens. Deal effectively with food safety issues arising from disease outbreaks in cattle, sheep and pigs.
Communication and Education	To facilitate communication of meat safety and hygiene issues to the red meat industries, and stakeholders.
SAFEMEAT Good Governance	Meeting SAFEMEAT Terms of Reference governance requirements.



The key activities undertaken by SAFEMEAT in 2025–2026 against the seven programs are outlined below:

NLIS Compliance Dashboard

The development of the Compliance Dashboard Reports was a key outcome of the National Biosecurity Committee traceability reform work. SAFEMEAT has undertaken and continues to promote nationally consistent data collection, presentation and analysis with regards to SAFEMEAT oversight of the industry and jurisdiction responsibilities of NLIS. This set of performance indicators helps assess operational effectiveness and detection of any issues and concerns to be addressed.

Australian feed standard for food producing animals

SAFEMEAT continues to develop the draft Australian Feed Standard for Food Producing Animals which will help ensure the safety of food for human consumption through adherence to good animal feeding practice and good manufacturing practices during the procurement, handling, storage, processing and distribution of animal feed and feed ingredients for food producing animals.

National Vendor Declaration (NVD) Review

The NVD Review is a strategic initiative aimed at modernising and ensuring the continued integrity of livestock traceability and market assurance systems across Australia. Supported by an Agricultural Traceability Grant from DAFF, the independent review launched a consultation process to evaluate the current uses and future needs of the NVD across the supply chain. The final report was reviewed by the NVD Working Group and Advisory Group towards the end of this reporting period. Partners will consider the recommendations later in calendar year 2026.

NLIS Cattle Standards

The NLIS Cattle Standards were last reviewed in 2016. Since then, significant changes have occurred in technology, regulatory expectations, and industry practice, including the national roll-out of electronic identification (eID) for sheep and goats and the development of NLIS 2.0. This review will ensure the Cattle Standards remain fit-for-purpose, harmonised with current best practice, and compatible with the modern NLIS platform.





Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

SAFEMEAT finalised for publication a guidance document for cattle and sheep producers with properties affected by PFAS, who are raising animals for export market supply chains with set maximum limits for PFAS in food. The document is intended to help producers assess whether PFAS levels present warrant attention and outline possible management options if needed.

Review of older registered Veterinary chemical products

Through SAFEMEAT, the red meat industry is working with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) to review the requirements for the use of older registered agricultural and veterinary (AgVet) products.

Dairy quality assurance and Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) equivalency

SAFEMEAT is progressing work to review and strengthen the equivalency between livestock quality assurance systems, particularly the assurances provided by the LPA program and the range of dairy quality assurance arrangements, in relation to meat safety and integrity. A dedicated working group was established to consider equivalency, ensuring that assurance frameworks remain robust, transparent and fit for purpose in supporting market access and consumer confidence.





SAFEMEAT plays a key role supporting the collective efforts of both industry and government to maintain Australia's world-leading red meat and livestock integrity systems.

The environment we operate within is becoming increasingly complex. Trade volatility, technical barriers to trade, biosecurity risk and the growing focus on food safety will continue to drive the work of SAFEMEAT. As we move into 2027 and beyond, it is imperative that SAFEMEAT remains contemporary in its structure and approach to ensure it can adapt and respond to these emerging challenges.

Over the coming year, the SAFEMEAT Partnership, Advisory Group, working groups and sub-committees will convene to consider

a range of matters to underpin the ongoing sustainability and prosperity of the Australian red meat and livestock sector and ensure that customer expectations in terms of product safety and integrity are met.

We will continue to work diligently and collaboratively, taking a proactive whole-of-chain approach to the challenges that we face for the benefit of every stakeholder in the Australian red meat and livestock supply chain.





safe  **meat**