



GRAINS SAFETY



Setting world standards in food safety

The Australian grains industry prides itself on the quality of Australian grain exports and has a number of systems and processes to provide export customers with high quality grain. These checks extend across the value chain.

The National Residue Survey is an example of an Australian government and industry strategy to minimise chemical residues and environmental contaminants in Australian food products.

› EXPORT GRAINS NATIONAL RESIDUE SURVEY

Residues can be present in food either through natural circumstances or as a consequence of agricultural or industrial activities. The National Residue Survey (NRS) currently tests for residues of pesticides and environmental contaminants in 21 grains, pulses and oilseeds.

SAMPLING

Approximately 3,000–5,000 export grain samples are collected and analysed each year. NRS arranges for bulk export grain samples to be collected from the holds of each ship after loading, while containerised or bagged export grain samples are collected from the grain packing sites during packing. All samples are sent to NRS-contracted laboratories for analytical testing.

GRAINS TESTING RESULTS

Residue testing results over the past decade indicate a high degree of compliance with Australian Standards. Over the last twelve years, compliance rates for bulk export grain samples have consistently been between 99.8 and 100 per cent. Container compliance rates are similarly impressive, with export samples achieving between 98.2 and 100 per cent compliance.

CHEMICAL SCREEN

The chemical screens for analysing pesticide residues in grain are developed in consultation with industry, taking into account registered chemicals and chemical residue profiles. The chemical groups covered in the grains program are a multi-residue screen (insecticides, post-harvest grain protectants, fungicides, herbicides, insect growth regulators), additional herbicide screen, environmental contaminants (heavy metals), fumigants and dithiocarbamates.

TESTING AND TRACEBACK

Samples are tested against an agreed chemical screen that is designed to meet market requirements. If a sample is found to contain a residue above the Australian Standard, a traceback investigation is undertaken to establish the cause. The responsible state or territory agency then provides advice to the producer to prevent recurrence. In more serious circumstances regulatory action may also be taken.

› FURTHER INFORMATION

The Australian Trade Commission – Austrade – is the Australian Government's trade, investment and education promotion agency.

Contact your local Austrade representative about connecting and partnering with the Australian food industry. austrade.gov.au

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

The following are some of the government and industry bodies involved in the Australian grains industry.

Australian Export Grains Innovations Centre (AEGIC) is the 'front door' to Australia's export grains industry. AEGIC provides an independent source of Australian grain quality information, analysis and technical support to agribusiness and customers. AEGIC was established to support the trade and use of Australian grains around the world and to carry out grain quality, economic and export market research and innovation. AEGIC's focus is on wheat, barley, canola, oats and lupins. The headquarters of AEGIC is in Perth, Western Australia, the largest grain exporting state in Australia. aegic.org.au

Pulse Australia is the peak industry body that represents all sectors of the pulse industry in Australia, from growers and agronomists through to researchers, merchants, traders and exporters. The six major pulse groups grown in Australia are chickpea, faba/broad bean, field pea, lentil, lupin and vetch. pulseaus.com.au

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry develops and implements policies and programs that ensure Australia's agricultural, fisheries, food and forestry industries remain competitive, profitable and sustainable. daff.gov.au

Australian Food and Grocery Council is the leading national organisation representing Australia's packaged food, drink and grocery products manufacturers. afgc.org.au

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade works with other government agencies to ensure that Australia's pursuit of its global, regional and bilateral interests is coordinated effectively. dfat.gov.au

Food Standards Australia New Zealand develops food standards to cover the food industry in Australia and New Zealand. FSANZ develops the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code which regulates the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. foodstandards.gov.au

Foreign Investment Review Board examines proposals by foreign interests to undertake direct investment in Australia and makes recommendations to the Government on whether those proposals are suitable for approval under the Government's policy. firb.gov.au