

Biosecurity Act 2014: labelling requirements for animal feed

The *Biosecurity Act 2014* and Biosecurity Regulation 2016 ensure that the labelling of animal feed in Queensland is consistent with national standards.

The legislation:

- ▶ continues to implement the Australian Ruminant Feed Ban, with adoption of negative RAM statement requirements for feed that does not contain restricted animal material (RAM)
- ▶ includes the *Code of practice for feed for food producing animals*, which sets requirements for feed content and labelling.

The requirements state what you must do to meet your general biosecurity obligation in relation to labelling feed.

The requirements apply to:

- ▶ feed in bags, including feed that is 'rebagged' or sold from open containers in small quantities
- ▶ bulk feed.



RAM statements

Restricted animal material (RAM) is material that contains or may contain a carcass of a vertebrate animal or anything derived from a vertebrate animal (e.g. blood, bone, egg, faeces, meat, tissue or meal).

It also includes anything that may have been in contact with these materials (e.g. food or food scraps that may have been in contact with meat from a restaurant, hotel or domestic premises).

RAM does not include gelatine, tallow, milk, milk products, milk by-products or used cooking oil that meet the required standards.

Feeding RAM to ruminants has led to the spread of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)—also known as mad cow disease—in cattle overseas.

While Australia is free of BSE, preventing ruminants from consuming RAM minimises the likelihood that BSE or similar diseases would spread if present.

RAM statements and a ban on feeding RAM to ruminants help to maintain domestic and international market confidence that Australian meat and meat products are free from the agents that cause BSE.

Under the legislation, a RAM statement identifying feed as either containing or not containing RAM must be applied to or accompany feed that is sold or supplied.

RAM statements must not be removed, defaced or obscured.

Feed with a positive RAM statement must not be fed to ruminants.

RAM statements are not required for feed that is produced and consumed on farm.



Feed that does not contain RAM

A person who sells or supplies manufactured feed intended for a vertebrate animal, crustacean or mollusc that does not contain RAM must ensure the following negative RAM statement is applied to or accompanies the feed:

This product does not contain restricted animal material

The statement may be written or stamped directly on the feed container (e.g. bag) or on a notice fixed to the container. For bulk food, it may be on a written notice (e.g. invoice or delivery docket).

Manufactured feed for cattle, sheep, goats, deer, camelids and other ruminants, horses, pigs, poultry and fish that does not include RAM must now have a negative RAM statement applied to or accompanying it.



Exceptions

A negative RAM statement is not required if the feed is:

- ▶ manufactured feed intended for
 - ▶ dogs and cats
 - ▶ aquarium fish
 - ▶ captive native or pet birds (other than poultry, emus and ostriches)
 - ▶ animals used in research other than ruminants
- ▶ manufactured feed that consists entirely of
 - ▶ chaff, hay or straw
 - ▶ whole, cracked or rolled single or mixed grain products
 - ▶ milk, milk products and milk by-products.

Feed that contains RAM

Under the legislation, feed that contains RAM continues to need a RAM statement.

A person who sells or supplies feed that contains RAM must ensure the following positive RAM statement is applied to or accompanies the feed:

This product contains restricted animal material— DO NOT FEED TO CATTLE, SHEEP, GOATS, DEER OR OTHER RUMINANTS

RAM statement format

Positive and negative RAM statements must:

- ▶ be in a prominent position that can be clearly seen on the bag or a written notice (e.g. invoice or delivery docket)
- ▶ be written or stamped in dark print on a light background, or light print on a dark background
- ▶ have characters that are at least 10 mm high if the statement is written or stamped directly onto a feed container, including bags
- ▶ have characters that are at least 3 mm high if the statement is on a notice attached to or accompanying the feed (e.g. invoice or delivery docket).

If the RAM statement is on a notice attached to or accompanying the feed, the notice (e.g. tag, invoice or delivery docket) must be at least 45 mm × 120 mm.



Feed for food-producing animals

The *Code of practice for feed for food producing animals* prescribes the labelling requirements for feeds (including pre-mixes), the method of labelling and the statement to be included for medicated feeds.

It sets out prohibited and restricted materials in feeds, including the maximum permitted levels of contaminants.



Labels

Labels must include:

- ▶ information on the class of animal for which the feed is intended
- ▶ the name, business address and telephone number of the manufacturer
- ▶ the name, business address and telephone number of the Australian distributor (if manufactured outside Australia)
- ▶ the batch number or date of manufacture
- ▶ the expiry date or 'best before' date for pre-mixes and medicated feed.

Medicated feed

All medicated pre-mix or medicated feed must comply with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority labelling requirements.

Medicated feed made under the instructions of a veterinary surgeon for animals under their care must also be labelled with the following statement:

Medicated feed prepared under veterinary surgeon's instructions

Prohibited material

Feed must not include manure, poultry litter, animal bedding material or industrial waste.

Cannabis plant material—other than processed industrial cannabis, oil extracted from processed cannabis or meal from ground processed cannabis—cannot be used in feed.

The code of practice states that feed must not contain a number of chemical and other substances, including nitrofurans and sulfonamides.

Restricted material

The code of practice lists the maximum permitted levels for the following contaminants:

- ▶ veterinary chemicals (unless inclusion is permitted under product label instructions, a permit or veterinary instruction)
- ▶ pyrrolizidine alkaloids and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)
- ▶ aflatoxin B₁
- ▶ organochlorine compounds
- ▶ dioxins and dioxin-like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
- ▶ heavy metals
- ▶ radionuclides.

More information

For more information, visit www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au or call **13 25 23**.

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