

Australia's MRL harmonisation process

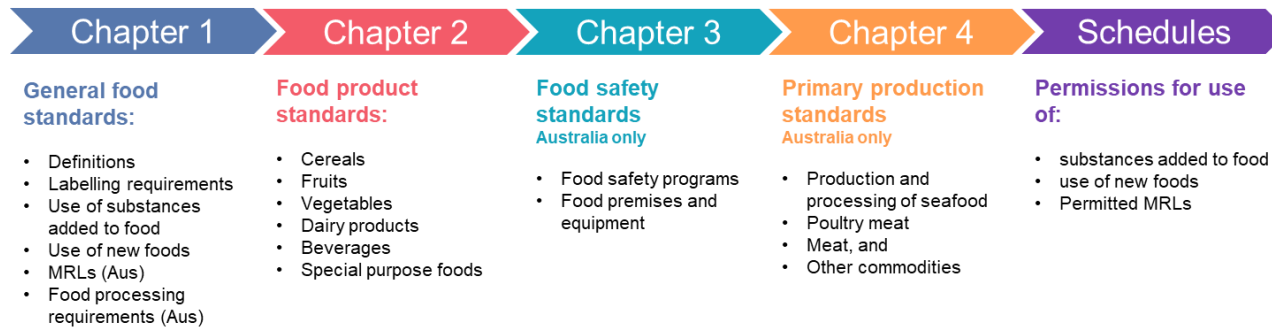
FSANZ
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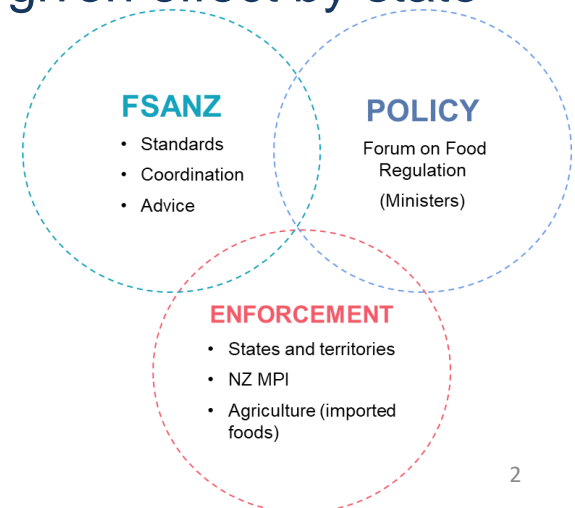
Australian Government

About FSANZ

- Australian statutory agency within the Australian Government Health portfolio
- Main function is to develop and administer the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code)



- The Code is a legislative instrument, that is given effect by state and territory or New Zealand laws
- Not responsible for enforcement



Overview



- National MRL Process **for food imports**
- **Australia specific** (NZ MRLs by MPI)
- Recognises differences in agvet chemical use around the world
- Uses internationally recognised scientific risk assessment methodologies
- Processes – streamlined and transparent
- Meets Australia's WTO obligations
- Facilitates trade



Shared responsibilities for MRLs



- Australia is unique in that there are two sets of MRLs in Australia
 - The APVMA MRL standard
 - used to monitor domestic use patterns necessary to control pests and/or diseases in Australia
 - applies at the point of food production.
 - ANZ Food Standards Code
 - Standard 1.4.2 of the Code (Schedule 20, 21 & 22).
 - Applies at the point of sale for all foods - imported and domestically produced.
 - All MRLs (APVMA & FSANZ) are published in Schedule 20 of the Code



MRL harmonisation process overview

- Requests seek to harmonise MRLs established by Codex or the country in which the food was grown
- Submitted requests must meet [MRL Guideline criteria](#) - FSANZ website
- Currently no fees for submitting MRL harmonisation requests
- Data submitted is checked
- Food imports meet DAWR requirements
- Risk assessment conducted
- Ongoing communication with requestors
- Process usually takes 9-12 months

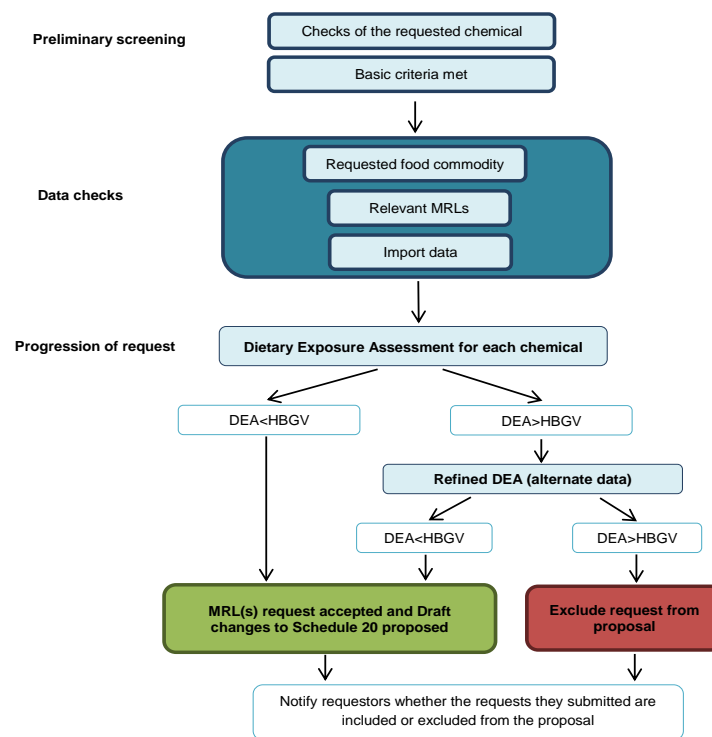


Figure 1 Summary of assessment process

Benefits of the harmonisation process

- Facilitates trade
- Streamlined
- Established a formal approach for considering harmonising MRLs
- The process is transparent and well documented
- Reliable and flexible
- No fees apply
- Consistency and allows planning for resources
- Promotes collaboration between national government agencies and departments
- Short time frame for consideration of requests
- Australia's process is recognised internationally for its efficiency
- Training and resources

Challenges

- **Establishment of the process**

- Developing guidance documentation
- Requestors may have needed to provide more data than before
- Legislative barriers
- Food consumption data for risk assessment

- **Ongoing challenges**

- Residue definitions not always the same
- Determining appropriate commodity name
- Additional support processes required
- No fees charged, workload increasing
- To consider all requests within timeframe

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