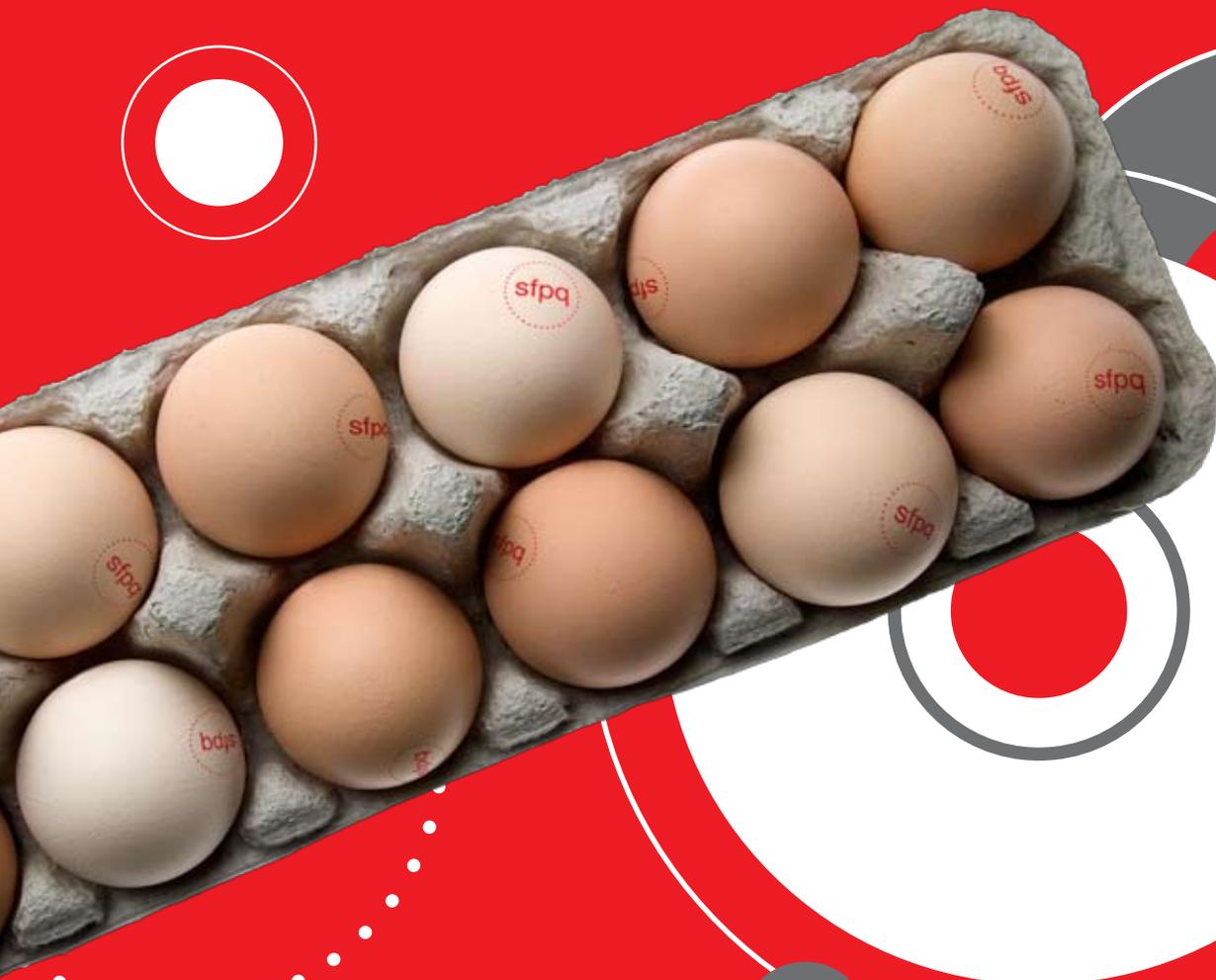
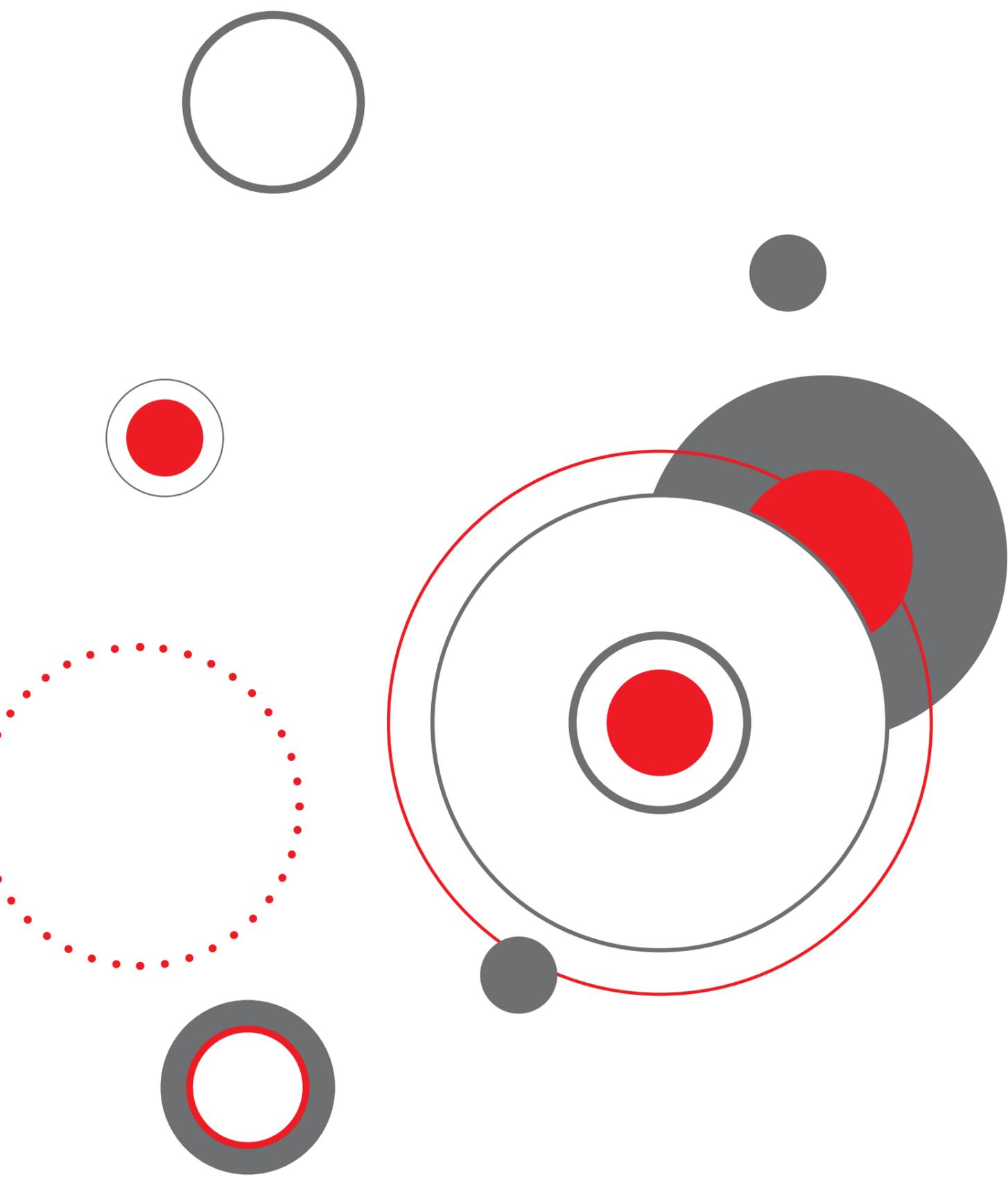


food safety guide for queensland's egg suppliers





food safety guide for queensland's egg suppliers

part one

The Egg Scheme and you

How to become accredited

part two

Industry information and recommendations

Resources and record sheets

Safe Food Production Queensland acknowledges the significant contribution of those within Queensland's egg industry and the Egg Food Safety Sub-Committee who have contributed to this publication.

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Disclaimer

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Information provided in *Food safety guide for Queensland's egg suppliers* does not replace Queensland Government legislation and this publication is not a legally binding document.

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introduction

Welcome to the *Food safety guide for Queensland's egg suppliers*. We hope the information provided will help you understand your responsibilities to food safety.

This publication is set out in two easy-to-use sections and is designed with you in mind.

You can use the two sections together or separately, depending on your existing knowledge, or what parts you find most useful for your business.

Following is a brief overview of the contents of Part One and Part Two.

Part One: The Egg Scheme and you

This section will help you to understand the legislation that currently exists in Queensland on the production, sale and transportation of eggs. It describes the activities covered by the Egg Scheme for Eggs and Egg Products (also known as the Egg Scheme), and will help you to decide if you need to be accredited by Safe Food Production Queensland. You should not rely solely on this section as an interpretation of the law. The detailed provisions of the law, as it applies to the Egg Scheme, are contained in the *Food Production (Safety) Regulations 2002* (www.legislation.qld.gov.au).

The checklist on page 13 will help you to decide which accreditation category you fall into — PSA supplier, producer, transporter/distributor or processor.

How to become accredited

Do you need to be accredited? In this section, you will find out exactly what your business requires to ensure the food you are supplying is safe.

Follow the steps (starting on page 14) to help you become accredited and improve your business. Remember, if you fall into any of the four accreditation categories, you must be accredited with Safe Food Production Queensland before you can legally supply eggs or egg products in Queensland.

Part Two: Industry recommendations and resources

Part Two provides industry information so that you can develop a food safety program and maintain compliance. It contains important information and facts, as well as links to resources to help you decide what you need to operate your business successfully.

This section will help you to identify food safety risks on your property, or risks associated with the food production activities in which you are involved. It also contains checklists to highlight the activities you should be carrying out regularly in order to minimise your food safety risks and improve your on-farm routine. Part Two also contains record sheets that can be copied and used in your day-to-day operations.

Need help?

If you have any questions, or need more help to use this guide, call SFPQ direct on free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

part one: the egg scheme and you

Why do we bother with food safety?

Each year, millions of cases of food-related illnesses are reported in Australia.

While most people can easily overcome what is commonly recognised as a 'bout of food-poisoning', there are vulnerable people in our community who can become seriously ill, or even die from a food-related illness. The very young, the elderly, and pregnant women are all at high risk from serious complications if they are affected by a food-related illness.

Because of these potentially serious problems, it is critical that anyone involved in the food production business is aware of the risks to food safety — and have measures in place to address these risks.

Salmonella is the suspected cause of up to one-third of all food-borne illness in Australia (source: OzFoodNet). Eggs that are cracked and/or dirty have a higher chance of carrying salmonella and, in turn, significantly increase the risk of food-borne illness.

Regulatory bodies and those who are in the food business are continually looking for new ways to minimise risks and ensure that food produced is safe.

Because food safety can be compromised at any point in the production process, there is an international focus on a 'through-chain' approach. That is, each step in the production process is carefully checked to ensure the food produced is safe to eat.

Why do we need food regulation?

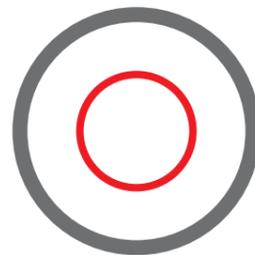
Changes in the way food is produced, distributed and consumed present new challenges in ensuring the safety of our food. Queenslanders are now consuming a greater variety of foods, particularly meat, eggs, dairy products, seafood, fruit and vegetables. While this is good for our health and our palates, it brings with it new food safety challenges. Today, Queenslanders eat out more than ever before, and they demand a wide range of foods all-year-round. Because of this, food safety management along the entire chain is becoming increasingly relevant.

Who are Safe Food Production Queensland?

To ensure through-chain coverage of food safety, the Queensland Government launched the *Food Production (Safety) Act 2000* in conjunction with the Food Act.

Safe Food Production Queensland (SFPQ) is a statutory body, established under the *Food Production (Safety) Act 2000*. We report to the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries.

SFPQ promotes and protects food safety in primary production and processing and works to ensure the reliability and safety of the Queensland food chain.



How do we maintain a safe food supply?

We adopt a cooperative approach with industry to develop outcomes-based food safety schemes. SFPQ has implemented food safety schemes for meat, dairy and eggs, and is in the process of developing a seafood scheme to ensure that Queensland's food supply remains one of the safest in the world.

Food safety schemes are developed in conjunction with industry and SFPQ co-regulatory partners: Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, Queensland Health and the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries. A risk-based approach is used to regulate the production and processing of primary produce through industry-specific food safety schemes.

In Queensland, food safety is an area of shared responsibility:

- **The Queensland Department of Health** (Queensland Health) is the lead agency for food safety in Queensland. Queensland Health administers the Food Act with assistance from local government, and establishes standards and policies for the safety and nutritional quality of food consumed in the State. Queensland Health also has responsibility for product recalls and ensures products offered for sale are true to label.
- **Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service** (AQIS) is the importing country's regulator. AQIS administers export controls and assists Australian food exporters by providing advice relating to importing country requirements and the maintenance of the National Australian standards, or Codex standards, concerning food safety.
- **Safe Food Production Queensland** (SFPQ) is the domestic regulator for primary produce and processing of food safety risks along the food chain—from production to retail sectors — in cooperation with co-regulatory partners. We work with Queensland's primary industries to develop food safety schemes for specific sectors such as meat, dairy, eggs and seafood. These schemes ensure the safety of Queensland-produced food by requiring all food-handling businesses meet agreed auditable standards of food safety.

What does Safe Food Production Queensland do?

We work to ensure that:

- Queensland's food production systems meet national food safety standards
- consumers have confidence in the food produced in this State.

In practice, this means introducing and promoting industry-based food safety schemes that cover the span of primary produce processed in Queensland.

Since 2000, SFPQ has been operating in the challenging environment of managing food safety risk.

Want to know more about SFPQ and our role in food safety? Visit our website www.safefood.qld.gov.au or call us on free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

Our staff has experience in dealing first-hand with all facets of Queensland's food business—its people, the processes and production, and how these elements fit together to make our food safe.

SFPQ's role is at the primary production and processing end of the food chain, which in itself has wide scope and diversity.

What is a food safety scheme?

A food safety scheme is a legal document developed in consultation with government and industry. A scheme is based on reducing food safety risks through-chain. It is a preventative approach that ensures public health and safety.

In simple terms, a food safety scheme is a regulation that sets out minimum requirements that a primary production and/or processing business must legally meet to make sure its food is safe.

It may be a requirement under a food safety scheme for a person to develop and implement a food safety program. This regulatory tool is one of many that can be adopted to assist businesses in meeting their legal requirements.

It is illegal to sell cracked or dirty eggs in Queensland. The Egg Scheme prevents the supply of cracked and dirty eggs into the market place.

What is a food safety program?

A food safety program (FSP) is a document prepared by a business outlining control measures and procedures that its operation has put in place to reduce, or eliminate, significant food safety hazards associated with a product produced or sold. Common food safety hazards that may pose a risk to public health are biological, physical and chemical.

A FSP provides a means to demonstrate compliance with the scheme, and assurance to regulators and others that the product is safe.

What is the Egg Scheme?

The Food Safety Scheme for Eggs and Egg Products (Egg Scheme) was put into practice on 1 January 2005.

The following section gives an overview of the requirements of the Egg Scheme. It is intended as an information source only — it is not an exhaustive list of requirements under the Egg Scheme and does not replace the legislation.

The main requirements of the Egg Scheme make it illegal to:

1. supply cracked eggs
2. supply dirty eggs
3. supply unpasteurised egg pulp
4. supply eggs and egg products without an accreditation.

Other essential elements of the Egg Scheme include product identification and traceability:

1. Traceability

- all individual eggs are identified with a *unique identifier (ID)*.

How do I get a unique ID for my eggs?

You need to have a unique mark, or ID, that can be stamped on every egg you produce. This means there is no confusion about where the egg originated, and can help with trace-back should a food incident arise. SFPQ has a register of existing IDs. Call us if you need help deciding on an ID for your product. Free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

2. Records

Following is a list of minimum records required.

- You must have an egg receipt log. Your receipt log must include:
 - amount of product received
 - date received
 - from whom the product was received (supplier details)
 - type(s) of product (e.g. free range, caged, etc)
 - brand name of product(s) (e.g. Happy Chook brand).
- You must have an egg distribution schedule. Your distribution schedule must include:
 - amount of product supplied
 - date supplied
 - to whom the product was supplied
 - type of product
 - brand names of product supplied
 - batch code/production date
 - transporter/company registration.
- You must have a documented system in place to identify and show how you are disposing of cracked and/or dirty eggs.
- You must keep records that verify your birds are free from disease.
- You must keep records that verify the feed you use is free from contamination (microbiological and chemical). This includes maintaining pest control records for feed storage areas.
- You must keep records to verify you have a system in place that ensures water used in your operation is acceptable for its intended use. Annual testing may be required for E.Coli and coliforms.
- You must keep records that verify you have a system in place to ensure eggs are free of residues. You must conduct annual testing for Organochlorine Pesticides (OCs) and Organophosphorous Pesticides (OPs) to ensure they are below the maximum residue limits (MRLs) for eggs.

Product identification and through-chain traceability is the cornerstone of good food safety management. As part of your food safety program, you must be able to identify your individual product.

3. Labelling

- All individual cartons/packages/catering packs/trays (including 'outers') containing eggs must have identification on each carton/package/catering pack/tray. Identification must be clearly legible and must meet requirements of the Food Standards Code.

For your labelling requirements, contact Queensland Health Publication Inquiry Service on 07 3234 0840 to obtain a copy of the Egg and Egg Products Labelling and Compositional Standards for Industry fact sheet.

- All product that will be sent for pasteurisation must be clearly labelled either 'for pasteurisation' or 'pulp for pasteurisation'. The way you intend to identify unpasteurised product on your premises must be included in your food safety program.

4. Recall of product

- You must include a product recall section in your food safety program as outlined in the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) recall protocol.

5. Health and hygiene

- Health and hygiene requirements for food handlers and food production premises must be met (as stated in the Food Standards Code).

6. Co-mingling of product must not occur

- Mixing your eggs with another producer's or processor's eggs is not permitted.

If you are a producer or a processor, these actions should be addressed in your day-to-day operations and documented in your food safety program.

Once you have been accredited, you will have to keep records to demonstrate that you are complying with these actions. Your food safety program will be audited to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Egg Scheme.

What does the Egg Scheme have to do with me?

If you are a supplier of eggs and/or egg products in Queensland, the Egg Scheme applies to you. It doesn't matter if you are a big operator selling to a retail chain, or a small grower selling to a farmer's market — if you sell, receive gain or reward from your eggs, it is likely that you must comply with the requirements set out in the Egg Scheme.

How do I decide if I need to be accredited?

The Egg Scheme applies to:

- egg producers
- egg processors
- egg transporters (distributors)
- anyone operating under a preferred supplier arrangement (PSA) for eggs.

Use the activity checklist 'Do I have to be accredited?' on page 13 to decide if you need to be accredited in Queensland, and what category you fall into.

What do these terms mean?

Egg producer

An egg producer is any person who produces eggs for supply. A producer can:

- grade
- wash
- candle
- oil
- pack
- store.

Egg processor

An egg processor can be:

- a producer who handles other people's eggs and/or
- a person who washes, grades (including assessing for cracks) another person's eggs and/or
- a person who stores and handles eggs at a wholesale premises (SFPQ policy states that, although the scheme relates to wholesale premises, they are not required to be accredited if they do not physically handle individual eggs) and/or
- a person who processes eggs to produce egg product
- a person who pasteurises egg pulp (as long as this activity is included in their approved food safety program).

Transporter (distributor)

A person or business that transports eggs or egg products between any premises (including to the back dock of a retail outlet, manufacturer or a commercial user who prepares eggs and egg products for immediate consumption) is considered a transporter (or distributor).

Preferred supplier arrangement

The term 'preferred supplier arrangement' (PSA) is used by SFPQ for a special set of activities that are related to eggs. The PSA allows approved egg producers to supply eggs exclusively to an egg processor. A producer who is operating under a PSA cannot sell directly to the public, or to anyone else other than the egg processor identified in their accreditation application.

Not sure which category fits your business? Call us and we'll help sort out your identity crisis! Free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

You don't need to worry about the Egg Scheme if ...

- you only keep birds as pets and you don't sell your eggs
- you only use your eggs for personal consumption
- you operate a hatchery and you don't sell your eggs
- you grow or produce stock feed
- you are a retailer who sells eggs (except if you sell straight from your farm gate).*

*Queensland Health and your local government look after the retail sale of eggs under the *Food Act 2006*.

Activity checklist—do I have to be accredited?

Use this activity checklist to decide if you need to be accredited in Queensland, and the category you fall into. If you tick 'yes' to any of the activities along the production chain it will give you an indication of which category you should be applying for accreditation against. Still not sure? Call us and we'll be pleased to help you. Free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

PSA Supplier	Producer	Transporter/ Distributor	Processor
<i>On Farm</i>	<i>On Farm</i>	<i>Collector and/ or Distribution</i>	<i>Grading/Handling/ or Pasteurisation</i>
<input type="radio"/> I grow or produce eggs	<input type="radio"/> I grow or produce eggs	<input type="radio"/> I transport eggs	<input type="radio"/> I grow or produce eggs on farm
<input type="radio"/> I supply all of my eggs to one processor for grading	<input type="radio"/> I grade my own eggs	<input type="radio"/> I transport graded eggs	<input type="radio"/> I grade other people's eggs
<input type="radio"/> I do not retail eggs to the public from my farm	<input type="radio"/> I do not handle other people's eggs	<input type="radio"/> I transport ungraded eggs	<input type="radio"/> I handle eggs from other suppliers
<input type="radio"/> I do not handle other people's eggs	<input type="radio"/> I only package my own eggs	<input type="radio"/> I store eggs	<input type="radio"/> I repackage eggs
<input type="radio"/> I transport my own eggs	<input type="radio"/> I supply ungraded eggs to a processor	<input type="radio"/> I do not handle individual eggs	<input type="radio"/> I receive cracked and dirty eggs for pasteurisation
	<input type="radio"/> I retail/sell eggs to the public from my farm		<input type="radio"/> I pasteurise eggs (heat treat eggs)
	<input type="radio"/> I transport my own eggs		

How to become accredited

If you fall into any of the 'accreditation categories' — such as producer, processor, transporter (distributor) or PSA — *you must be accredited with Safe Food Production Queensland before you can legally supply eggs or egg products in Queensland.*

To obtain accreditation follow these steps:

Step 1

Contact Safe Food Production Queensland and talk to one of our officers. We can give you information on how to apply for accreditation and send you an application form and details of fees that apply.

Free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

Step 2

When you receive information on how to apply for accreditation you will have to assess your operations for food safety risks. You have to document what you intend to do in your day-to-day operations to manage risks. This step will lead you to develop a food safety program.

Developing your food safety program

A food safety program identifies and lists the risks to food safety that may arise in the day-to-day operation of your business. Your food safety program must describe the food production activities your business carries out, identify risks, and show how you intend to manage the risks.

Records give you better control of your product quality, safety and traceability. Check out the record sheets at the end of this guide. If they help you track your operations feel free to use them. As well, you can use them to create tailored record sheets for your business.

The ability to trace your product from start to finish is the cornerstone of good food safety management.

If you need assistance in developing a food safety program, we can help. Just call us on free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

You need to give SFPQ your complete food safety program when you submit your application for accreditation and pay your fees. Without a complete food safety program you will not be accredited by SFPQ.

Step 3

Make your application by sending:

1. Your complete food safety program. If you are involved in egg production, you will need to supply your proposed unique ID with your food safety program.
2. Complete the 'Application for accreditation' form
3. Send payment for fee.

Send your application to:

Safe Food Production Queensland (SFPQ)

PO Box 440 Spring Hill Queensland 4006

Telephone: 07 3253 9800

Free call: 1800 300 815

info@safefood.qld.gov.au

www.safefood.qld.gov.au

What will this cost me?

There are initial costs associated with the application for accreditation, and then annual fees are charged and collected by SFPQ based on whether you are a producer, processor, transporter (distributor) or operate under PSA. Call us for the current fee schedule, or check it out online at www.safefood.qld.gov.au

Access to the web?

If you want to go online to get your information about accreditation and the forms you need, visit www.safefood.qld.gov.au

Accreditation and food safety program checklist

Use the quick accreditation and food safety program checklist below to see if you have everything in place for your food safety program — and to become accredited. If you need help with any section of this list, please don't hesitate to contact us. Free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

Who can help me develop my food safety program?

Help is available to develop your food safety program. Contact the Queensland Egg Farmers Association for more information on 07 4696 7645.

Safe Food Production Queensland — accreditation and food safety program checklist (Egg Scheme)

If you are applying for accreditation under the Egg Scheme, use this checklist to make sure you have everything you need before you submit your application. This checklist will also help you identify exactly what you need to include in your food safety program. Need help completing the checklist? Call us free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

1. Complete food safety program (including your proposed unique ID)
2. Complete 'Application for accreditation' form
3. Fee payment.

Note: Without all of the above, your application will not be processed by SFPQ.

- I have completed an 'Application for accreditation' form
- I have completed and attached my food safety program (including my approved unique ID) with my application
- I have submitted an application fee with my application
- My unique identification (ID) has been approved (check with SFPQ for the register of existing IDs)

My food safety program includes:

Type of product

- Free range
- Organic
- Barn laid
- Caged
- Egg products

Location

- Site address

Description of processes

- Bird receipt (including vaccination declaration)
- Bird management (feed, water, litter and disease)
- Egg collection
- Egg storage and transfer to grading
- Egg cleaning (washing/drying/oiling)
- Temperature records
- Packaging (including storage of packaging and labelling)
- Control for non-conforming product
- Identification of pulp for processing
- Distribution/transport (including vehicle registration)

Identification and description of programs

- Cleaning and maintenance of equipment
- Pest control
- Chemical use
- Disease management/waste disposal
- Maintenance
- Water quality
- Waste management
- Product identification and traceability
- Training and education (skills and knowledge)
- Product recall

Records

- Disease status/vaccination and treatment records of flock
- Water supply and inputs records (e.g. birds, feed, packaging)
- Daily production records
- Daily disposal records
- Buying in egg records (if relevant)
- Egg cleaning records
- Packing details
- Distribution records
- List of current suppliers (including PSA)
- Staff training records

Review details

- My food safety program includes details of how and when it will be reviewed

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of requirements under the Egg Scheme and does not replace the legislative requirements of the *Food Production (Safety) Act 2000* or the Egg Scheme. You may wish to include additional records of your business in your food safety program.

food safety guide for queensland's egg suppliers

Industry information and recommendations
Resources and record sheets

I've been accredited — now what?

Once you are accredited you can supply your eggs and/or egg products in Queensland. Congratulations! But what do you need to do *after* you have become accredited?

Maintain your program

Throughout the year, you will have to make sure that your food safety program is adhering to all the things you indicated it would.

Let SFPQ know if you are making changes

Any major changes to your business might require approval from SFPQ, such as:

- change to processes (e.g. undertaking pasteurisation)
- change to your unique product identification
- change to your equipment
- changes to activity (e.g. receiving eggs from another egg producer)
- changes to critical control points (e.g. cleaning process).

Your business will be audited against the activities detailed in your food safety program.

The level of risk in your day-to-day operations, and your category of accreditation, will determine how often you will be audited. Call us if you would like to know more about how often your business is likely to be audited and the costs associated. Free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.



Making major changes to your operations? Give us a call to see if you need to amend your food safety program. Free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

A visit from an SFPQ-approved auditor

As a minimum, you will receive one fee-for-service compliance audit each year. If your business operations are high-risk, this may be more frequent. Compliance audits are charged to you at an hourly rate. It is important that you review your food safety program prior to your compliance audit to ensure it is a true reflection of the daily activities and operations.

As audits are charged at an hourly rate, those businesses that regularly review their operations — and have all their records up-to-date and in order — are rewarded with reduced fees.

Want to check the SFPQ-approved auditor list? Go online at www.safefood.qld.gov.au or call us on free call 1800 300 815 or 07 3253 9800.

Want to know more? Contact us:

Safe Food Production Queensland (SFPQ)

Telephone: 07 3253 9800

Free call: 1800 300 815

info@safefood.qld.gov.au

www.safefood.qld.gov.au

This document has been produced by the Queensland Egg Farmers Association Incorporated (QEFA) to provide a guide for implementation and maintenance of an egg food safety program.

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Disclaimer

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The *Food safety guide for Queensland's egg suppliers* in no way attempts to replace Queensland Government legislation and is not a legally binding document.

contents part two

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23 What are the food safety risks associated with eggs?

23 What are your responsibilities?

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37 Training summary record sheet

38 Current supplier list

39 Customer complaint report

part two: industry information and recommendations

What are the food safety risks associated with eggs?

The food safety hazards for eggs and egg products are biological, chemical and physical.

Because a bird has the same orifice for its intestinal and reproductive passage, it is easy to see how the outside of an egg can become contaminated with micro-organisms. If an egg's shell is cracked — particularly if the membrane inside is broken — bacteria can easily form inside and grow.

Eggs that are not clean present a food safety risk. Dirty eggs are a perfect home for bacteria. Eggshells are porous and, even if the shell is not cracked, bacteria can soak through into the egg itself.

With these issues to consider, if you are involved in producing, processing or transporting eggs it is important to make sure that you have a system in place that reduces the risk of food contamination. The bottom line is: *make sure the food you produce is safe.*

What are your responsibilities?

As a producer of a widely consumed food, you must ensure that the eggs you produce and sell are safe to eat. You must not place consumers at risk of illness, or even death, from a food-borne illness. To reduce this risk, *you must not sell cracked and/or dirty eggs, or unpasteurised egg pulp.*

This section of the *Food safety guide for Queensland's egg suppliers* has been written by people involved in your industry and members of the Egg Food Safety Sub-committee. Whether you are an egg producer, processor, transporter, or operating under a PSA, the aim is to help you decide what precautions are necessary for you to operate your business safely and efficiently.

The information and resources in this section can help you identify food safety risks on your property, or risks associated with the food production activities in which you are involved.

This section also contains a checklist to help you trigger the activities you should carry out in order to minimise food safety risks within your business and to improve your on-farm routine.

It is helpful to know that in Queensland the Egg Scheme is regulated by SFPQ and covers all activities associated with the production of eggs in the State up to the point of retail.

Any activities covered after distribution and retail are regulated by your local government and/or Queensland Health.

As a producer of a widely consumed food, you must ensure that the eggs you produce and sell are safe to eat.

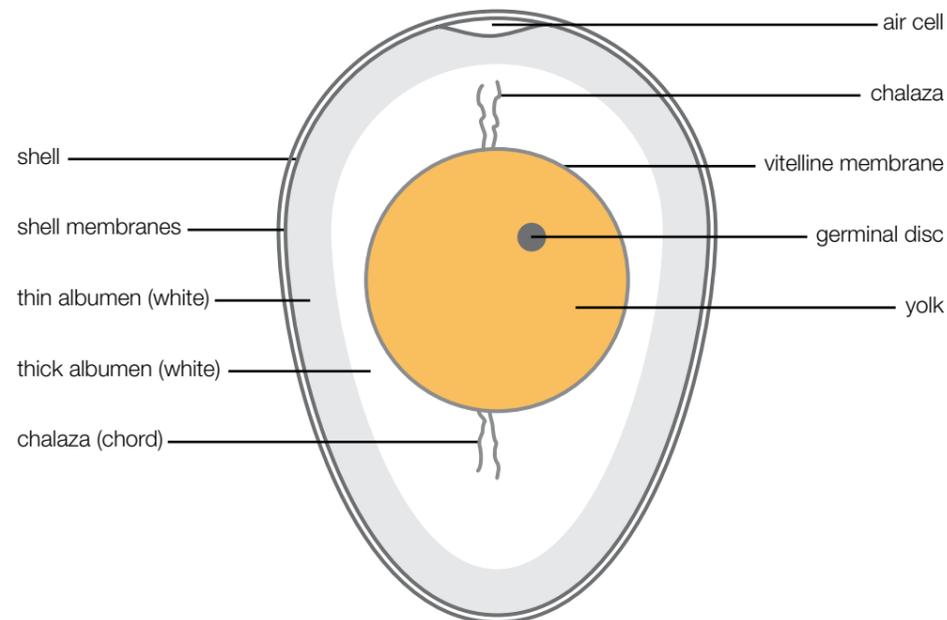
The basics — what is an egg?

As stated in the Egg Scheme, the definition of an egg includes those produced by hens, ducks, quail and emus.

An egg is made up of a:

- yolk
- thick albumen (white)
- thin albumen (white)
- air cell
- vitelline membrane
- germinal disc
- shell membranes
- chalaza (cord)
- shell

The structure of an egg



How can I minimise the risk of food-borne illness from the eggs I produce?

There are a number of things you can do at each step in the production chain to reduce the food safety risks associated with your eggs.

Industry recommends that you:

1. Make sure the birds you purchase are free from disease

When you purchase your birds, you need to ask for documents from your supplier to demonstrate that the birds have a disease-free status. If you breed your own birds, ensure they are disease-free. A biosecurity program will help your business remain disease-free.

2. Collect your eggs daily and keep records

Daily collection and daily record-keeping helps ensure your eggs are fresh and, if a recall is required, assists with tracing your product back to the day it was laid or packed. The date your eggs are laid should be recorded, and/or your estimated best before date. This means that each day's eggs can be identified simply by the date of collection and/or the best before date.

3. Make sure all your eggs are clean

Eggs for sale must not be dirty. You should inspect all eggs to make sure they are clean; if cleaning is needed, industry recommends that one of the following methods be applied:

- Use a special egg washing machine (automatic cleaning).
- Dry clean using a clean cloth to remove any visible dirt and nest matter (manual cleaning).
- Wash in water. Industry recommends that washing water should be at a temperature between 41°C and 44°C.
- Use an industry-recommended egg cleaning solution and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Contact the Queensland Egg Farmers Association Inc. (QEFA) for a list of approved cleaning solutions.

4. Make sure your eggs do not have cracks

Eggs for sale must not have cracks. You should examine all your eggs for cracks before they are packed for sale. Industry recommends candling, which is the examination of the inside of an egg by special light to make sure it is not cracked. This exercise also helps you to check for food quality concerns, such as eggs that have black rot.

The Queensland egg industry recommends that *each and every egg for sale should be candled prior to being packed for sale.*

If you need help to set up candling, members of the egg industry can help you. Call QEFA on 07 4696 7645 for more information.

Use the candling guide on page 29 to see how your eggs should look, and decide what category of quality they fall into.

5. Stamp every egg and every carton (inner and outer)

Each and every egg and carton must be stamped to indicate where they came from – this is your individual, or unique identification (ID).

You can do this with automatic inkjet machines, or with manual finger stamps. The ink stamped directly on your eggs must be of a food-grade quality.

If using trays and/or catering packs, each egg and container must still be stamped.

All individual cartons/packages/catering packs/trays (including 'inners' and 'outers') that contain eggs must be stamped with your unique ID.

If you shrink-wrap trays of your product, you must put a label on the outside of each tray.

Your unique ID helps you achieve full trace back should there ever be a serious problem (e.g. illness or death resulting from consumption of your eggs). This identification is incorporated into your daily egg collection records and your unique ID must be registered with Safe Food Production Queensland.

Some egg producers use the initials of their farm as their unique ID. Others use simple designs.

6. Always use new packaging

Industry supports the use of new packaging each and every time eggs are sold. This eliminates the risk of cross-contamination. The risk of legal issues with labelling and product descriptions is removed if you do not recycle egg cartons. The practice of carton re-use is not accepted within the Queensland egg industry. For legislative requirements for packaging and labeling contact Queensland Health.

7. Store your eggs in a cool room

To maintain freshness and reduce any potential food safety risks it is good practice to put your eggs in cool storage as soon as possible after collection. Industry recommends that cool rooms be kept at temperatures between 12°C and 20°C to maximise egg quality. When transporting your eggs, industry recommends that storage temperatures in vehicles should be between 12°C and 20°C.

8. Keep your equipment clean

Make sure you clean everything each day after use (e.g. grading machine).

Regularly maintain your equipment to ensure that you meet the minimum requirements for food standards and hygiene. This includes all equipment used to wash the eggs, transport the eggs, and candling tools.

9. Keep your equipment calibrated at all times

Ensure all measuring equipment, such as thermometers, grading machines and scales, are regularly calibrated.

Need help to calibrate your equipment?
Contact the QEFA for a copy of their workbook or for advice. Call 07 4696 7645.

10. Keep an up-to-date list of your suppliers

To enable quick and easy contact in an emergency or product recall, you must keep a list of all your suppliers. This can be in the form of a simple list of names and contact details and it must be current. It should contain information on where you obtain feed, and your cleaning equipment, vaccines, egg cartons, etc.

11. Keep eggs separate and keep records if you buy in eggs

If you supplement your production by purchasing another supplier's eggs, these eggs must not be mixed with your own eggs. Keep them separate and identified.

12. Clearly identify eggs for disposal

Keep records of disposal of useless eggs to ensure no contamination of your first quality eggs. Useless eggs are classed as unsaleable eggs that need to be dumped, and include 'leakers' and dirty eggs (or part of a dirty egg).

13. Clearly identify eggs for further processing

Pulp eggs (e.g. cracked, stained or misshapen eggs) to be sent for further processing must be clearly labelled either 'for pasteurisation' or 'for processing'.

Note: If you have any other grade of eggs this needs to be described in your food safety program.

14. Keep training records

Training records must be kept to demonstrate the levels of competency in particular tasks. You must understand the requirements for hygiene under section 3.2.2 of the Food Standards Code.

For a copy of section 3.2.2 of the Food Standards Code, visit www.foodstandards.gov.au

15. Make sure your stock feed and water is free from contamination

You must be able to demonstrate that your feed and water is free from contamination. This includes recording the origin of the feed ingredients, pest control in feed storage areas, and ensuring that fresh feed and water is available at all times.

Refer to the *Egg safety and quality checklist for egg producers* (developed by QEFA) on page 30. It will help you make a quick check of the extent to which your business meets the above recommendations.

What records should I keep?

Below is a basic list of records industry suggests you should have for your business.

We've created templates that you can use on-farm for each of these activities. You can find them on pages 29-39 at the back of this guide. Please photocopy them for your use, or adapt them to suit your business. You can also download the forms from www.safefood.qld.gov.au.

- 1. Daily collection records** — date, total number of eggs collected, the shed they came from, the number of cracks/pulp and amount of useless eggs for disposal. The collection records can also include mortalities.
- 2. Daily disposal records** — record how many eggs were second quality for further processing and where they were sent.
- 3. Cleaning records** — sanitation schedules and checklist.
- 4. Buying in eggs (if relevant)** — the amount of eggs received, their place of origin, best before date/production date, type and brand names.

5. **Packing details** — the number of eggs packed, best before date and/or production date allocated.
6. **Distribution details** — the name of the person or business you sold to, what you sold (best before date/production date, number, type, brand name) and who transported the product.
7. **Cool room temperature records** — after packing, cool room temperatures should be recorded.
8. **Delivery vehicle temperature records (if transporting)** — transport temperatures should be recorded to point of delivery.
9. **List of current suppliers**
10. **Staff training records**
11. **Vaccination and treatment records** — ensure all treatments given to birds are recorded.
12. **Customer complaints** — record all customer complaints received, and any corrective actions taken.

What do I need to have in place for a product recall?

If a product needs to be recalled, you need to know what steps to follow. You can contact QEFA to obtain more information or a detailed list of the requirements of your recall plan. Call 07 4696 9745.

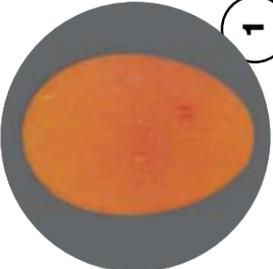
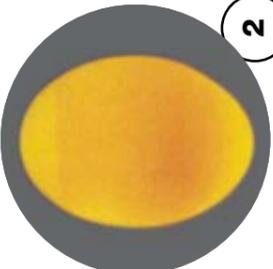
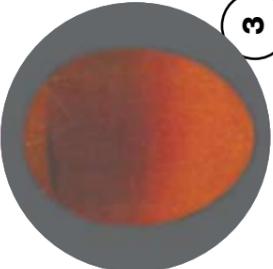
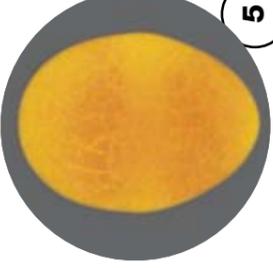
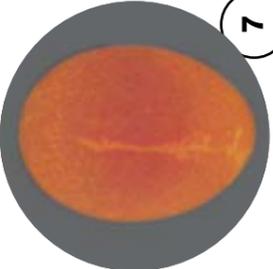
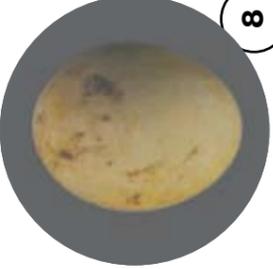
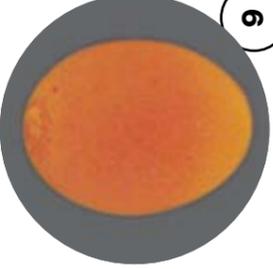
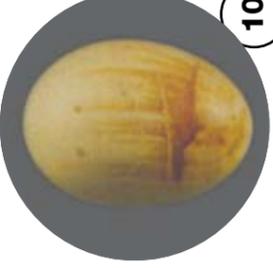
A recall plan could include the following steps:

1. Complaint is received from customer or a problem is noticed in production
2. Investigate complaint or problem
3. Decide to recall all suspect eggs or take no action
4. Notify Safe Food Production Queensland or other relevant authorities
5. Obtain information about quantities and distribution
6. Notify wholesaler/marketer and/or other customers of recall
7. Initiate return of product
8. Isolate and hold all suspect product
9. Reconcile quantity of eggs produced with quantity returned
10. Label with reject notice
11. Determine appropriate action and, if necessary, method of disposal.

Want to speak to your industry?

For more industry information contact QEFA on 07 4696 9745.

This guide can help you check what your eggs should look like and the grade they should achieve.

	1. Blood spot (poor quality)		2. Air cells (poor quality)		3. Black rot (poor quality)		4. Dirty (must be cleaned before sale, sent for further processing or disposed of)		5. Misshapen (poor quality)
	6. First quality		7. Cracked (must be sent for further processing or disposed of)		8. Dirty (must be cleaned prior to sale)		9. Soft shell (poor quality)		10. Dirty (must be cleaned prior to sale)



Want to know more? Contact:

Safe Food Production Queensland (SFPQ)

PO Box 440 Spring Hill Queensland 4004

Telephone: 07 3253 9800

Free call: 1800 300 815

info@safefood.qld.gov.au

www.safefood.qld.gov.au

Queensland Egg Farmers Association Incorporated

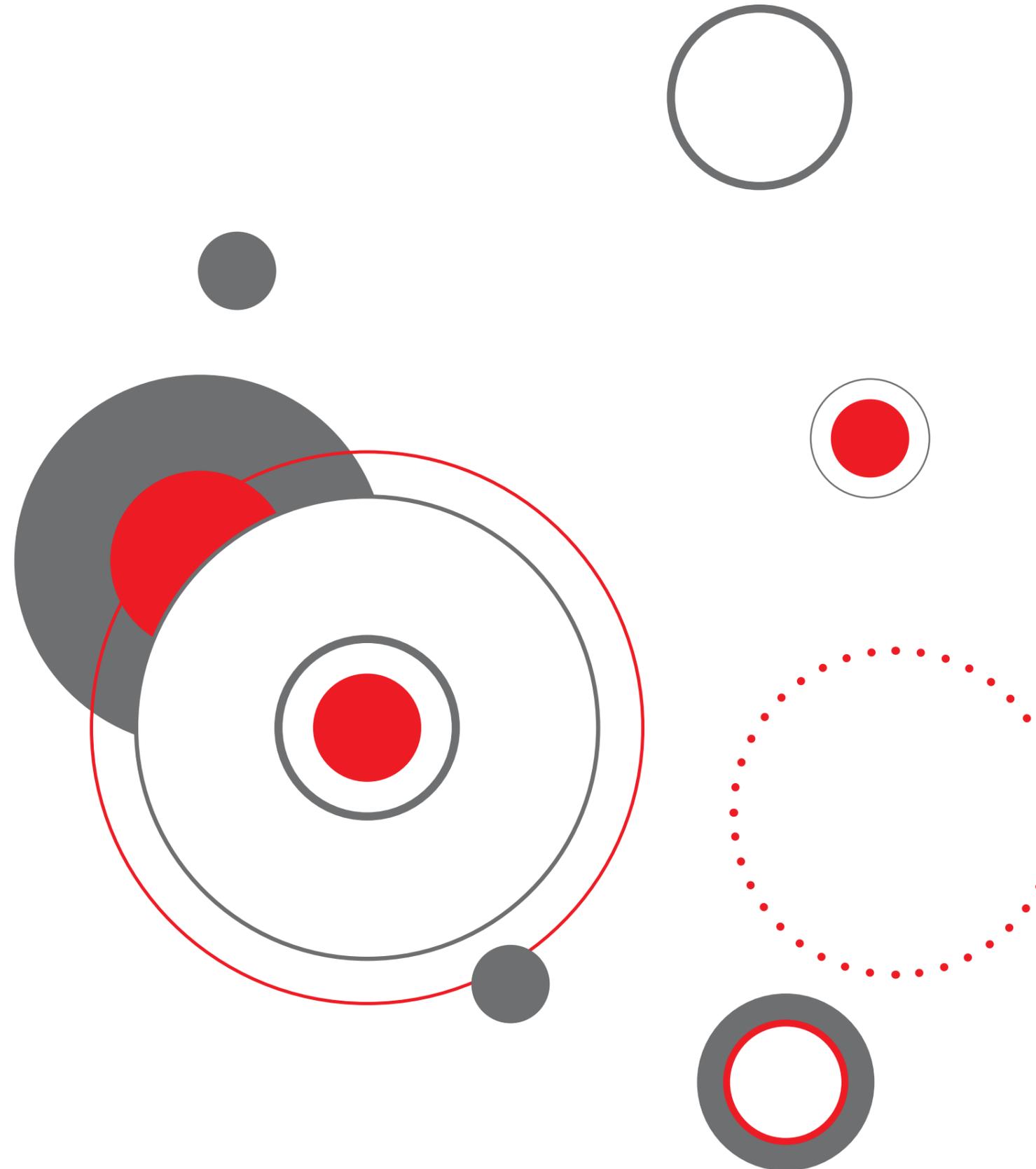
PO Box 2390 Toowoomba Queensland 4350

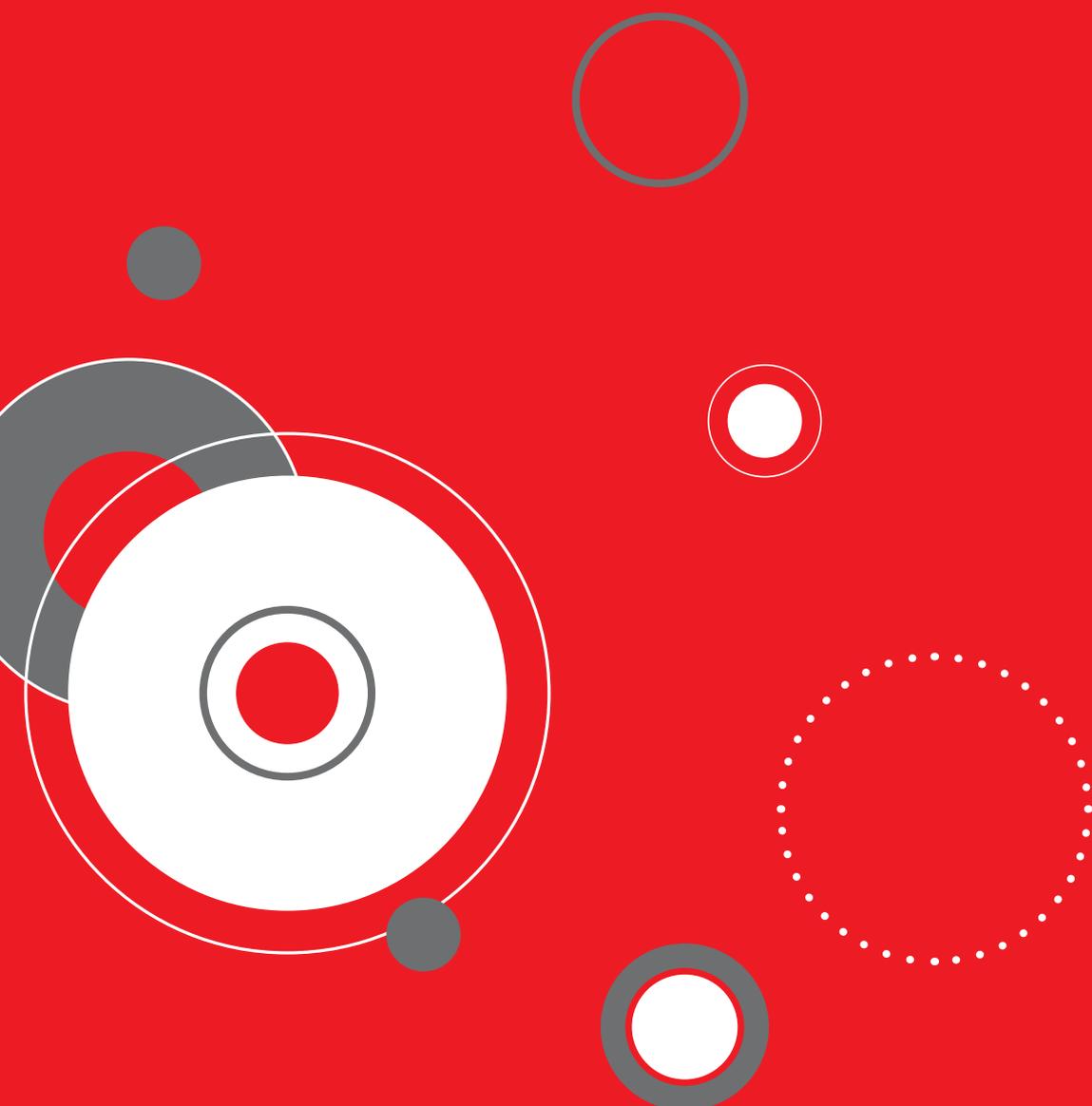
Telephone: 07 4696 7645

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