



Thermal Process Approvals – Milk, Egg and Fish Products

Date of notice: 30/07/14

Date of effect: immediate

This notice applies to export registered milk, egg and fish establishments using thermal processing for low acid canned foods in hermetically sealed containers.

Key change

This notice is to advise that the Department of Agriculture is changing the arrangements for establishments that conduct thermal processing and will no longer formally sign off on thermal process approval forms (EX30's). Companies will be responsible for ensuring the scheduled thermal processes they conduct, meet requirements for thermal processing set out in Part 3, Division II of Schedule 5 of milk, egg and fish commodity orders.

Export legislation link: <http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/quarantine/legislation/export>

Background

Thermal process heat penetration trials and process calculations will still be required as the minimum validation data that underpins your HACCP program, CCP's and records. Thermal process validation, scheduled processes and assessment of any deviations to established scheduled processes must be conducted by a person who is appropriately qualified to calculate scheduled processes.

Companies must maintain:

- Records of skills and know
- ledge of appropriately qualified staff
- Validation data for each thermal process (including heat penetration trials, thermal process calculations etc.) that has been signed off by an appropriately qualified person
- Deviations to any scheduled thermal process must be assessed by an appropriately qualified person. Records must include a clear determination of the final disposition of the assessment outcome, including evidence where the product is determined to be commercially sterile and safe to eat
- All other records as required in accordance with legislation and your approved arrangement, including: calibration records, CCP monitoring records e.g. cooling water, seam and can inspection records

Establishments that are already approved to conduct thermal processing:

- The submission of EX30 forms, heat penetration data and process calculations to the department is no longer required
- Establishments conducting thermal process operations must still be able to demonstrate that the thermal processing of low acid hermetically sealed foods is conducted in accordance with a validated thermal process calculated by a person who has completed the 'Approved Persons Course for the Thermal Processing of Low Acid Foods' or equivalent and is appropriately qualified
- Establishment's must ensure that cut codes are added prior to production of any new thermal process. This must be done by establishment staff in management and control requesting the cut code/s by email from your regional food safety auditor
- New and existing thermal processes will now be reviewed at audit

Establishments that are not currently approved to conduct thermal processing:

- Establishments wishing to conduct thermal processing or other new processes for the first time must seek approval from the department prior to implementation. This will involve submission of approved arrangement amendments and inspection of equipment, premise and process as required.

Further enquiries: Dairy, egg and fish products: dairyeggsfish@agriculture.gov.au