

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

37-19

10/8/19

BARCODES IN LIEU OF SHIPPING MARKS PILOT PROGRAM FOR FRESH MEAT PRODUCTS FROM AUSTRALIA

I. PURPOSE

This notice provides instructions to inspection program personnel (IPP) for applying the official import mark of inspection for shipments of fresh meat products exported to the United States from establishments in Australia with barcodes in lieu of shipping marks on shipping containers. For such shipments from Australia, following product reinspection, instead of applying the USDA official import mark of inspection to the individual shipping cartons, the mark is applied only to the barcode placard on each pallet in the shipment. The barcode placard is associated with all the individual shipping containers in the shipment, which provides for adequate trace-back allowing IPP to apply the official import mark of inspection to the barcode placard only.

II. BACKGROUND

A. FSIS is assessing the feasibility of permitting a foreign country, Australia in this case, to use barcodes in lieu of shipping marks on cartons of palletized product exported to the United States. The use of barcodes could streamline FSIS reinspection by reducing issues associated with missing or illegible shipping marks. Australia's Meat Messaging system, described in Section IV of this notice, will be used to verify product identity.

B. Barcodes contain a unique identifier that can be used to link a shipping container to the foreign inspection certificate issued by the central competent authority (CCA) of the foreign government. Under [9 CFR 327.4 \(e\)\(7\)](#), [381.197 \(e\)\(7\)](#), and [590.915 \(e\)\(7\)](#), a shipping or identification mark can be used on imported product shipped to the U.S.; this includes the use of bar codes. Currently, FSIS offers a similar option of applying a single shipping mark and official import mark of inspection to palletized, consumer packaged (including food service—hotel, restaurant, or institution (HRI)), fully marked and labeled products ([FSIS Directive 9900.1](#), *Imported Product Shipment Presentation*, VIII. C). The procedure for palletized, consumer packed product also requires the foreign government's inspection certificate to identify all the retail package production codes present (such as date codes imprinted on the can or package) in the shipment, to facilitate product trace-back.

C. Pilot participants are listed in Appendix A. There are a limited number of exporting establishments in Australia, official import inspection establishments in the U.S., and receiving U.S. federal establishments participating in the pilot program.

NOTE: This barcode pilot program is not to be confused with the barcode procedures used for correcting shipping marks found in [FSIS Directive 9900.5](#), *Label Verification of Imported Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products*, VII. E.

DISTRIBUTION: Electronic

NOTICE EXPIRES: 10/1/20


OPI: OPPD

III. SHIPMENT PLACARDS

A. Under this program, placards that identify the Serial Shipping Container Code (SSCC) exist at two levels: (1) at the conveyance level (e.g., container) and (2) at the pallet level. The SSCC provides users of Australia's Meat Messaging system a mechanism to search and identify any shipping unit in the consignment.

B. The pallet level placards will resemble the figure below. Noted information includes:

1. Pallet SSCC (i.e., specific to the individual pallet);
2. Message SSCC (i.e., the unique identifier for the shipment);
3. Producing foreign establishment number;
4. Place for the U.S. import mark of inspection;
5. Production dates;
6. Net weight;
7. Number of units on the pallet;
9. Handling instructions; and
10. Exporting establishment name and address.

PREPARED BY: Really Good Meats Company Pty Ltd		NOTE 10
1 Slaughter Road, SLAUGHTERVILLE, Slaughterville QLD 9999 Australia		
MESSAGE SSCC: (00)993487310070933932		NOTE 2
PALLET SSCC: (00)893487310003784856		NOTE 1
Group: 24 of 24		
Product GTIN (01)99348731009997 BONELESS BEEF PRODUCT OF AUSTRALIA EST NO: AAAA NOTE 3		
C-F 85CL BULK NOTE 9	(02)99348731009997(3102)054440(13)180719(37)000020	
KEEP FROZEN -25 DEGREES CELSIUS NOTE 6	NOTE 7	
Total Net Weight: 544.40 KGM 1200.20 LB	No. of Units: 20	NOTE 5
Oldest Packed Date: 19-Jul-18	Newest Packed Date: 19-Jul-18	
		
PALLET SSCC (00)893487310003784856		
Count of Production Dates: 19-Jul-18 x 20	NOTE 4 - Area for Stamp	

IV. MEAT MESSAGING SYSTEM

- A. Australia’s Meat Messaging system is an online tool for the creation, sending, and receiving of attestation statements and compliance declarations for meat products (including cartons, carcasses, carcass portions, pallets, bulk packs, and conveyance containers). The Meat Messaging system is based on global standards (GS1) for numbering and barcoding of meat products. The Meat Messaging system can identify and list the barcode on each shipping unit in the consignment.
- B. The Meat Messaging system will be utilized by industry (foreign exporters and official import inspection establishments in the U.S.), as well as select FSIS personnel within the Office of Field Operations (OFO), Recall Management and Technical Analysis Division (RMTAD). IPP will not access the Meat Messaging system.
- C. If IPP observe or suspect discrepancies relative to barcodes associated with the shipment, they are to request that official import inspection establishments supply them with a printed copy of the barcodes for the shipping containers from the Meat Messaging system. IPP may also email RMTAD at importinspection@usda.gov if questions arise from the information supplied by official import inspection establishment management.
- D. Following is an example of a barcode report from the Meat Messaging system. The Message SSCC is recorded under the SSCC (upper left corner) and Message File Name on the All Carton Serial Number Report below. This is the unique identifier code for the shipment that represents all product certified at the conveyance level.

SSCC 993999990070886409 All Carton Serial Number Report	
Exporter / Consignor TEYS AUSTRALIA BEENLEIGH PTY LTD LOGAN RIVER ROAD QLD 4207	Carton Count 696 Message File Name 993999990070886409 Message Date 20180807 Container Number Gov. Seal No. 544748 Carrier Seal No. Consignor Seal No.
Consignee TEYS USA INC. 770 N. HALSTED STREET, SUITE 307 CHICAGO IL 60642 US	Health Certificate 0008639785 EXDOC No. 8161071 Goods Decl. (ECN) Bill of Landing SUDU38BNE006727X Invoice No. Order No. (purchase) Species BOVINE Country of Origin AUSTRALIA
Buyer TEYS USA INC. 770 N. HALSTED STREET, SUITE 307 CHICAGO IL 60642 US	Establishment No. 294 Port Marks TBN/96081A Net Weight Total 18946.06 KGM
Third Party/ Loading Establishment LAGO COLD STORES PTY LTD 1225-1235 LYTTON ROAD HEMMANT QLD 4174 AU Est: 2784	Shipping Line HAMBURG SUD AUSTRALIA PTY LTD Vessel/Aircraft CAP CLEVELAND Voyage 512N Date of Departure 20180806 Port of Loading AU Port of Discharge US Final Destination UNITED STATES
Shipment Reference	Description BOVINE *C-F* 85CL BONELESS BULK

The SSCC on the page below is the Pallet SSCC. This portion of the report shows the barcode of each shipping container on the pallet. For example, Group 1, Pallet SSCC 00893322180001415038 is a pallet with 30 shipping cartons of product, which are listed below the SSCC.

All Carton Serial Number Report

Carton Bar Code Numbers

Group: 1, Port Mark: TBN/96081A, SSCC: 00893322180001415038

019933221802634831020027201318072021010025940400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026310400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026470400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026740400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026750400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026780400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026800400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031200400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031230400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031240400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031260400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031280400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031310400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031330400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031350400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031540400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031550400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031610400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031720400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031780400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031800400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031810400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031850400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031910400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031920400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031940400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031970400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031990400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010032050400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010032080400

Group: 2, Port Mark: TBN/96081A, SSCC: 00893322180001415045

019933221802634831020027201318072021010025820400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026320400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026580400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026680400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010026730400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010028730400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010029280400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010030630400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010030700400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010031710400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010034170400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010034330400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010034490400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010035690400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010035780400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010036120400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010036180400
019933221802634831020027201318072021010037030400
019933221802634831020027201318072021011023440400
019933221802634831020027201318072021011023660400
019933221802634831020027201318072021011023800400
019933221802634831020027201318072021011023950400
019933221802634831020027201318072021011024000400
019933221802634831020027201318072021011024110400
019933221802634831020027201318072021011024780400

V. CERTIFICATION

A. Australia certifies export shipments through electronic certification (eCERT). This pilot utilizes barcodes in lieu of shipping marks on the shipping cartons. The shipping mark data field in the Public Health Information System (i.e., the shipping mark on the certificate) will correspond to the last nine digits of the Message SSCC. IPP are to verify that the last nine digits of the Message SSCC on each pallet placard match the shipping mark data in PHIS when performing the Certification Type of Inspection (TOI) in the Public Health Inspection System (PHIS).

NOTE: The Australian eCERT system requires the use of three alpha characters in its shipping mark data field. These three alpha characters will populate the shipping mark data field in PHIS along with the last nine digits of the Message SSCC. IPP are to ignore the three alpha characters in the shipping mark data field in PHIS. Example: The pallet placard figure on page 3 shows the Message SSCC number as (00)9934873100**70933932**. The shipping mark data field in PHIS would show three alpha characters, and the last 9 digits of **70933932**. IPP are to ignore the three alpha characters and verify that **70933932** matches the last nine digits in the Message SSCC on the pallet placard.

B. If IPP are unable to match the last nine digits of the Message SSCC on each pallet placard to the shipping mark data field in PHIS, they are to fail the Certification TOI and follow the procedures in [FSIS Directive 9900.1](#), *Imported Product Shipment Presentation*, V.I.

VI. LABEL VERIFICATION

A. IPP are to perform label verification as per [FSIS Directive 9900.5](#), *Label Verification of Imported Meat, Poultry and Egg Products*, **without removing the plastic wrapped around the pallet**. If IPP cannot perform the label verification because the plastic is covering information on the shipping containers, IPP are to request that official import inspection establishment management remove the plastic just enough for IPP to verify the information. This does not mean the plastic must be completely removed from the pallet. Pallets are to be rewrapped as needed.

VII. REMOVING SHIPPING UNITS FROM A PALLET AND REPLACEMENT PALLET PLACARDS

Official import inspection establishment management removes shipping units from pallets when IPP select them as part of a sample collection, or if the shipping units or cartons are refused entry for transportation damage as with any other shipment. This will require the removal of the plastic around the pallet and the pallet barcode placard. When sample units are returned to the pallet because the importer wants them returned, or once any refused entry shipping units are removed and the pallet is reconfigured, establishment management will re-wrap the pallet and apply a corrected pallet barcode placard consistent with the actual pallet contents (e.g., number of units and net weight).

NOTE: Import inspection establishment management will update the data in the Meat Messaging system for that SSCC, including the identity of the cartons removed from the pallet, and use Meat Messaging to generate the corrected barcode placard.

VIII. APPLICATION OF THE MARK OF INSPECTION

A. When the lot passes reinspection, the USDA import mark of inspection will only be applied to the pallet placard(s). FSIS will not require each shipping unit to receive the mark per [9 CFR 327.26](#). Any sample units will be stamped with the official import sample stamp and any shipping units identified as refused entry will be stamped U.S. Refused Entry.

B. Shipments in this pilot will move intact to official establishments in the U.S. for further processing. IPP are to verify that the importer has provided documentation sufficient to indicate the destination establishment. IPP are to retain this documentation in the official case file.

IX. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to the Office of Policy and Program Development through [askFSIS](#). When submitting a question, use the **Submit a Question** tab and enter the following information in the fields provided:

Subject Field: Enter **Notice 37-19**.
Question Field: Enter question with as much detail as possible.
Product Field: Select Import from the drop-down menu.
Category Field: Select Labeling Compliance for Imported Products from the drop-down menu.
Policy Arena: Select International (Import/Export) from the drop-down menu.

When all fields are complete, press **Continue** and at the next screen press **Finish Submitting Question**.

NOTE: Refer to [FSIS Directive 5620.1](#), *Using askFSIS*, for additional information on submitting questions.



Deputy Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPATING FOREIGN ESTABLISHMENTS

Teys Australia Meat Group PTY LTD, 7

Teys Australia Beenleigh PTY LTD, 294

Teys Australia Biloela PTY LTD, 399

JBS Australia PTY LTD, 235

PARTICIPATING OFFICIAL IMPORT INSPECTION ESTABLISHMENTS

Agro Merchants Oakland, I-415

Americold Logistics, I-16

Versacold Texas LP, I-20

Preferred Freezer Services Houston Port LLC, I-37

Preferred Freezer Services Houston Gulf Coast, I-66

Mullica Hill Storage, I-182

Mullica Hill Pedricktown, I-669

TC Trading, I-207

Nordic Logistics and Warehousing, I-39

Agro Merchants Group Charleston LLC, I-5

PARTICIPATING FEDERAL ESTABLISHMENT END USERS

Burger Maker M5907-P5907

Plymouth Beef M4037-P4037

Cargill Meat Solutions M86F-P86F

Costco Wholesale Meat Plant M18532