

Draft Meat Industry (Meat Industry Levy) Regulation 2025

Public consultation summary report

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NSW Food Authority www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au

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Contents

Executive Summary.....4

Review and consultation process.....4

Analysis of submissions.....5

Executive Summary

The Meat Industry (Meat Industry Levy) Regulation 2016 (MIL Regulation) supports the *Meat Industry Act 1978* (the Act), which requires every occupier of NSW land who is liable to pay an animal health rate to also pay an annual Meat Industry Levy (MIL) to the Food Authority to fund meat industry food safety activities.

The Food Authority consulted on the draft Meat Industry (Meat Industry Levy) Regulation 2025 (draft Regulation) and Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) from 5 May – 1 June 2025.

The RIS developed for consultation on the draft Regulation concluded that making the proposed Regulation is the preferred option as it generated the greatest net benefit to businesses, consumers, government, and the community. The proposed Regulation provides a sufficient contribution from producers to food safety activities that benefit the meat industry, while also improving clarity and efficiency for government and removing red tape for producers.

Industry organisations supported maintaining the meat industry levy (MIL) rate constant without change from the MIL Regulation. Industry organisations strongly supported the administrative amendments to simplify, align and modernise the MIL Regulation. Some submissions from individuals did not support the changes in the draft Regulation.

The draft Regulation has been finalised without further change as the proposed Meat Industry (Meat Industry Levy) Regulation 2025 (proposed Regulation).

This submissions summary report provides an overview of the public consultation process undertaken and a summary of the submissions received along with the Food Authority response.

Review and consultation process

The Food Authority reviewed the existing MIL Regulation during development of the draft Regulation. The review indicated the Regulation is essentially ‘fit for purpose’ to support the Act and the existing regulatory provisions are required for continued management of the meat industry in NSW. The review also identified minor improvements to modernise and simplify existing provisions and increase consistency with other legislation.

The draft Regulation maintains the existing MIL rate and maximum along with amendments to improve clarity and efficiency for government and remove red tape for producers.

The draft Regulation and RIS were open for public consultation for 28 days from 5 May to 1 June 2025. Consultation documents were available on the Food Authority website along with a plain English summary of the changes by industry and an online survey.

A notice of the draft Regulation and RIS was published in the [NSW Government Gazette](#) (2 May 2025), on the NSW Government Have Your Say website, the NSW Food Authority website, and notices were placed in the Sydney Morning Herald (6 May 2025), the Daily Telegraph (6 May 2025) and The Land (8 May 2025).

Consultation on the draft Regulation was also advertised at the Tocal Field Days (2-4 May) and the Primex Field Days (15-17 May), in Local Land Services regional newsletters and on social media pages of the Food Authority (5 May), Local Land Services (5 May), Central Tablelands LLS (5 May), Central West LLS (5 May), Greater Sydney LLS (5 May), Hunter LLS (5 May), Murray LLS (5 May),

North Coast LLS (5 May), North West LLS (6 May), Northern Tablelands LLS (6 May), Riverina LLS (5 May), South East LLS (5 May), Western LLS (8 May).

Stakeholders were invited to send a submission via email, post or via an online survey with questions related to the amendments.

Representatives from the Food Authority met with the NSW Farmers cattle committee during the public consultation period.

Analysis of submissions

A total of five submissions were received throughout the public consultation period. The Food Authority received two industry submissions and three submissions from individuals.

Table 1 summarises matters raised during public consultation and the Food Authority's response.

Table 1 Summary of submissions and Food Authority response

Raised by	Submission viewpoint	Food Authority response
NSW Farmers	Support for the meat industry levy being charged as a contribution from producers for food safety approaches that enhance the safety, integrity, and sustainability of the meat supply chain across New South Wales.	The Food Authority notes industry support for the meat industry levy as an efficient way for producers to contribute to the safety, integrity and sustainability of the meat supply chain.
NSW Farmers Industry	Support for the proposed Regulation which retains the meat industry levy at the same rate and maximum as the existing Regulation.	The Food Authority notes industry support for retention of the existing meat industry levy rate and maximum.
Individual	Question what the meat industry levy achieves.	Pages 9-11 of the RIS developed for the draft Regulation lists the Food Authority activities partially funded by the meat industry levy. These include a range of compliance and enforcement to ensure safe and suitable food and to prevent misleading conduct, such as investigation of meat related foodborne illness outbreaks, testing for illegal chemical use at retail butchers, ensuring abattoirs and meat processors handle meat hygienically, and investigating illegal slaughter operations.
Individual	Do not support the meat industry levy anymore. Preference for levies to be charged to overseas companies that own Australian resources.	All producers that occupy rateable land in NSW who are liable for the animal health rate are treated equally and must pay the meat industry levy. This includes Australian producers and companies with overseas ownership. All producers benefit from the food safety activities undertaken by the Food Authority in the meat supply chain.

Raised by	Submission viewpoint	Food Authority response
Individual	Oppose retaining the meat industry levy rate and maximum as it imposes a disproportionate burden on small producers. This represents a significant expense for small operators with limited stock and tight profit margins.	The Food Authority does not consider the meat industry levy imposes a significant expense for small operators. In 2024, the average levy paid per producer was \$11.41 and 89% of producers paid a meat industry levy of \$20 or less.
Individual	Oppose retaining the meat industry levy as it is inefficient and overlaps with existing regulations such as the Food Standards Code.	The Food Authority does not agree. Food regulatory policy is harmonised between the Commonwealth, states and territories under the <i>Food Regulation Agreement</i> signed in 2000. The agreement commits jurisdictions to amend their food laws in line with the Food Standards Code. Legislation in each jurisdiction gives legal effect to the Food Standards Code. The contribution by producers partially funds Food Authority activities that benefit the meat industry. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal stated in its 2013 draft report for a Review of a funding framework for Local Land Services that the meat industry levy is targeted and efficient, seeking to cost recover part of the Food Authority's costs from the industry that impacts/benefits from its activities. These activities include compliance and enforcement of the Food Standards Code and the Australian Standards for hygienic production of meat for human consumption.
NSW Farmers Industry	Support for the amendment to section 5 which streamlines administrative processes, supports alignment with other key dates, and will provide improved clarity for producers. The alignment of the date for notice to be given to the land occupier with the date the LLS sends out the rates notices is a sensible amendment that is beneficial for both business and government.	The Food Authority notes industry support for the amendment to section 5 to align with the date LLS sends out rates notices.

Raised by	Submission viewpoint	Food Authority response
Individual	Concern on amendment to section 5 - aligning levy notices with LLS rates notices may streamline administration for government but risks overwhelming producers with simultaneous financial demands.	The Food Authority notes the concern. Current practice is to include the meat industry levy on the LLS rates notice for administrative efficiency. As 89% of producers pay a meat industry levy of \$20 or less, it is unlikely that charging rates and levies at the same time will overwhelm ratepayers. Producers experiencing hardship can contact Local Land Services to discuss options, which could include setting up a payment plan.
NSW Farmers Industry	Support for amendments to section 6 and schedules 1 and 2 to: - reduce risk of over-collection of farmers' personal and business information by only collecting essential information. This better recognises the privacy rights and expectations of producers, as well as improving government administrative efficiency, and ensuring government systems remain fair, functional and fit for purpose. - support regulatory alignment and reduced reporting burdens. This will have a small but positive impact on landholder privacy by ensuring information requests are necessary to the application.	The Food Authority notes industry support for the amendment to section 6 and schedules 1 and 2 to reduce collection of personal information when notifying a change in property ownership.
Individual	Concern about amendment to section 6 and schedules 1 and 2 – although this change reduces red tape, it does not address the broader complexity of compliance, leaving producers with a still-cumbersome process.	The Food Authority does not agree. The proposed amendments simplify and streamline the process for a producer to notify a change in property ownership while reducing the quantity of personal information stored by the Department.
NSW Farmers	Support for the amendment to section 7 which removes the \$5 fee for an application to obtain information about levies due and payable supports a more transparent process and should increase administrative efficiency. As indicated in the RIS, the lack of clarity around this fee has meant it has not been charged, and this amendment ensures that the regulation accurately reflects current practice and producer expectations.	The Food Authority notes industry support for the amendment to section 7 to remove a \$5 fee that has not been charged due to its ambiguity.

Raised by	Submission viewpoint	Food Authority response
Industry	Support for amendments to sections 7, 9 and 10 - appreciate efforts to reduce unnecessary administrative costs and achieve regulatory alignment. These proposed changes appear to be justified.	The Food Authority notes industry support for amendments to sections 7, 9 and 10.
Individual	Lack of support for amendments to sections 7, 9 and 10 – no reason given.	Noted.
NSW Farmers Industry	Support for amendment to section 8: - No impact on producers and it clarifies that the LLS certificate is suitable – LLS has been issuing certificates and will continue to do so. - Supports alignment.	The Food Authority notes industry support for the amendment to section 8 that clarifies that LLS will continue to issue certificates, and this amendment has no impact on producers.
NSW Farmers	Support for amendments to section 9 that reduce the barriers for producers to dispute the validity of a meat industry levy. The Local Court is generally more geographically accessible, less formal, and less costly to navigate than the District Court. Living in regional and rural NSW presents increased challenges to access services and this amendment better supports producers to exercise their rights under the Regulation who may have otherwise been discouraged due to the complexity, cost, or distance involved in higher court proceedings.	The Food Authority notes industry support for the amendment to section 9 to enable a producer to dispute the validity of a meat industry levy in the Local Court rather than the more costly District Court.
Individual	Concern on amendment to section 9 - moving levy validity disputes to the Local Court may lower filing fees but could increase frivolous claims, burdening the judicial system and indirectly raising costs for all stakeholders.	The Food Authority considers improving fairness for ratepayers outweighs the concern. The District Court has a jurisdictional limit of \$1,250,000 while the Local Court has a jurisdictional limit for civil claims of \$100,000 in the General Division, and \$20,000 in the Small Claims Division. The maximum meat industry levy payable in any year is \$130, well below the jurisdictional limit for the Local Court. The Food Authority also notes that Local Land Services encourage any producer with a concern about their levy calculation to seek clarification by contacting Local Land Services. Conversation resolves most concerns.

Raised by	Submission viewpoint	Food Authority response
NSW Farmers	Support for amendment to section 10 to set the rate for overdue levies which reflects a commitment to fairness and transparency.	The Food Authority notes industry support for giving clarity and transparency to producers about overdue levies.
Individual	Concern on amendment to section 10 – setting the rate at 2% above the Commonwealth Bank's overdraft index adds a punitive layer for producers rather than incentivising compliance through support.	The Food Authority notes the concern. However, this is the current method used by LLS to calculate interest on overdue rates. The amendment gives clarity and transparency to producers about overdue levies.
NSW Farmers	Support for amendment to section 11 to remove outdated paper-based methods for maintaining land and producer records. This marks a step forward to handle data and information in a way that meets modern expectations. While there is no change for producers this amendment formalises current practice and supports more accurate, secure, and efficient data management within government systems.	The Food Authority notes industry support for modernising data collection and management in government systems.
NSW Farmers	These proposed amendments deliver better alignment and consistency between the Food Authority and LLS which supports clearer service delivery for the meat industry in NSW.	The Food Authority notes industry support for the proposed Regulation and better alignment and consistency between the Food Authority and LLS.
Industry	Appreciate the proposed Regulation that keeps the current meat industry levy annual contribution without any change, and to both modernise, refine and reduce reporting burdens upon industry through these changes.	The Food Authority notes industry support for the proposed Regulation and efforts to modernise, refine and reduce reporting burdens for industry.
Individual	Preference for voluntary contributions, risk-based regulation and industry collaboration.	The Food Authority notes this preference. The levy contribution by producers only partially funds Food Authority activities that benefit the meat industry. Food safety programs in the Food Regulation under the <i>Food Act 2003</i> target food safety risks throughout the food supply chain and are tailored to individual industries, sectors or businesses. The Food Authority conducts risk-based surveillance of the NSW food industry to improve compliance with food regulations. Licensed meat businesses pay annual licence fees which also contribute to meat industry food safety activities.