



Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Senator for Queensland

5 SEPTEMBER 2011

Gillard Government supports regional meat processing jobs

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig, today announced a new system of export certification for Australian meatworks that will cut red tape, support regional jobs and improve Australia's export meat industry's competitiveness.

"Australia's meat export certification system is amongst the best in the world. All meat that leaves Australia for export markets meets strict quality and safety standards," Minister Ludwig said.

"Export certification gives assurance to our producers and trading partners that hygiene and quarantine standards are met.

"The export meat processing sector supports over 10,000 jobs in regional communities all over Australia. The Australian Government has been working with the sector since December 2009 to slash red tape and reduce the cost of the certification process and help Australian meatworks compete internationally."

The new co-regulatory arrangement, the Australian Export Meat Inspection System (AEMIS), will be implemented from 1 October 2011. To support the transition to the new system the government will provide \$25.8 million over three years in support as the industry returns to full cost recovery by 2013.

"The changes give businesses greater flexibility in how staff are deployed when not undertaking export inspection work, reward good performance, and focus regulatory resources on risk areas," Minister Ludwig said.

"I want to acknowledge the role the Australian Government Meat Processors Ministerial Task Force and the Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC) have played in delivering these important changes to the sector. They provide for improved efficiency and competitiveness along with a continued focus on reducing the cost of operating the system."

"AMIC will work closely with the Australian Government as we implement the new system," said Chair of the Ministerial Task Force, Mr Gary Burridge.

"It is in our interest to continue to work with the Government to improve the efficiency of export certification and we are pleased the Minister has agreed to maintain an oversight role for the industry in both implementing the new system but also working to drive efficiencies in to the future.

"A Memorandum of Understanding between AMIC and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry will enhance collaboration regarding international market access discussions."

The legislative instruments to support the new certification system along with the new fees and charges will be tabled in the parliament in the coming weeks.

If these legislative instruments are disallowed there will be no roll out of AEMIS or any ongoing support to the processing sector. Minister Ludwig called on all parliamentarians to support this significant reform.

For further information visit www.daff.gov.au/ecrp