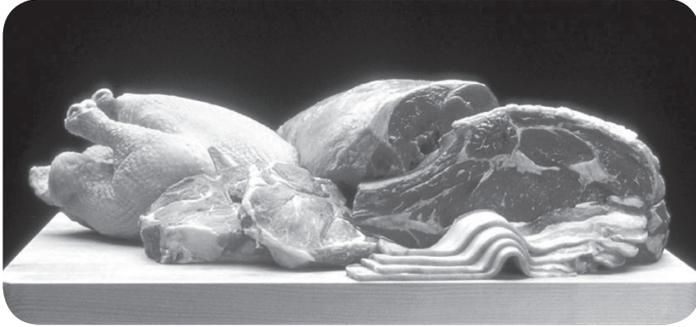


# Our meat is safe



**IN SOUTH AFRICA meat available in butcheries, supermarkets and retail shops is of good quality and safe.**

Worldwide the meat industry is probably the best regulated industry, with the specific aim to protect the consumer.

South Africa can, however, not provide enough meat to satisfy the demand locally, especially as far as mutton and, to a lesser extent, beef are concerned and will therefore continue to import meat. A proper classification system makes it possible to trace every carcass to its origin.

## Roller mark

- The consumer should note the roller mark (quality mark) on meat. Grade A meat has a purple mark and grade AB a green mark.
- Both these markings indicate top-graded South African meat.
- The roller mark does not always appear on all cuts. Lamb chops and leg of lamb are, however, always marked.



**agriculture**

Department:  
Agriculture  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

- The roller mark also indicates that the meat originates from an animal slaughtered at an abattoir. Abattoirs are subjected to strict requirements and have to comply with certain standards.
- As long as the consumer pays attention to the colour of the roller mark he/she is totally safe.

## **Imported meat**

- Strict measures apply to regulate the importation of meat.
- No meat may be imported without a permit.
- Permits are only granted to meat from approved plants. In foreign countries these plants are periodically inspected by officials of the Department of Agriculture to confirm that they comply with our import standards.

## **What happens when meat is imported?**

- The first step is to check whether the import requirements have been adhered to. The meat may then be tested for bacterial infections. The consignment is suspended until the results are available. In case of any infestation the country of origin is informed and the consignment sent back or destroyed.

## **BSE**

- It is not possible to test meat for BSE.
- However, strict measures apply concerning the import of meat from countries where this disease occurs.
- Meat from countries where BSE previously occurred may be imported, but only if the disease did not occur within the last 5 years on farms where the meat originated from.
- Consumer satisfaction is always important and this is the reason why South Africa supported the ban on meat from Britain in the eighties.
- BSE is largely under control in Britain but is only now becoming a concern in Europe.

- Rumours about the influence of BSE-infected bonemeal for periods of up to 8 years have been greatly exaggerated, to such an extent that people are now even worried about their pets because imported bonemeal is an ingredient of pet food. BSE can, however, only be transmitted by eating infected meat.
- There is no restriction on South African bonemeal because it is not a source of infection.

## **Illegal importation**

- Fraud connected to the importation of meat usually involves import tariffs and faulty declarations to sidestep tariffs.
- The possibility of trucks loaded with infected meat crossing our borders is very slight.

For further information contact your animal health technician, state or private veterinarian or Directorate Veterinary Services

Tel: 012 319 7479

*or*

Directorate Veterinary Services  
ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute  
Private Bag X05, Onderstepoort 0110

Tel: 012 529 9158

*or*

Resource Centre of the Department of Agriculture

Tel: 012 529 9158

2008

2001 First print

Compiled by

Directorate Agricultural Information Services, Department of Agriculture

Printed and published by

Department of Agriculture

Obtainable from

Resource Centre, Directorate Agricultural Information Services

Private Bag X144, Pretoria, 0001 South Africa

and on the web at: [www.nda.agric.za/publications](http://www.nda.agric.za/publications)