



New national Food Safety Standards for the primary production and processing of leafy vegetables, melons, and berries

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) has developed new national standards for the primary production and processing of [leafy vegetables](#), [melons](#), and [berries](#) which will come into effect across Australia in 12 February 2025.

These new standards are automatically adopted by Western Australia's (WA) *Food Act 2008*. The Department of Health WA (WA Health) is currently coordinating the implementation of the new standards, and communications to industry and local government.

This factsheet provides you information on frequently asked questions on the new standards.

Why were the standards introduced?

The most effective stage to manage food safety to prevent food poisoning is at the primary production and processing stage. For this reason, food safety standards are already in force for the primary production and processing of poultry meat, seafood, meat, dairy products, eggs and seed sprouts.

However, foodborne illness, deaths and product recalls continue to be linked to fresh berries, leafy vegetables, and melons, costing the Australian economy approximately \$20 million each year.

What crops are captured by the new standards?



Leafy Vegetables*

All lettuces, kale, chicory, watercress, swiss chard, Asian leafy greens, all leafy herbs consumed raw, spring onions, microgreens, all spinach leaves, silverbeet, and cabbage.



Fresh melons*

Watermelon, rockmelon, honeydew melon, piel de sapo, galia melon, charentais melon, Korean melon, hami melon.



Fresh berries*

Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, boysenberry, loganberry, silvanberry and youngberry.

*including, but not limited to

What activities of my business will be captured by the new standards?



Primary Production

Growing and harvesting, including inputs (eg. soil, fertiliser, water, seeds, seedlings, soil amendments), management of weather events.



Primary Processing

Washing, trimming, sorting, sanitising, storing, combining, packing, transport between processing facilities



Other requirements

Traceability, premises and equipment, animals and pests, skills and knowledge, health and hygiene.

What do I need to do?

Similar to other primary producers and processors captured by a food standards code, you will be required to notify/register with your local government (LG).

Why do I need to notify/register with the local government?

As the primary production standards are adopted by the WA *Food Act 2008*, primary producers and processors of leafy vegetables and melons will be legally required to register with LG as a “food business” to continue selling their produce from February 2025 onwards. Berry primary producers and processors will only need to notify their LG of their operations.

Growers and processors will need to notify or be registered with their local government by 12 February 2025 when the standards come into effect.

What if I do not sell directly to the public?

The requirements of the standards and the *Food Act 2008* will still apply to you even if you do not sell directly to the public. As you are handling food intended for sale and/or selling food you will be considered a “food business” and be required to notify/register with your LG.

Do I still need to notify/register with the local government if I am on Freshcare or a food safety scheme?

Yes, all applicable growers and processors will need to notify/register. As Freshcare, SQF and Global GAP are recognised in WA, the registration process for growers and processors on these schemes will be simplified. You will only be required to provide general business contact details and copies of a few forms that you already have completed as part of your certification. Since you are already audited by a certified independent third-party auditor, you will **not** be subjected to additional routine inspections. Your scheme owner will also be in touch with you to provide you further information.

What do the new standards require?

Leafy vegetable and melon growers or processors who are **not** on a food safety scheme will need to set up a system to manage food safety and formally document how risks will be managed. Your LG will conduct routine inspections to check that you are compliant with the standards.

Berry growers and processors will not be required to formally document how their food safety risks will be managed but must have the required infrastructure and processes in place to meet the new standards. The LG may still conduct random inspections to check that compliance with the standards is met.

Your LG will provide you the tools and resources to help you set up your system to manage food safety in your production and processes.

When and how do I get registered?

WA Health is currently working with industry to distribute information on the incoming standards and to request WA growers and processors contact WA Health to assist with implementation.

WA Health request that you complete the following survey in order to be connected with your relevant LG. Your LG will be in touch with you to provide the relevant registration/notification forms. **Please complete the survey by 31 March 2024.**



Scan QR code for survey or visit:

<https://datalibrary-rc.health.wa.gov.au/surveys/?s=EMFW8RCAY8P9HW9J>

Where can I get more information on the standards?

More information is available on the WA Health website on the new standards on the link below or scan the QR code:

https://www.health.wa.gov.au/articles/n_r/primary-production-and-processing-standards-for-leafy-vegetables-melons-and-berries



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.