

Meeting the Standards

Manual of Specifications and Guidelines for
New Zealand Meat Retailers



2nd Edition
April 2009

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Introduction



The New Zealand Beef and Lamb Quality Mark was introduced to New Zealand consumers in 1997.

At that time, there was a major issue with the consistency of both beef and lamb. In particular, tenderness testing showed a significant proportion of beef (50%) was below acceptable levels of tenderness, whilst lamb showed unacceptable results of 25%.

The Quality Mark manual established mandatory standards based on achieving a consistent product for our New Zealand consumers.

Since the inception of the Quality Mark, tenderness testing shows the majority of beef and lamb is now testing at acceptable levels. In fact, such has been the success of the Quality Mark programme, there are relatively few changes to the standards. This second edition will replace the existing manual as of 1 April 2009.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rod Slater".

Rod Slater
CEO
Beef and Lamb New Zealand
April 2009



Quality Mark Standards Review



The monitoring and revision of these standards is carried out by the Quality Mark Advisory Group, which includes representatives from producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and the foodservice sector. Any future changes or additions to the standards will be forwarded to you, to be added to this document.

This manual contains:

- o Specifications (mandatory procedures that must be followed)
- o Guidelines (suggested procedures)
- o Background notes

Suggestions for improvements to the Quality Mark Standards are welcome. Any inaccuracy or ambiguity found in the Quality Mark Standards should be made known promptly, so it may be investigated and appropriate action taken.



Qualifying Product



All categories of steers, heifers, young lean beef, veal and sheep meat other than mutton, as described in the current export classification system*.

The Quality Mark may be used on carcasses, parts of carcasses, cuts, boneless product, whole muscle table meat, value-added specialty cuts, eg marinated (but excluding any pumped marinated product), stir-fry, crumbed schnitzel, seasoned roasts, corned or cured meat, ground meat and cubed or diced meat of 90% VL or above (85% CL).

* The definition for veal, which is not described in this system, is 'meat derived from a young bovine not over 12 months of age which, in the case of a male, does not show the secondary characteristics of a bull, and in the case of the female is not pregnant.'

Qualifying product criteria:

1. Derived from animals of New Zealand origin.
2. Derived from animals not treated with Growth Promotants (GPs) and not reacted to Tuberculosis (TB) testing.
3. Processed in licensed ME or AB plants that are certified as a Quality Mark approved processor.
4. Transported under conditions where the cold chain and food safety are not compromised.
5. Identified to show traceability to the approved processor and the clear identification of Quality Mark product and non-approved product.
6. Handled by a retailer who has a Product Safety programme in place, which includes transport when this is arranged by the retailer.
7. Handled by staff involved in the product preparation and presentation who have a suitable training level, the minimum being the Food Safety Certificate – unit 167 and the Food Handling Prevent Food Contamination Certificate – unit 168 for key personnel and supervisory staff or equivalent qualifications approved by NZMB.

8. Product must be stored under conditions where the cold chain is not compromised:

Fresh meat

Storage room:	air temp max 2°C ¹
Processing room:	no greater than 12°C ²
Display:	max temp 4°C, less than 2°C is ideal

Frozen meat

Storage room:	-18°C or colder
Processing room:	no greater than 12°C
Display:	-12°C or colder

9. Frozen meat that is less than 18 months old from the time of slaughter.
10. Trimmed to a standard and consistency in compliance with the specification of 5mm external fat.
11. Retailed in a manner that protects the integrity of the standard in all respects, including not misrepresenting a product, eg describing hogget as lamb.
12. Prepared and retailed in premises that does not do 'home kills' and does not have uninspected meat from any source present on the premises at any time.

¹ Product must either be placed in refrigerated storage immediately on receipt from transport, or go directly to a processing room that is capable of maintaining the cold chain.

² Some tolerance will be allowed, but under no circumstances shall surface meat temperature exceed the following temperatures:

- Cold-boning (product no greater than 7°C) max 13°C
- Warm/hot boning to not exceed 16°C

Product must be placed in a refrigerated display or returned to storage within two hours from removal from transport or storage.

Product that does not Qualify



Product that does not qualify (on any one of these points):

1. Is not of New Zealand origin.
2. Mutton, cow and bull other than the Young Lean Beef category (XY).
3. The Mark may not be used on processed meat eg sausage, salami, luncheon or patties, including hamburger patties, rissoles and meatballs, whether or not they are made from pure meat product.
4. The Mark may not be used on product derived from carcasses that, while fully acceptable for human consumption, have reacted to tests undertaken for TB status or show evidence of TB lesions or animals that have been administered with Growth Promotants (GPs).
5. Is processed in non-licensed ME or AB plant and is not a Quality Mark approved processor.
6. Is transported under conditions where the cold chain and food safety are compromised.
7. Is not identifiable and traceable to the approved processor and does not have clear identification of Quality Mark product and non-approved product.
8. Is handled in a premises where a Product Safety programme is not in place, which includes transport, when this is arranged by the retailer.
9. Is handled by staff involved in the preparation and presentation of the product, who do not have a suitable level of training that at a minimum includes the Food Safety Certificate – unit 167 and key personnel and supervisory staff not having unit 168 or equivalent qualifications approved by NZMB.
10. Stored under conditions that compromise the cold chain.
11. Frozen meat that is more than 18 months old from the time of slaughter.
12. Trimmed to a standard and consistency not in compliance with the specification of 5mm of external fat.
13. Retailed in a manner that does not protect the integrity of the standard in all respects, including misrepresenting a product, eg describing hogget as lamb.
14. Prepared and retailled in premises that does 'home kills' or has uninspected meat from any source present on the premises at any time.
15. All offal. Offal is defined as any portion of a carcass other than whole muscle meat and includes the following from beef, lamb and hogget: hearts, tripe, tongue, brain, sweetbreads, tail, kidney, cheeks, liver, fry; either fresh, frozen or cured. The exclusion of offal includes mixed items such as steak and kidney, diced and whole.

Scope and General Information



1.1 Definitions

Quality Mark	The NZ Beef and Lamb Quality Mark
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture
NZMB	New Zealand Meat Board (Meat NZ)
MIRINZ	Meat Industry Research Institute of New Zealand
CAR	Corrective Action Report
Processor	Primary and/or secondary processor
FIFO	First in first out
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
ME	Meat Export plant
AB	Abattoir

1.2 Scope

This Standard establishes requirements for the quality system defined as the Beef and Lamb Quality Mark. It identifies each of the elements of a system to be designed, established and maintained by the retailer for the purpose of ensuring that products will conform to the requirements of the Standard.

1.3 Application

This Standard applies to all systems where referenced in the Standard relating to:

- The procurement of product
- Transportation of product
- Processing and storage
- Disposition
- Identification
- Traceability
- Record keeping

1.4 Reference Documents

- Animal Products Act 1999
- Animal welfare (commercial slaughter) code of welfare – due to be released in 2009.
- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code
- Bickerstaffe, R., Bekhit, A.E.D., Robertson, L.J., Roberts, N. and Geesink, G.H. (2001). Impact of introducing specifications on the tenderness of retail meat. *Meat Science* 59: pgs 303-315.
- Code of Recommendations and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Animals at the time of Slaughter at Licensed and Approved Premises, Code of Animal Welfare No.10. July 1994. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries; Animal Welfare Advisory Committee.
- Code of Recommendations and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Animals Transported within New Zealand. Code of Animal Welfare No. 15. November 1994. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries; Animal Welfare Advisory Committee.
- Electricity Regulations 1997
- FAO Animal Production and Health Manual: Good Practices for the Meat Industry
- Food Act 1981
- Food Hygiene Regulations (1974); Sections 14, 15, 44, 46
- Food Safety Certificate – unit 167 and 168 or equivalent
- Guide to Beef Carcass Classification. July 2004. Issued by the New Zealand Meat Classification Authority.
- Guide to Lamb and Mutton Carcass Classification. July 2004. Issued by the New Zealand Meat Classification Authority.
- Meeting the Standards (Beef and Lamb New Zealand publication)
- NZFSA Meat Manual: Industry Standard 4: Procurement of Animals for Use as Food
- NZFSA Meat Manual: Industry Standard 6 / Industry Agreed Standard 6 Processing of Edible Product
- NZFSA Meat Manual: Industry Standard 8: Quality Assurance (MISC)/Industry Agreed Standard 8: Quality Assurance (VISC)
- NZFSA Meat Manual: Industry Standard 9: Storing and Transport
- NZFSA Draft Meat Code of Practice – Further Processing Part 2 – Chapter 9
- NZS 8403:1987 Classification of meat carcasses for sale on the New Zealand market. Standards New Zealand.
- NZS 6116:2006 Safe application of Electricity in the Meat Processing Industry. Standards New Zealand.
- New Zealand Standard Specification for Grades and Definitions of Joints and Cuts of Meat for Sale in the New Zealand Market, First Revision, NZ Standards Institute (1962)
- The 'Mark' Retailer Agreement (an agreement to be entered into between the retailer and NZMB entitling the processor to participate in the Quality Mark Strategy)
- The New Zealand Meat Specifications Guide. Meat & Wool NZ publication 2008.

Scope and General Information (cont.)



1.5 Useful Websites

Company/Topic	Acronym	Website
Beef and Lamb New Zealand	BLNZ	www.beeflambnz.co.nz
Meat & Wool New Zealand	MWNZ	www.meatandwoolnz.com
NZ Food Safety Authority	NZFSA	www.nzfsa.govt.nz
Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry	MAF	www.maf.govt.nz
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	FSANZ	www.foodstandards.gov.au
MAF Biosecurity New Zealand	MAFBNZ	www.biosecurity.govt.nz
National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee	NAWAC	www.biosecurity.govt.nz/animal-welfare/overview/advisory/nawac
Meat & Livestock Australia	MLA	www.mla.com.au
Safe Food education	MLA	www.safefood.net.au
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	FAO	www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns
World Organisation for Animal Health	OIE	www.oie.int/eng/normes/mcode/en_sommaire.htm
Food Safety (USA)	USFS	www.foodsafety.gov/foodsafe.html
Standards NZ	SANZ	www.standards.co.nz/default.htm
NZ Legislation		www.legislation.govt.nz
New Zealand Meat Board	NZMB	www.nzmeatboard.org
AUS-MEAT Limited		www.ausmeat.com.au/auditing--accreditation/new-zealand-services.aspx
Food storage		www.pastrywiz.com/storage/refrigerated



Administrative Procedures



2.1 General

The retailer shall maintain an effective system for quality management. The systems should be planned and developed alongside other functions which are documented in their 'Food Safety Manual'.

Requirements shall be met by the establishment and implementation of procedures, which have the specific purpose of ensuring only acceptable product is offered for sale. The system shall:

- (a) Demonstrate recognition of the requirements affecting the Quality Mark and an organised approach to satisfy these requirements;
- (b) Ensure the Quality Mark programmes are established to satisfy the requirements including, as applicable, subsequent contractual services;
- (c) Provide for the prompt detection and corrective action of actual or potential deficiencies, trends or conditions which could result in unsatisfactory quality;
- (d) Make available to the auditors appointed by Beef and Lamb New Zealand, objective evidence that the Quality Mark quality assurance system is effective.

2.2 Organisation

The retailer shall clearly lay down quality management procedures and will define the responsibilities of staff who manage, perform and verify work affecting the Quality Mark.

The retailer shall appoint a management representative who has authority and responsibility for ensuring the Standards' requirements are implemented on an ongoing basis.

2.3 Review and Audit

- 2.3.1 All parties who apply to use the Quality Mark will be reviewed prior to being licensed as a User, to ensure they have systems in place to meet all standards relevant to their operation.
- 2.3.2 All parties who agree to comply with the standards will allow the standards to be audited at least twice per year. The frequency of visits will be reviewed at the end of the first year.
- 2.3.3 The actual frequency of audit for any particular licensed Quality Mark holder will depend upon their level of compliance to the agreed standards, as shown by prior audit.
- 2.3.4 Notice may be given that in the event of a default in compliance with the standards, the user is required to remedy such deficiencies. The details of this process are set out in section 12 of 'The Mark' Retailer Agreement.



Administrative Procedures



2.4 Training

- 2.4.1 The retailer shall establish and maintain procedures for identifying the training needs and requirements of all staff performing duties affecting the Quality Mark.
- 2.4.2 Staff performing such activities shall have appropriate education, training and/or experience as required for performing the specific assigned tasks. Where training is required, it shall ensure suitable proficiency is achieved, maintained and recorded.

See also the training requirements laid down in the section of this document titled 'Qualifying Product'.

2.5 Work Instructions

- 2.5.1 The retailer shall develop and maintain clear and complete documented instructions that prescribe the performance of work, where such written instructions are necessary for the achievement of quality. This work includes, but is not limited to, procurement, handling, processing, inspecting, trimming, packaging, storing and any other treatment of product, facilities, standards or equipment. Such instructions shall provide the criteria for workmanship.
- 2.5.2 Instructions shall be available, able to be understood and used by personnel at all locations where work essential to the achievement of the Quality Mark is performed.

2.6 Product Identification and Traceability

The retailer shall establish and maintain a system which allows Quality Mark product to be identified and traced from receipt through to further production and sale.

This will be facilitated by processors and wholesalers marking product and providing details of Quality Mark product on invoices and, wherever possible, on delivery dockets.

It is the retailers' responsibility to familiarise themselves with any abbreviations used to describe meat of different classes and genders to ensure compliance, eg 'PR' is a symbol commonly used by export processors to mark carton product containing cuts from Cow Beef, which is a product excluded from the Quality Mark.

All Quality Mark licensed users are required to check and verify that incoming and outgoing product is correctly marked as Quality Mark product.

Where non-qualifying product is incorrectly labelled as Quality Mark product, the Quality Mark identification is to be removed and details are to be recorded. Advice is also to be given to the Chief Auditor.



Administrative Procedures



2.7 Records

2.7.1 **General:** the retailer shall establish and maintain a system for the collection, filing and storage of records. In particular, retailers should check delivery dockets, invoices and/or statements to:

1. Ensure product is Quality Mark;
2. Weights, carcass descriptions and numbers are correct and immediately advise suppliers in the event of any discrepancy.

Sufficient records shall be maintained to demonstrate the achievement of the required quality and the effective operation of the system. Pertinent subcontractor and supplier records shall be an element of this data. All records shall be legible and identifiable to the product involved.

2.7.2 **Retention of records:** records shall be readily retrievable and stored in such a way to minimise the risk of deterioration, damage or loss. Records shall be retained for one year and made available for evaluation by the auditors. The exception to this is food safety records (temperature charts, cleaning checklists etc) which should be retained for one month.

2.8 Corrective Action

The retailer shall establish and maintain procedures to detect and correct any conditions in the retailers', suppliers' or the subcontractors' operations that could have an adverse effect on Quality Mark product. The retailer shall provide for:

- a) Continuing analysis of processes and work operations to detect and eliminate potential causes of non-conformance;
- b) Continuing analysis of known or suspected non-confirming supplies to determine the cause and corrective action needed to prevent recurrence;
- c) Effective management so that corrective actions accomplish their intended purpose;
- d) Documentation of corrective action;
- e) Corrective action reports (CARs) are to have a specific time deadline.

Technical Requirements



3.1 Procurement

Product sourced for retail as Quality Mark product must be from a licensed ME or AB plant, which is certified as a Quality Mark approved processor and be purchased either direct or through a Quality Mark approved wholesaler.

Licensed users of the Mark shall not have on their premises at any time, product that has not been MAF inspected, eg home kills or uninspected meat from any source.

3.2 Ground Meat, Cubes and Diced Meat

All ground meat, cubes and diced meat is to have at least a 90% visual lean (VL) content - equivalent to 85% chemical lean (CL).

Samples will be taken on a periodic basis for testing for lean content.

3.3 Marinated and Crumbed Product

Coated marinades are permitted but pumped marinades are excluded from qualifying. Product crumbed and/or marinated to extend the sale period of 'tired' product shall not qualify. Product crumbed and marinated must comply with the Quality Mark trim standard.

3.4 Use-by Dates

All pre-packaged product shall carry a 'Use-by date' or similar (eg best before date) and basic handling instructions. Retailers selling non-packaged product shall ensure that FIFO procedures are used with due consideration for ageing of primal cuts. Product that has deteriorated due to age or storage conditions shall not be offered for sale as Quality Mark product.

3.5 Food Safety

Retailers are to have a Food Safety Programme in place, which includes transport when this is arranged by the retailer. Staff who are involved in the preparation and presentation of the product are to have a suitable level of training that, at a minimum, includes the Food Safety Certificate – unit 167 and 168, for supervisory personnel, or equivalent qualifications approved by NZMB.

3.6 Product Storage

Product is to be stored under conditions such that the cold chain is not compromised. Suitable conditions are:

Fresh meat:

Storage Room:	below 2°C ¹
Processing room:	no greater than 12°C ²
Display:	max temp 4°C, no greater than 2°C is ideal

Frozen meat:

Storage:	- 18°C or colder
Processing room:	no greater than 12°C
Display:	- 12°C or colder

Frozen meat must be less than 18 months old from the time of slaughter.

¹ Produce must either be placed in refrigerated storage immediately on receipt from transport or go direct to a processing room that is capable of maintaining the cold chain.

² Some tolerance will be allowed, but under no circumstances shall surface meat temperature exceed the following temperatures:

- Cold-boning (product no greater than 7°C) max 13°C
- Warm/hot boning do not exceed 16°C

Product must be placed in a refrigerated display or returned to storage within two hours from removal from transport or storage.

Technical Requirements



3.7 Trim Standards

Retailers are to have written trim specifications that can be audited for consistency. A maximum of 5mm trim is a Quality Mark standard to be adhered to, along with removal, where practical, of all internal fat deposits.

3.8 Transportation of Product

Retailers, whether operating their own cartage operation or subcontracting, for either receipt of product or delivery to customers, are to ensure the product temperature (either bone-in or bone-out meat) is progressively reduced. This ensures so the integrity of the cold chain is maintained to achieve an internal temperature of not more than 7°C, by the time the product is offered for retail sale.

Data loggers are to be used to check periodically that an appropriate temperature regime is applied during the transport process.

Where these have been placed by processors or wholesalers to check the regime in transport they have contracted for, retailers are requested to co-operate in the recovery of the data logger devices.

All fresh carcass products are to be racked or hung. (Exemptions will only be granted where there are no alternatives and the procedures in place have been approved by the Quality Mark Auditors).

Vehicles used are to be:

- Dust proof;
- Lined with a smooth impervious surface that is easily cleaned, rot proof and will not corrode;
- Refrigerated;
- Cleaning procedures are to be in place (note: only MAF approved).

3.9 Tenderness/Ageing

The retailer acknowledges they have an important role in the tenderness/ageing process.

To ensure the appropriate ageing period to achieve the required standard of tenderness is provided, a 'retail ready date and time' will be indicated for all product.

To be eligible for the Quality Mark, all lamb and hogget and the following beef primal cuts cannot be sold prior to the 'retail ready' date and time advised by the processor:

- Rump
- Sirloin
- Scotch Fillet (Cube Roll)
- Thick Flank
- Eye Fillet (Tenderloin)

Other beef cuts and trimmings may be sold prior to reaching the 'retail ready date and time'.



Technical Requirements



3.9 Tenderness/Ageing (cont..)

It is the retailer's responsibility to ensure product is not presented for sale before the retail ready date and time. It is in the retailer's best interests to work with suppliers on presenting the consumer with the best aged meat possible.

To monitor the effectiveness of the 'retail ready date and time' approach, tenderness testing will take place on a regular basis at retail. Product for testing will be taken from the sirloin strip for beef and the middle loin for lamb and hogget.

Samples will be collected by Auditors or other appointed personnel. Information relating to the producing plant and 'retail ready date and time' for the product is to be made available to the Auditor or collector.



3.10 Auditing Statement

3.10.1 All parties who apply to use the Mark will be visited prior to being licensed as a User to ensure they have systems in place to meet compliance with all standards relevant to their operation.

3.10.2 All retailers and foodservice operators who have agreed to comply with the standards, will allow those standards to be audited on a minimum basis of twice per year. The minimal levels for frequency of visits will depend on their level of compliance to the agreed standards, as shown in the prior audit.

3.10.3 The auditing party will aim for a consistent approach with regards to the frequency of visits, and with monitoring compliance with the standards.

3.10.4 Retail auditing will include the purchase of product for tenderness testing.

Contacts



Beef and Lamb New Zealand

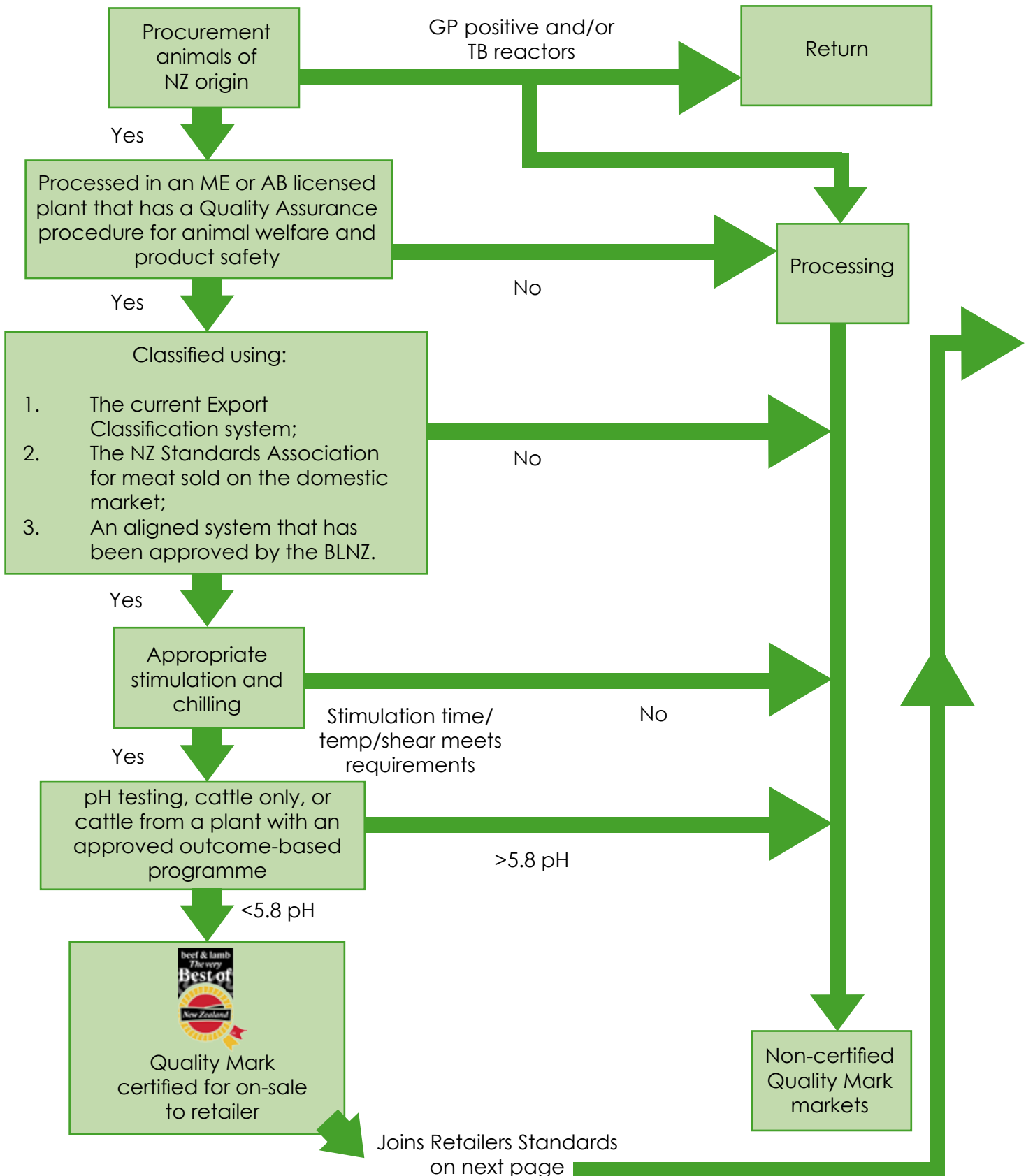
Rod Slater	Chief Executive Officer	0800 733 466
Tanya Hart	Marketing/PR Manager	0800 733 466
Stan Sutherland	North Island Auditor	027 251 0222
Brian Raynes	South Island Auditor	021 654 518

Carne Technologies

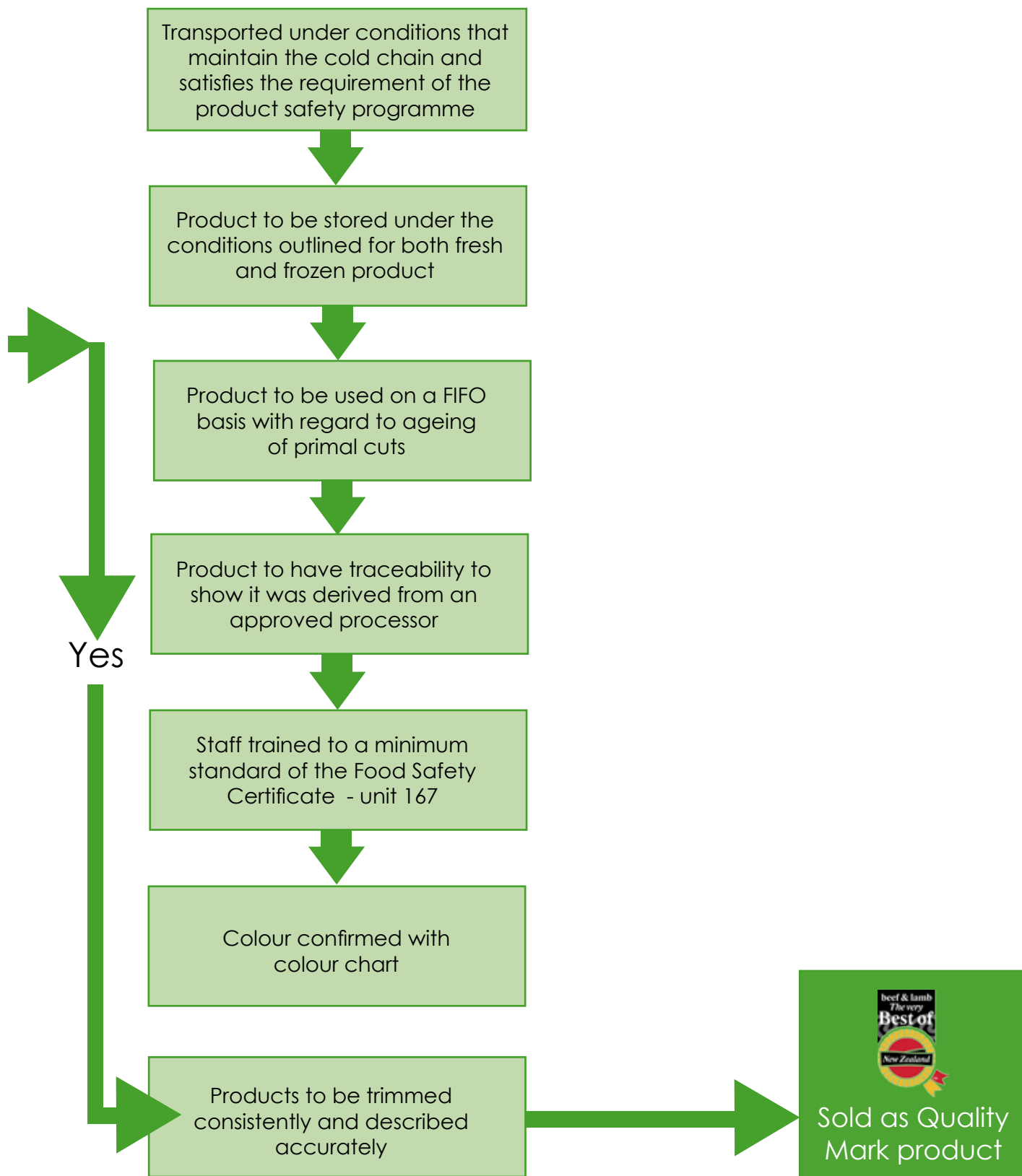
Nicola Simmons	Meat Quality	07 827 0731 027 255 3675
Clyde Daly	Electrical & Welfare Issues	07 827 0731 0274 166 783



Quality Mark Decision Tree - Processors



Quality Mark Decision Tree - Retailers



Guidelines for the Manual of Documented Procedures



Manual Amendments

Amendments to this manual will be given a consecutive number and will be dated. Please ensure all amendments are inserted, obsolete pages removed, and the record below is signed and dated by the Manual Holder. All letters and interim instructions received from Beef and Lamb New Zealand are to be filed at the back of the manual.

Amendment Number	Entered by	Date	Amendment Number	Entered by	Date
1			11		
2			12		
3			13		
4			14		
5			15		
6			16		
7			17		
8			18		
9			19		
10			20		