

## Technical Brief 09-11

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### 1. US OMAR / Labelling / Product Description - *Slavisa Jovic & John Lee*

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**Notification:** US OMAR specifies requirements for labelling of animal products. Section 9.19 in particular addresses the matter of product names and descriptions on the products labels.

#### 9.19.2 Meat product names

a. United States law requires that the "name of the product" be either:

- i. the name as specified in the relevant standard (a "standard" product); or
- ii. for other products, the common or usual name, or
- iii. where this does not exist, a truthful description.

b. This has been elaborated in a series of supporting documents for meat which list terms and descriptions that are acceptable.

New Zealand exporters are advised to check with their US agent whether product terms, ciphers or abbreviations placed on the label are acceptable to US prior to export of such items.

Any items where a label may display an unapproved or unacceptable term must be corrected prior to shipment to United States.

At the same time the exporters must note the USDA expectation that the product description on the carton label and the export certificate must match, including the name of the cut.

**Background:** The US tends to use two guides as the basis for acceptable cut names. These are:

1. [The Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications](#) (General Requirements Approved by the USDA) and
2. The [Meat Buyers Guide](#) by National Association of Meat Purveyors is a summary of the IMPS most commonly used.

New Zealand producers and exporters have been advised to describe products in accordance to these publications.

Recently, a significant number of consignments originating from various premises have been detained at the border inspection by the USDA, because carton labels contained an unapproved term "**TRUNK**" in the product

description. In all of these instances the USDA required the offending labels to be corrected before product could be released.

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