



FRIGORIFICO CANELONES S.A.

To Whom It May Concern.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

- 1 Frigorífico Canelones S.A. is approved by the US Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to produce for export bovine meat.
- 2 In the Federal Register, Vol. 61, Nº 144, 25 July 1996 FSIS released the PR/HACCP Rule (also referred to as the MegaRegs). The Pathogen Reduction (PR) component mandated a program of bacteriological testing of bovine carcasses for the presence of *Escherichia coli* and *Salmonella* spp bacteria to verify the effectiveness of process controls for hygiene and sanitation under the plant's HACCP program.
- 3 The Company has in place a fully documented HACCP- based quality assurance system which has been established in accordance with the Uruguayan Veterinary Inspection Service (DIA, Dirección de Industria Animal)). The DIA program:
 - Complies with DIA guidelines for meeting FSIS Pathogen Reduction/HACCP requirements; and
 - is audited by on-plant DIA supervisors;
 - is audited at least each month by external DIA officers; and
 - has been subjected to a detailed verification audit by external DIA auditors and found to meet DIA and FSIS requirements; and
 - was most recently audited by FSIS & APHIS officers in 2002 y 2003 and accepted as satisfactory.
- 4 Since 1999, *Salmonella* has not been detected in any randomly selected carcass sample tested.
- 5 Since 1999 *Salmonella* has not been detected in any randomly selected cut tested for export to the European Union.
- 6 In relation to *E. coli* O157:H7, establishment 8 confirms that its HACCP Plan has been reassessed in accordance with "Federal Register Notice 9 CFR Part 417 Docket Number 00-022N dated 7 October 2002 and titled *E. coli* O157:H7 Contamination of Beef Products. The HACCP Team concluded, and the Senior Management Team agrees, that *E. coli* O157:H7 is a hazard reasonably likely to occur in its products without the implementation of a HACCP Plan. The DIA/USDA has recently audited and approved the establishment's HACCP Plan.
- 7 The reassessed HACCP Plan includes the following interventions and other measures:
 - washing or rejection of cattle with heavy hide faecal contamination (verified by inspection of hide-on carcasses by Quality Assurance Assessors);
 - occlusion of the oesophagus after stunning and/or bleeding (verified by observation by Quality Assurance Assessors of nominated Operatives carrying out their work procedures);
 - use of 2 knives for hide removal procedures (verified by observation by Quality Assurance Assessors of hide removal Operatives carrying out their work procedures);
 - identification, using tags, of carcasses where faecal/ingesta leakage is suspected or occurs during dressing procedures which prepare for removal of the gastrointestinal tract (verified by observation by Quality Assurance Assessors of nominated Operatives carrying out their work procedures);
 - tagged carcasses subjected to intensified inspection and, where necessary, intensified trim and operational sanitation procedures prior to chilling (verified by observation by Quality Assurance Assessors of the nominated Trimmer carrying out his/her work procedures);
 - carcasses are rapidly dry chilled.



FRIGORIFICO CANELONES S.A.

to reduce, eliminate or control E. coli O157:H7.

- 8 The efficacy of those interventions are verified by microbiological testing of boned product for E. coli O157:H7 at the rate of 5 cartons per day of manufacturing beef nominated by the Customer for export to the USA.
- 9 Since 1999, 3305 samples from cartons of manufacturing meat have been tested for E. coli O157:H7 and none has returned a "positive" detection of E. coli O157:H7. If a "positive" detection were made, procedures are in place to prevent shipment of product. Only product that is compliant with HACCP requirements and tested "negative" for E. coli O157:H7 is shipped.

Following the reassessment of Establishment 8 HACCP Plan and its continued effective operation, as detailed above, Establishment 8 has conclude that the prevalence of E. coli O157:H7 has been reduced to undetectable levels. The Frigorifico Canelones S.A testing program conducted for the lot from which this consignment was taken was found to be negative.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Welters".

Chem. Robert Welters
Quality Assurance Manager