

## Seamons, Colleen

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**From:** Elise Magrath [tiggersfield@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 3 March 2010 2:37 PM  
**To:** submissions  
**Subject:** Submission regarding Proposal P1007 - Primary Production & Processing Requirements For Raw Milk Products

**Categories:** Blue Category

Submission regarding Proposal P1007 - Primary Production & Processing Requirements For Raw Milk Products

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Overarching questions:

- 1) The overarching scope of the Proposal is assessing the safety of raw milk products using the Category Framework. FSANZ has undertaken a Technical Assessment based on three Risk Assessments (Raw Cow Milk, Raw Goat Milk and Raw Milk Cheese), a Consumer Study and Nutrition Assessment – Can you identify any aspects we have not covered at this point?

The Proposals exaggerate the risks of raw milk products.

They state that “Because of the potential for raw milk to be contaminated with pathogens, raw milk and products made from raw milk present a high level of risk to public health and safety if there are no control measures to manage the microbiological hazards that may be present.”

It is a false assumption that the risks are “high level” for raw milk products. A more realistic description for raw milk products is “they present an additional risk to public health and safety compared with products made from correctly pasteurised milk”.

- 2) We have summarised the impacts by option in Table 1 in the Report. Do you have any comments on the overall assessment? Can you identify other benefits and costs to the affected parties?

For raw milk cheese, the overall assessment seems to be far more alarmist than the technical assessment suggests. I consider that the technical assessment indicates that all soft cheese should be placed in Category 2, reserving Category 3 for raw drinking milk alone.

Consumers:

- 3) Would Australian consumers benefit from a greater range of cheeses and dairy products? Please provide details.

There is a growing desire amongst Australian consumers to know more about where their food comes from and who makes it. The growth of Farmers’ Markets are indicative of consumers wanting to develop personal relationships with the producers of what they eat. Access to Artisan cheeses is what consumers want, especially those produced in their own regional area. Cheese makers are currently hamstrung by the current legislation and if the law is changed to allow them to produce raw milk cheese a whole new range of products will be able to be made. Consumers will benefit greatly from these new choices. Products which are currently off limits will be able to be tasted and selected by consumers. We deserve the right to have access to these raw milk cheese styles.

- 4) FSANZ has received comments that raw milk cheeses are likely to be gourmet, high-end market products. Costs associated with ensuring the safety of products may also be passed on to the customer - if raw milk cheeses were permitted:

- a. How much would you be willing to pay for such cheeses?  
As much as befits a quality product. Consumers would decide based on the reputation of the cheesemaker as well as sampling the product (which we currently don't have the right to do)
- b. Are you willing to pay more than the cost of current gourmet cheeses?  
Yes
- c. Are you prepared to pay more if there are added costs in ensuring the safety of raw milk products?  
Yes. I think educated consumers understand there are production costs involved in bringing a quality and safe product to market. Consumers can then weigh up their options and choose accordingly.
- d. Would you choose to purchase an Australian raw milk cheese over an imported equivalent?

Yes. I would like the right to buy and taste both local and imported raw milk cheeses and enjoy the opportunity to compare them. If I found a quality Australian raw milk cheese from a reputable cheese maker, I would be happy to support a local product over an imported one.