



Tacuarembó
MEAT THE BEST



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Tacuarembó, 31 March 2009.

To whom it may concern

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE (HACCP LETTER).

1. Frigorífico Tacuarembó S.A., Establishment N°12 is approved by the US Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS –USDA) to produce for export bovine meat fresh, frozen and dry cured beef, to United States. We certify that our programs and operations comply with all applicable USDA-FSIS regulations and that incoming cattle comply with all applicable FDA and USDA regulations.
2. Since 28 of January of 1997 we complied with the Federal Register , Volume 61, N°144 , 25 July 1996 FSIS released the PR/HACCP Rule (also referred to as the MegaRegs). The Pathogen Reduction component mandated a program of bacteriological testing of bovine carcasses for the presence of Escherichia coli generic and Salmonella spp. bacteria to verify the effectiveness of process controls for hygiene and sanitation under the plant's HACCP program.
HACCP plan and the pre-requisite programs (SSOP and GMP) were audited by USDA /FSIS Authorities, March 2008, and accepted as satisfactory.
3. The Company has in place a fully documented Good Manufacturing Practice, Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point integrated of our quality assurance system:
 - ✓ Complies with Uruguayan Ministry MGAP guidelines for meeting FSIS Pathogen Reduction / HACCP requirements; and
 - ✓ The HACCP is audited by on plant MGAP supervisors.
 - ✓ It has internal audits (GMP, SSOP, HACCP, BRC, and Quality System) every year.
 - ✓ Is audited by most of the customers.
4. In the last eight years, Salmonella has not been detected in any randomly selected carcass sample tested.
5. In relation to E. coli O157:H7, establishment 12 confirms that its HACCP Plan has been reassessed in accordance with Federal Register Notice 9 CFR Part 417(Docket N° 00-022N) 7 October 2002 Titled E. coli O157:H7 and according with Notice October 2007 for raw ground beef manufacturing trimming: USDA. The HACCP Team of the Company consider E. coli O157: H7 is a hazard reasonably likely to occur in its products without the implementation of a HACCP Plan, since 1998.



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Sanitation procedures and intervention methods used during slaughter processing to prevent faecal contamination, cross contamination and to reduce microbial load are itemized and fully explained in our **GMP, SSOP** and **HACCP** plan.

- a) Cattle shepherd in open sky (not feedlot)
- b) Animals should arrive with minimum mud and faecal contamination. And avoid overcrowding to reduce the possibility of injury or unsanitary conditions.
- c) Washing of cattle to eliminate contamination on their hides, monitoring, verification, take corrective action if there is deviation (Good manufacturing Practice and SSOP).
- d) Minimise contamination of the carcass and the dressing (monitoring and verified by quality Assurance operator).
- e) Good manufacturing practice and SSOP operations for hide removal (with 2 knives of different colours)
(Monitored and verified by quality assurance personal).
- f) Prior to evisceration, the rectum is secured with a ring and plastic protection to prevent contamination.
- g) Trim Rail (Critical Control Point 1) all visible contamination is removed as soon as possible after it occurs to prevent microbial attachment with knife trimming
(Monitored, verified, corrective measure and corrective if it is necessary).
- h) Measures to control the holding temperature of the carcass after the final wash is the second (CCP 2) ensure that the reduction in microbial effective (carcass temperature is recorded daily and verified by quality assurance personal).
- i) 180°F water knife / equipment sanitizers are utilized.
- j) Positive airflow is utilized in the kill floor to prevent the circulation of airborne contaminants

The efficacy of these interventions is verified by microbiological testing for E. coli O157: H7.

Microbiological testing is used to also verify the effectiveness of interventions and process controls at slaughtering:

- By the plant testing history for O157: H7 since 1999 **was negative**. In 1999 we testing 350 samples, 2000 : 844 samples, 2001 : 759 , 2002: 800 samples and in 2003 : 5000samples, 2004 : 8032 samples, 2005: 9500 samples, 2006: 7200 samples. 2007:3000 samples and 9800 samples in 2008. All these samples were negatives.



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We could use Neogen's E. coli O157: H7 confirmation system for the rapid isolation and concentration of chromogenic system with magnetic beads and chromogenic agar plates.

- Since Jan 2008, considering the new sampling method (n=60 for each lot), tests have been made for E. coli O157:H7 according with it.
 - None of the results have indicated a positive detection of E. coli 0157:H7. 1030 tests have been made for E. coli O 157:H7.
 - Monthly, ground beef samples are obtained and tested by the Official Laboratory of the M.G.A.P (Di.La.Ve). No positive detection of E. coli 0157:H7 has been recorded.
6. Only product that is compliant with HACCP requirements and tested "negative" for E. coli O157:H7 is shipped.

Frigorífico Tacuarembó is in total compliance with all pertinent regulatory requirements, 9 CFR Part 309, 310 and 318 (July 13,2007), Prohibition of the Use of Specific Risk Materials (SRM- BSE) for Human Food and Requirements for the disposition of Non-Ambulatory Disabled Cattle; Prohibition of the Use of Certain Stunning Devices Used to Immobilize Cattle During Slaughter.

Company Objectives and management:

Frigorífico Tacuarembó is committed to implement and maintain compliance with the HACCP Plan, Good manufacturing Practices, Standard Operating procedures, quality policies (Quality control assurance) in order to improve the safety and quality of the product.

If any further information is requested feel free to contact us.

Sincerely yours,

Marta Isasa Amoza
Quality Manager.