Implementation of the Processed Meat Compulsory Specification Industry circular

PUBLICATION AND SCOPE

The Compulsory Specification for Processed Meat Products VC 9100 was published by the Minister of Trade and Industry as per Government Gazette No.42628 Notice No. 1058 of 08 August 2019. This Compulsory Specification is effective from 8 October 2019. The NRCS Business Unit Food and Associated Industries will be responsible for implementation of regulatory activities and the enforcement of this VC. The scope of the compulsory specification applies to the handling, preparation, processing, packaging, refrigeration, freezing, chilling, labeling, marking and storage of heat treated and ready to eat (RTE) processed meat products covered in the scope of SANS 885, *processed meats products*; and it includes the microbiological and food safety related compositional requirements of these products. The classes of processed meat products are identified as heat treated and ready to eat (RTE) categorized in the respective classes and unspecified RTE products listed in clause 5.3 of SANS 885:2011, which are as follows:

   a) Whole muscle, cured, heat treated products

   b) Whole muscle, uncured, heat treated or partial heat treated and RTE products;

   c) Comminuted, cured, heat treated products;

   d) Comminuted, uncured and heat treated products;

   e) Reformed, cured, heat treated;

   f) Unspecified class i.e. Any other unspecified RTE processed meat products; and

   g) RTE products which are not going to be cooked before consumption with the exclusion of dried and fermented processed meat products i.e. partially heat treated products and RTE e.g. SALAMI.

REGISTRATION AND APPROVAL

The industry is required to commence immediately with the registration process as outlined in this circular in order to meet the implementation date. The approval of operators will be a continuous process and conducted in phases until all the operators have been approved as per the requirements of the compulsory specification VC9100.

Registration is compulsory for all producers and importers and should be done online on the below link:

http://preview.nrcs.org.za/Pages/FoodFactoryProcessor.aspx

The video demonstrating the process of registration is also attached for perusal as below.

Form.mp4

This will be followed by inspections to determine compliance with the requirements of the VC. Once compliance has been established, the processor will then be issued with an approval certificate which will be reviewed annually.

The registration cost is currently R1668 as per Government Gazette No.42431 Notice no. 631 published on 3 May 2019.

INSPECTIONS SAMPLING AND TESTING

All factory inspections will be conducted bi-annually, annually and on an adhoc basis informed by the NRCS Risk Based Strategy as required by clause 3.2 of VC 9100.

Product testing will be conducted through monitoring and mainly focus on microbiological and chemical testing as per the VC & SANS 885:2011. This will be done monthly and may be reviewed based on the testing data that are obtained. About 80% of the sampling of products will be done at the processing plant and 20% at retail.

PAYMENT OF LEVIES

All Processors/Manufacturers and Importers of Processed Meat Products are accountable for the payment of Government legislated levies to the Regulator as required by the VC clause 3.14. The levy negotiations with the processed meat industry are planned from 30 September to 3 October 2019 nationwide (Pretoria, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Durban).

AWARENESS WORKSHOPS

There will be planned industry workshops for the month of October 2019. The purpose of these workshops are to introduce and familiarise the industry with both the requirements of the VC, SANS 885 as well as the role of the Regulator and also clarify any other technical questions. The inspection process and application thereof will be explained and discussed during these workshops.

All related queries should be sent to the respective NRCS FAI offices as indicated on the website https://www.nrcs.org.za/content.asp?subID=43#