



# RENDERING Circles

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A newsletter produced by the Australian Renderers Association  
as a service to customers and members

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## COMMUNICATIONS THE NAME OF THE GAME

**T**he on-going reaction to TSE diseases in Europe and our recent outbreak of anthrax in Victoria have both highlighted the value of accurate and timely information to Australian renderers. We hope this quarterly newsletter will play an important role in that process.

The Australian Renderers Association has over 50 full members and 21 associate members drawn from a diverse group of Australian business -mainly from meatworks, service renderers, protein meal brokers, tallow traders, chandlers, shippers, equipment suppliers and end users. The association is committed to continuous improvement.

## RENDERING - SHAPING UP FOR 2000

*September 25, 26*

**Novotel Bayside, St Kilda**

**I**NDUSTRY-WIDE meetings are one of the most effective information gathering opportunities and this year's ARA Symposium will be no exception.

There are plenty of issues to discuss and an impressive panel of international and national speakers to make sure you get maximum value.

The program will feature technical and 'big picture' issues under three major topics:

- Optimising Rendered Products;
- Food Safety - Part of the Chain; and
- Environmental Issues.

### TRADE SHOW OPPORTUNITY

**T**HROUGHOUT this year's Symposium our Trade Show will offer companies and individuals a unique opportunity to display and market their full range of products and services to the more than 150 delegates representing industry and government.

The Trade Show will be integral to the Symposium Hall and will be the focus for a range of activities including the Cocktail Party on Wednesday September 24 and morning and afternoon tea breaks throughout the symposium.

The conference venue at the Novotel Bayside, St Kilda, is self-contained which means the Symposium, its associated Trade Fair and delegates accommodation are all at the same site.

The end of September is an exciting time of the year in Melbourne - the days immediately preceding the AFL Grand Final weekend. But that also means that accommodation will be 'tight' so you will need to act promptly to make sure of your reservations.

**Full details and application through Executive Officer, Graeme Banks.**

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## BSE - SITUATION UPDATE

**A**USTRALIA'S rendering industry appears to be suffering 'collateral damage' as countries around the world react to threats from Europe's BSE problems.

New processing requirements came into force in Europe from 1 April (97/198/EC) including the requirement for all meat and bone meal to be pressure treated (3 bar for 20 minutes) at 133°C. But sources in Europe report a mixed response from European renderers. In some cases (Ireland, Italy, France, Denmark) no renderers were ready to begin pressurised operations at the start date and some had sought extensions of varying types from their own governments. In other countries (Germany, Austria, Spain, Belgium, Holland) plants handling high risk materials were ready or in process of installing the appropriate equipment.

Whatever the state of readiness in Europe, exporters of meat and bone meal from Australia which has no history of TSEs will have to comply with the EU Directive for shipments to Europe.

In other developments the EU bureaucracy has moved to ban the use of animal based ingredients - including tallow - from soaps and other cosmetic products "to ensure the health and safety of consumers without waiting for irrefutable scientific proof of the causal link between BSE and CJD or its variant". There are no exclusions and no third country derogations to this directive which has already been lodged with the WHO.

The ARA has approached the federal government on this issue and in response the Primary Industries Minister, John Anderson, has advised he shares our concern that the EU Directive does not contain any mechanism to grant derogations to third countries which are free from TSEs.

AQIS raised this issue with the European Commission during discussions in March and will continue to press the Commission for recognition of Australia's freedom from TSEs and for granting derogations from this and a number of other BSE related directives.

The US and Canada have raised similar concerns since they currently export around 350,000 tonnes of inedible tallow to the EU each year. They note that the EU is also a prime market for US made consumer ready products derived from US tallow. They note this is "potentially trade disrupting and an emotional over reaction on the part of the commission which is without scientific basis." This, they note, is inconsistent with the EU's obligations under the WTO (S&P) Agreement.

## EUROPE IN FOCUS

**M**OST of the actions in Europe follow a shift in responsibility for scientific, veterinary and inspection areas which now has a strong consumer slant, giving larger safety margins than scientists believe

necessary. One possible development is to stream the rendering industry based on risk assessment of the raw material with that destined for use in food, soap, pharmaceuticals and animal feeds sourced only from animals fit for human consumption.

There seems to be little scope for defending traditional practices which owed more to their 'service' to agricultural industry.

## MRC MEMBERSHIP FOR FPRF

**A**USTRALIAN renderers can expect substantial benefit from the recent decision by the Meat Research Corporation (MRC) to renew its membership of the US based Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF).

Commercial interests in Australia have maintained links with the FPRF but this move by the MRC will add a new dimension to that relationship. In particular it should help boost the flow of research data available to Australia and provide new opportunities for research collaboration and information exchanges.

FPRF Technical Services Director, Gary Pearl, said Australia's links with the Foundation had provided a continuing forum to collaborate on product information. He said they had appreciated the interest and attention which had come through the commercial links and these would be used to guide mutual collaboration in the future.



## EXPORT CERTIFICATION - Canada and US

**A**USTRALIAN Renderers Association delegates met with AQIS in late April and established the following guidelines for shipments to the US and Canada for further processing

- AQIS prefer to utilise the ARA accreditation/audit system for shipments to US/Canada;
- ARA propose an addendum to the existing Code for plants requiring AQIS certification for shipments to US/Canada;
- those plants will need to specify documented procedures to exclude 'dead stock' (i.e. not subject to ante mortem inspection) from raw material used for MBM to US/Canada, with records subject to audit;
- AQIS will negotiate with US/Canada authorities for suitable wording as part of existing health certificates;
- accredited plants will provide a declaration, on own letterhead, to support AQIS certification for each consignment to those markets;
- accreditation is available to all renderers - whether ARA members or not;
- current consignments can be certified through AQIS staff (in AQIS supervised plants); or Statutory Declaration (Dead Stock Excluded) subject to regular AQIS audit.

## CODE OF PRACTICE

**T**HE ARA Code of Practice for Hygienic Rendering of Animal Products represents a significant milestone for Australian rendering.

This Code of Practice was originally fabricated in 1993 with a lot of input from members and the then technical committee, particularly Kevin Pratt, Bill Spooner and Brian Bartlett.

It was subsequently revised in late 1996 following the encouragement from the Victorian Meat Authority for a similar code in line with the move to universal QA in that state. Prepared with a grant from the MRC the revised Code includes the bulk of the previous ARA Code.

The revised Code sets strict eligibility criteria for plant construction and operation and a regime of auditing, declaration of sampling results and staff training to ensure the safety of end products.

Rendering plants have gradually become accredited - the first was in January 1995 and there are now 19 on the list.

Individual plants are subject to audit for product quality (salmonella testing regime) and the plant itself which is checked for cleanliness, procedures, documentation and operator awareness.

The COP has now been revamped to cover the EU Balai Directive with emphasis on the integrity of various heat treatment processes and HACCP ideals based on the format for ISO 9000.

## RUMINANT FEEDING BAN

**R**ENDERERS have a responsibility to the industry to ensure the ban on feeding ruminant Meat and Bone meal to ruminants is upheld.

It is perceived by many overseas countries as an important cornerstone of our claim to be TSE free. Some states have now instituted regulations making it a punishable offence, others are following. The ARA has resolved to write to Federal Minister for Primary Industries, John Anderson, asking for his encouragement to ensure the earliest implementation of the ban Australia-wide.

## DIRECTORY OF AUS. RENDERERS

**A** DIRECTORY of Australian renderers is being compiled by the Meat Research Corporation to catalogue the range of rendered products available and the suppliers of different products.

Listings in the directory are free to all Australian renderers and will involve only that information supplied by individual companies.

The MRC is also conducting an audit of Australian renderers' technical capabilities to identify opportunities to diversify product ranges. A major focus of the co-products key program is to encourage diversification into

unconventional products by supporting alliances between renderers and customers.

Diversification is particularly important in view of the current pressure on traditional uses for meat meal and tallow. The technical audit will help identify renderers who can diversify their production and who may be interested in MRC support to help produce and market novel products.

All information will remain confidential to the MRC.

## TSE RESEARCH FUNDING

**M**UCH needed research to provide answers in the primary areas of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalities (TSE) inactivation and antemortem diagnostic assays is jointly undertaken by the FPRF, TSE Research Subcommittee and resource scientists. Several proposals and protocols have been reviewed and are in various stages of development. Research projects which embrace the scientific challenges presented by the TSE are extremely costly -- running to many millions of dollars and goes beyond the breadth of one organisation or segment of the

industry. The FPRF Executive Board and TSE Committee approved co-funding for the employment of Dorris & Associated to conduct a Funding Study that will involve all allied and associated industries. A progress report to the FPRF Board was expected at the end of April 1997.

## ENVIRO NEWS

**W**ITH the formation of the ARA Environment Committee it is anticipated that the results of the environmental survey carried out last year will be able to be tabulated.

Many thanks to the 20-30 people who took the time to fill it in. Many States are currently finalising their Environmental Operations Bills. If any member has specific views or concerns about the Bill in their state they are invited to attend and contribute to any one of the Environment Committee meetings where their input will be greatly appreciated.

## FOCUS ON OPERATOR TRAINING

**T**HE Australian Renderers Association in conjunction with Australian Meat Technology (AMT) has actively promoted plant operator training courses, focused on hygienic production practices. A total 7 courses have been held since 1993 and 207 operators have undergone training and achieved accreditation in Hygienic Production of Rendered Animal Products.

These courses have been instrumental in achieving salmonella level reductions in finished product. This has now proved its worth in light of EU requirements relating to bacterial levels and the eradication of *clostridium perfringens* in finished protein meals.

*Printed copies of the ARA Code of Practice have been distributed to all ARA Members.*

*Additional copies are now available through Graeme Banks (\$15 for 10 copies). Single copies are available free to our customers.*

ARA members John Aird and Bill Spooncer presented papers to the Australian Veterinary Association Public Health Conference in early May. Following are extracts from those papers.

### BSE LIMITS ACCESS TO WORLD MARKETS

*John Aird, Business Manager, Peerless Holdings:*

**A**USTRALIA is free from all Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) but Australian Renderers have good cause to be concerned about rules and processing conditions created by Europeans to solve a European problem.

Total production of Australian rendered products in 1994 was estimated by the MRC to be worth \$405 million. The major products are tallow (445,000t.) and meat & bone meal (430,000t.).

Exports account for about 2/3 of the tallow and 1/3 of meat and bone meal and Australia is second only to the US as an exporter of tallow.

Markets around the world are sensitive to world standards and fashions and rules to prevent transmission of TSE diseases in Europe are being adapted by countries who purchase Australian rendered products.

#### Compliance with W.H.O. Directives

TSE diseases are not apparent in Australia and the ARA strongly supports the World Health Organisation (W.H.O.) recommendation to ban feeding ruminant meat and bone meal back to ruminants. That stance reflects the extra safety we convey to our customers.

#### Industry Message to Veterinarians:

The imperative is to maintain our TSE-free status by clear and concise action. Veterinarians are asked to support this by:

- documenting and publicising inspection data from 'at risk' cattle and sheep, in a statistical form accepted by world veterinarian peers;
- maintaining strict quarantine restrictions from areas of potential disease including live animals, meat and bone meal and other animal products;

- urging governments to support research to expand the scientific knowledge of TSE ;
- encouraging conclusions based only on scientific research; and
- preaching our Clean/Green and TSE free record.

### BSE - EUROPE'S RESPONSE

*Bill Spooncer, Australian Meat Technology P/L:*

**B**SE is thought to have had its origin through feeding meat and bone meal sourced from scrapie infected sheep.

In 1988 the EU moved to control the spread of BSE through the ban on feeding ruminant based protein to ruminants and later extended that to include all mammals.

Minimum rendering standard (96/449/EEC) also came into force from 1 April 1997, the latest in a series of legislative requirements which commenced in 1990. The Australian Renderers Association has made a submission to the EU through AQIS which seeks to classify all Australian origin rendered materials as equivalent to low risk or non-mammalian materials rendered in the EU.

However, as of 1 April meat and bone meal made from mammalian product must comply with 96/449/EEC. Likewise meat and bone meal incorporate in pet food. At least 22 Australian renderers have indicated they can apply pressure cycles if required and these companies could service the existing demand for Australian sourced material to the EU.

However there are significant exports of specialty lamb meals to the US for production of petfood which is then exported to the EU, some of which is produced in continuous dry rendering systems which can not be pressurised.

**GIVE YOUR A.R.A. MEMBERSHIP EXTRA MUSCLE!**  
**RENDERING CIRCLES**  
puts YOUR name in front of every business  
with an interest in Australian rendering

### ARA SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS

**T**HE list of speakers at this year's Symposium will include many highly regarded national and international figures including:

**Dr Don Franco** - Director, Scientific Services, National Renderers Assn. and Animal Protein Producers Industry.

**Julie Brace Maclean** - formerly NRA Director for Europe and the Middle East and since then founder and Managing Director of JBM International Associates, providers of specialist market information and analysis to industry.

**Eric Jackson** - US based International Protein Corporation.

**Winsome McCaughey** - Chair, Australia New Zealand Food Authority.