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MO: 10002039

Office of the Minister for Health

Ms Keira McIntosh
40/208 Adelaide Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

3 SEP 2010

Dear Ms McIntosh

I write in response to your letter dated 9 May 2010, regarding pending legal action by Queensland Health against The Maple Street Food Co-op. The Deputy Premier has asked that I respond on his behalf and apologise for the delay.

Milk by its nature is a highly perishable product and is an ideal medium for the growth and multiplication of harmful micro organisms that can cause disease.

Pasteurisation has been the most effective control measure for eliminating disease causing organisms that may be present in raw milk. Disease causing organisms found in raw milk include: *Salmonella typhi* (typhoid fever), Hepatitis A virus (infectious hepatitis), *Brucella* spp. (brucellosis), *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* (diphtheria), *Shigella* spp. (bacillary dysentery), *Listeria monocytogenes* (listeriosis), *Campylobacter jejuni* (campylobacter enteritis), *Coxiella burnetii* (Q fever) and *Escherichia coli* (diarrhoeal disease).

Processing requirements for milk and dairy products are specified in clause 15 of Standard 4.2.4 – Primary Production and Processing Standard for Dairy Products of the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code).

This Standard currently requires that, unless an applicable law of a State or Territory otherwise expressly provides, milk must be pasteurised by:

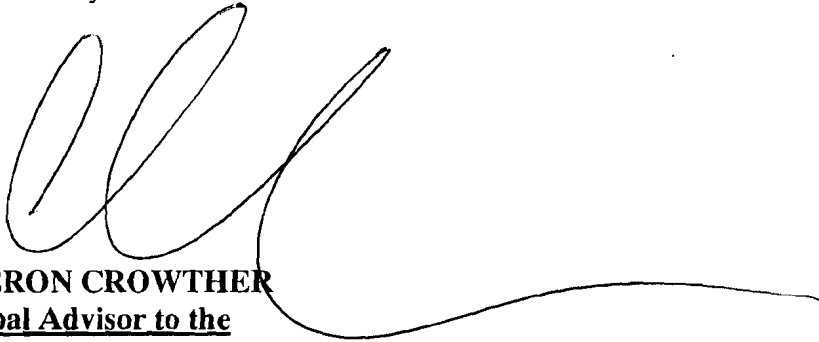
- heating to a temperature of no less than 72°C and retaining at such temperature for no less than 15 seconds;
- heating, using any other time and temperature combination of equivalent or greater lethal effect on any pathogenic micro-organisms in the milk; or
- using any other process that provides an equivalent or greater lethal effect on any pathogenic micro-organisms.

The development and maintenance of standards in the Code are the responsibility of Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). Since FSANZ is currently considering the primary production and processing requirements for raw milk products, I would encourage you to participate in the consultation process involved in this proposal. Further information about this issue can be accessed from the website at www.foodstandards.gov.au.

As you are aware, Queensland Health does have a matter relating to unpasteurised milk currently before the courts, however, we are unable to comment on the specifics of the case.

Should you have any queries regarding my advice to you, Ms Tenille Fort, Director, Food Safety Policy and Regulation Unit, Environmental Health Branch, Queensland Health, will be pleased to assist you and can be contacted on telephone 3328 9310.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

CAMERON CROWTHER
Principal Advisor to the
Deputy Premier and Minister for Health