

Meat Inspection and Quality Assurance Network

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Project Description

The Meat Inspection and Quality Assurance Network is a state based network of researchers, industry QA practitioners, trainers and regulators. It is a well-established network that is a highly effective means of distributing new information and providing extension services for AMPC RD&E activities.

Project Content

In the 2015-2016 year a total of fourteen network meetings were conducted. This schedule comprises:

- Two network meetings in Queensland, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, and four meetings in New South Wales (two in the north, and two in the south)
- Two domestic networks in NSW and giving presentations at the Queensland Country Meat Processor Association and Young Guns meetings
- One joint training and MI&QA forum in each of Tasmania and the Northern Territory (funded through the Meat industry Training Network).

As in previous years there have been presentations and strong support from AMPC, MLA, the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, State Food Authorities and AMIC. Similarly industry participation remains strong. These forums allow research agencies to promote and disseminate industry-funded innovations and research. In addition they enable industry to provide feedback to researchers on their programs and their validity as well as a forum to discuss issues with regulators and identify those that require research or training initiative to resolve them.

In addition, MINTRAC Project Officers are, as part of this project, available to on-plant and regulatory personnel between meetings to answer incidental queries, investigate and respond to issues raised by processing personnel, and visit plants when requested.

Project Outcome

This year a range of topics and research projects were discussed at the network meetings by researchers including work undertaken on:

- Rapid detection of pathogens
- Base line studies of micro contamination on carcasses
- Lymph node study on its role in salmonella
- The shelf life of vacuum packaged meat
- Shelf life prediction software.





- AMPC also reported on market access work it has undertaken with regard to chilled meat into China and the features of the chilled meat trade and cold chain in China.
- The Department of Agriculture and State Food Authority representatives spoke on:
- Outcomes from overseas reviews conducted by the US, EU, China and Malaysia
- Review of export regulations with an expectation that new regulations and orders will be in place by 2020
- Land Transport Standard
- Sheep and cattle AW Standards
- NLIS Issues
- AAO re-registration.



Dr. Kevin Sullivan also delivered a very well received presentation on heat stress in feedlot cattle.

Mark Beecham, from MINTRAC, delivered a presentation on the science of packaging, an area often taken for granted by Quality Assurance personnel.

MINTRAC also prepared processors and the regulators for the introduction of the new meat safety qualifications, due for introduction around mid-2016.

Benefit for Industry

Over a period of nearly twenty years, this network has developed and evolved into a recognised industry forum for the sharing, debate and dissemination of a wide range of issues and research related to meat science, customer requirements and expectations, and the regulation of the Australian meat processing industry.

This network offers industry personnel, regulatory officers, researchers and industry personnel an opportunity to join a community of practice that alerts them to the latest issues and potential solutions. It has enabled the industry to develop a common understanding of such issues as animal welfare, professional development requirements, meat export orders and Department Meat Notices.

For research organisations such as MLA and AMPC it has provided a way of explaining to company representatives the nature of a specific research project, what its possible outcomes are and how the industry can assist in gathering data, samples etc. This collaborative approach to resolving problems is relatively unique in what is a highly competitive industry.

In a forever changing regulatory environment the network has enabled QA personnel to have changes in domestic and export market requirements explained to them by the relevant enforcement body and in particular what compliance will look like in terms of processes procedures and records.

It is a well-established network that is a highly effective means of distributing new information and providing extension services for AMPC RD&E activities.



Contact Information

Australian Meat Processor Corporation Ltd
Suite 1, Level 5, 110 Walker Street
North Sydney NSW 2060
Phone: 02 8908 5500
Email: admin@ampc.com.au
Website: www.ampc.com.au

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