

14<sup>th</sup> January 2011

Dear

**LETTER OF GUARANTEE**

In response to your request for information from Alliance in regards to supplying your company with beef products, I can advise the following on behalf of Alliance Group Limited.

**Premise Details**

Identification	Name	Address	Telephone No
ME136	Alliance Levin	P. O. Box 43, Levin	0064-6 366 0420
ME69	Alliance Sockburn	PO Box 11-099, Christchurch	0064-3-343-8900
ME18	Alliance Pukeuri	Private Bag 50051, Oamaru	0064-3-437-3800
ME21	Alliance Mataura	PO Box 1, Mataura	0064-3-203-6500
ME40	Alliance Nelson	Private Bag, Nelson	0064-3-543-9660

All Alliance plants have NZFSA (New Zealand Food Safety Authority) approved Risk Management Programmes

**2. Bovine HACCP Plans**

Premise	Document ID	Revision	Date	Approved By
ME136	LEV QUA 301	8	11/10/10	Paul Robinson, NZFSA VA
ME69	SOC-HCP-003	15	16/07/09	Carol Simmons, NZFSA VA
ME18	PUK-QUA-301	28	13/01/10	Larry Moolenaar, NZFSA VA
ME21	MAT-HCP-002	25	5/06/10	Michael Brannigan, NZFSA VA

All Alliance Plants have NZFSA approved HACCP plans. The CCP for our bovine HACCP plans is to attain a final carcass that is free of Faecal and Ingesta (ZFT) as per the USA OMAR.

E coli 0157:H7 is a hazard not reasonably likely to occur in New Zealand Beef and therefore no intervention step is in place. Daily testing as per part 4 of this letter is carried out.

**2. Bobby Calf HACCP Plans**

Premise	Document ID	Revision	Date	Approved By
ME18	PUK-QUA-302	30	13/01/10	Larry Moolenaar, NZFSA VA
ME21	MAT-HCP-003	5	26/02/10	Michael Brannigan, NZFSA VA
ME40	NEL-BCS-015	24	20/08/10	Malcolm Mairs, NZFSA VA

All Alliance Plants have NZFSA approved HACCP plans. The two CCPs for our Bobby calf HACCP plan are as follows

CCP 1 Intervention step (steam vacuum (ME18 & ME21) or peroxyacid spray (ME40))

CCP 2 Zero Faecal and Ingesta (ZFT) as per the USA OMAR.

E coli 0157:H7 has been identified as a hazard that may occur in New Zealand Bobby Veal. An intervention step has been introduced into the slaughter process as CCP 1 and daily E coli 0157:H7 testing is carried out as per step 4 of this letter.

### **3. Microbiological Sampling**

In New Zealand our microbiological sampling requirements are regulated by the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA).

These have been accepted by the USDA as meeting “equivalency requirements” of the FSIS Pathogen Reduction: Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems; Final Rule.

Beef and Bobby Calf products are currently tested for Aerobic Plant Count and E coli on a weekly basis from carcasses (ex slaughter floor), primal cuts and bulk pack. Salmonella is tested in a “sample window” of 6 weeks each season.

### **4. E coli 0157:H7 sampling**

E coli 0157:H7 sampling is carried out on Beef and Bobby Calf bulk on a daily basis and is sent to an external laboratory for testing. This is a N60 testing program based on a lot. Methodology is mandated in the E coli 0157:H7 testing program controlled by NZFSA. This protocol has been agreed to by FSIS.

We operate a test and hold procedure with no product being exported until a confirmed negative E coli 0157:H7 result has been received. Product that tests positive for E coli 0157:H7 is restricted from sale for food. No product tested positive is exported from New Zealand.

### **5. Sanitation Programme & Verification Procedures**

As part of our SSOP's, all plants are required to have robust documented cleaning programmes for all aspects of the premise. This is also captured within our regulatory Overseas Market Access Requirements (OMAR's) for the USA and Canada.

In essence if we didn't have these our premises would not be approved to export to USA or Canada. Verification of the sanitation programme occurs via a pre-operative hygiene assessment in all edible processing areas daily. Defects are categorised as minor, major or critical and a limit on the total defect score determines whether the inspection has passed or failed.

In addition microbiological swabs are taken from food contact surfaces weekly in all edible processing areas and analysed for Aerobic Plate Counts.

### **6. Control Programme Metallic/Non-Metallic Contamination**

Our HACCP plan Hazard Analysis determined that metal is a hazard that is not reasonably likely to occur in our products - note we do not use mincing or grinding in any of our processes. Metal detectors are not therefore mandatory. They are used in some plants however for specific items where it is a customer requirement to do so.

All plants maintain a glass register and this is subjected to regular verification. Procedures are in place for dealing with any breakages, however the emphasis is on prevention with protective measures in place, eg, lights covered, etc.

7. Shipping Policy

Shipping requirements are once again governed by compliance with "Overseas Market Access Requirements". Export Certificates will not be signed by NZFSA if such requirements are breached.

In terms of product quality our primary concern is with maintenance of the cold chain and hence we have strict controls over the loadout and transportation of frozen and chilled products. Frozen products are loaded out at <-12°C and will maintain this during shipping, whilst Chilled Products are required to remain at -1°C, although we endeavour to meet an even tighter range of -1°C ± 0.5°C.

8. Company Status with USA Export Programme

All Alliance Group beef premises are listed as US eligible for beef products. We have full-time NZFSA veterinary presence on our sites and are subjected to independent monthly reviews from NZFSA officials specifically to meet US market access requirements.

The USDA also visits New Zealand annually and reviews a number of premises at random.

9 Supplier Programs

All stock supplied are accompanied by an ASD (Animal Status Declaration). This is a legal document and an NZFSA requirement. Documentation covers animals treatments, feed and traceability information.

Packaging and other suppliers are sourced from preferred suppliers who undertake to meet our requirements. Packaging suppliers are audited by company auditors to ensure they meet our standard.

10 Security

Alliance participates in C-TPAT (Customs-Trade Pact against Terrorism). Each plant in the Alliance Group has documented security procedures to prevent tampering and contamination.

Yours sincerely



Karen Morris  
**Group Food Safety and Market Access Manager**