



Meat Standards Australia  
*beef*



*Australian MSA beef  
comes from the world's  
leading eating quality  
grading system.*





**This is your symbol for tender, juicy and flavoursome beef, every single time.**

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The MSA symbol, established in Australia, is now used globally. MSA graded beef has met strict criteria developed using eating quality science supported by consumer taste panels.

**How is the eating quality determined?**

It is underpinned by Meat Standards Australia (MSA) – a beef eating quality grading system developed by long term research and supported by extensive consumer testing. It is voluntary and only licensed processors can apply the MSA grading system. MSA calculates and differentiates on three levels of eating quality for each cut – MSA three star (MSA graded), four star (premium quality) and five star (supreme quality) in conjunction with recommended cooking techniques.

MSA accredited graders, employed by the processors, collate information provided by producers, supervise the processing and assess each carcase to determine the MSA grade of the individual cuts.

Australian beef brands can choose to underpin the eating quality of their products by using MSA standards and grading specifications. These brands may also have additional specifications, which can be applied at grading.

- > *Consumer taste panels held in 8 countries*
- > *More than 86,000 diners*
- > *Over 600,000 serves of beef*
- > *Wide range of production and processing systems tested*



## Meet the experts

*Cattle producer*

*“Seeing the MSA symbol will give you the confidence that you’re buying consistent quality beef every time. The MSA grading system takes into account all aspects that affect eating quality along the supply chain. It is widely recognised as the world’s leading eating quality program for beef.”*

*Sam Gunn, Condobolin, NSW, Australia*



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## The science behind MSA



Research into beef eating qualities matched with taste test results determined the factors which impact on the eating experience.

*This found the maturity of the animal – known as ossification, breed content, the colour of the meat, and the pH and acidity levels all play a part. Marbling and the distribution of fat on the animal are also traits that can affect eating quality.*

The MSA graders use tools to measure these qualities during processing and combine this information with that provided by the MSA registered producer to assess the MSA grade of the cuts within the carcass.

Cattle must be raised with good nutrition, a minimum of stress and be well managed during mustering and transportation to ensure they arrive for processing in top condition.

The MSA model is able to predict the improvement in eating quality of cuts with extended ageing periods. All MSA beef requires a minimum ageing period of five days, with eating quality also calculated for up to 35 days of ageing.



*Marbling is assessed at the eye muscle at the ribbing site of the carcass. It is calculated by evaluating the amount and distribution of marbling in comparison to the MSA standards. Scores range from 100 to 1190.*

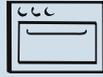
## Cooking methods

All cuts receive at least one recommended cooking method as cooking is a key factor in ensuring consumer acceptability.



### Grill (GRL)

Steaks should be cut at a minimum thickness of 21mm and are suitable for cooking in a pan, grill or BBQ.



### Roast (RST)

Preheat oven to recommended temperature and roast according to table.



### Casserole (CAS)

The product is prepared in 20mm cubes. Cover in liquid and simmer on a low heat (160°C) for approximately 2 hours.



### Stir fry (SFR)

Product is prepared into strips approximately 10mm in width and depth and 75mm in length. Beef strips are cooked quickly on a hot surface in small batches.



### Shabu shabu (SHB)

Product is prepared by cutting to 2mm thickness. A hot-pot cooking method, shabu shabu is prepared by submerging meat or vegetables in a pot of boiling water or broth.



### Thin slice (TSL)

Product is prepared to 2mm thickness and suitable for dry cooking methods.



### Yakiniku (YAK)

Product is prepared by cutting to 4mm thickness. A style of cooking small thinly sliced meat pieces and vegetables over a charcoal or gas burner.



### Corn (CRN)

Product is cured and prepared by a slow wet cook.



*Chef*

*“Using MSA beef has allowed me to achieve customer satisfaction and I know that everyone in my restaurant will have a pleasurable eating experience. MSA gives me confidence in ordering beef and knowing what I will be receiving – it’s insurance for my business.”*

*Shane Keighley, Executive Chef, and Captain of the Australian Culinary Olympic Team*



A man wearing a light-colored cowboy hat and a blue button-down shirt is leaning on a wooden fence. He is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background is a blurred outdoor setting, likely a farm or ranch.

## Meet the experts

*Cattle producer*

*“Our property is MSA accredited, ensuring that it is managed sustainably and humanely with a direct result on eating quality. How we treat our animals is super important and ensuring happy and stress free cattle is critical to achieving MSA quality meat.”*

*Lachlan Graham, Argyle Prestige Meats,  
Harden, NSW, Australia*

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## Integrity

All participants in MSA are licensed to use the MSA trademark and certify products via an approved Quality Management System in accordance with the MSA Standards Manual. Licensees are subject to independent random audits for compliance to the Standards. MSA Standards are backed by independent audit to the AS/NZS ISO 9001/2008 Standard. MSA certified producers complete a Livestock Production Assurance National Vendor Declaration and an MSA vendor declaration prior to delivering cattle to processing.



## How to identify MSA product

MSA certified beef is identified on the primal packaging, or via a food grade insert inside the packaging. It is also identified on the carton label.

The carton label will display the eating quality grades, recommended cooking methods and ageing requirements.

MSA calculates and differentiates three levels of eating quality, MSA three (MSA Graded), four (Premium quality) and five star (Supreme quality).

The MSA model is able to predict the improvement in eating quality of cuts with extended ageing periods. All MSA product requires a minimum ageing period of five days, with eating quality up to 35 days ageing also calculated.



**BONELESS BEEF** ANY MEAT WORKS Co **32301**  
**PRODUCT OF AUSTRALIA** Batch: 4487 **4 PC**  
**\*YG\* STRIPLOIN MSA**  
**OVER 6.0 kg**  
IW/VAC



(01)99327(11)031762(31)01)000262(13)020417(21)41457354

MSA 3 Roast @ 5 days, 4 @ 28 days  
MSA 3 Grill @ 5 days, 4 @ 28 days

PKD ON 17-APR-2012 17:26  
BEST BEFORE 02-JULY-2012

080702 0°C

**26.2kg** **57.8lb**  
NET WEIGHT

KEEP REFRIGERATED



EST. NO.9999

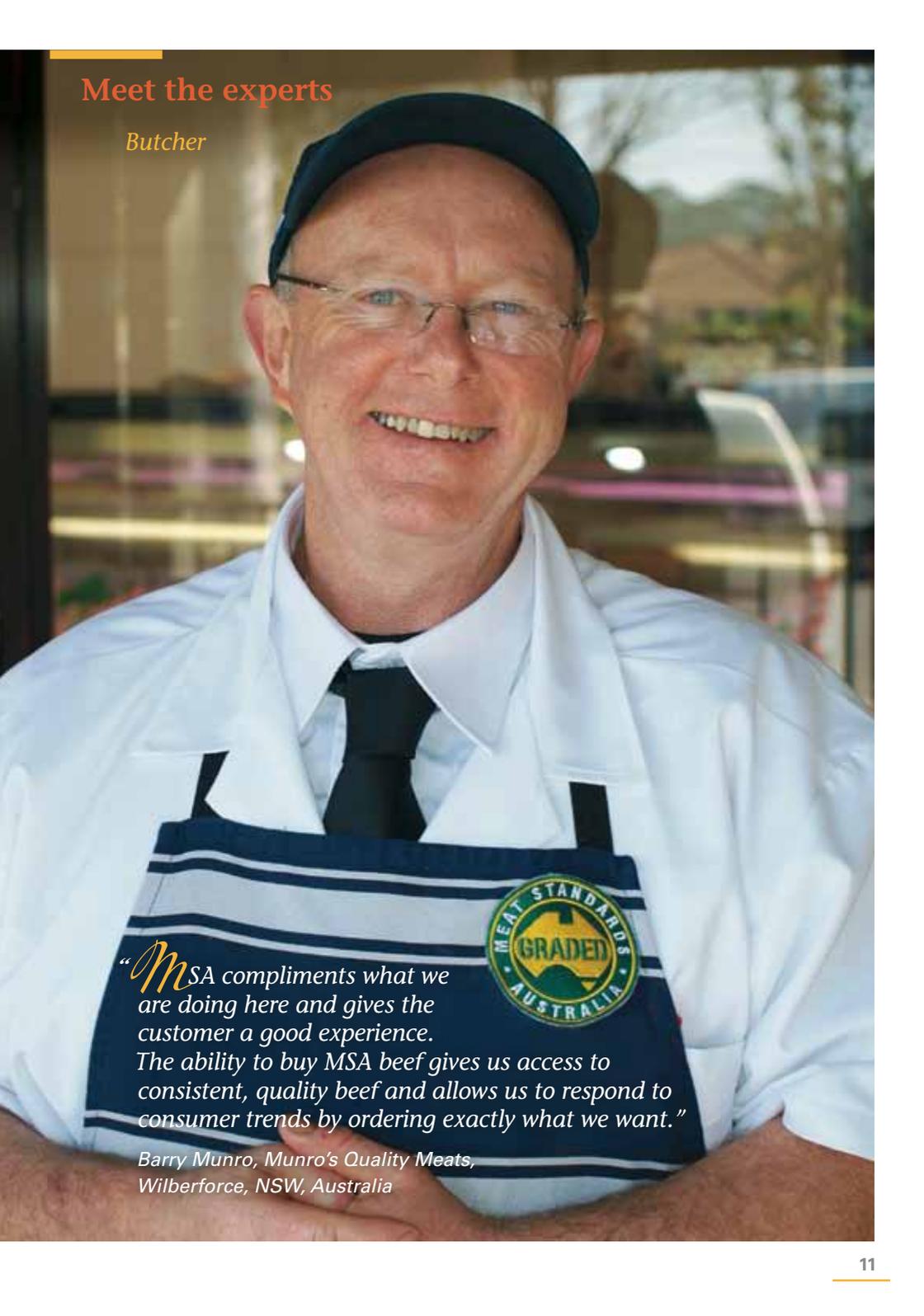
This information tells the buyer that the product can be sold as MSA 3 star, or MSA Graded for roast and grill cook methods after 5 days ageing calculated from the packing date. With 28 days ageing, the product will increase in eating quality and can be sold as MSA 4 star for roast and grill cook methods.

# Comparison of international beef grading systems

Grading inputs	MSA Meat Standards Australia	USDA United States Department of Agriculture	EUROP European Beef Grading System	JMGA Japan Meat Grading Association
Tropical breed content	✓			
Hormonal growth promotants	✓			
Sex	✓			
Carcase weight	✓	✓	✓	✓
Carcase conformation		✓	✓	
Ossification (maturity)	✓	✓		
Meat texture		✓		✓
Meat firmness		✓		✓
Milk-fed veal	✓			
Hanging method	✓			
Marbling	✓	✓		✓
Meat colour	✓	✓		✓
pH	✓			
Rib fat measurement	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ribeye area		✓		✓
Fat colour	✓			✓
Via saleyard	✓			
Cut ageing	✓			
Cooking method	✓			
Individual cut	✓			

## Meet the experts

Butcher



*“MSA compliments what we are doing here and gives the customer a good experience. The ability to buy MSA beef gives us access to consistent, quality beef and allows us to respond to consumer trends by ordering exactly what we want.”*

*Barry Munro, Munro's Quality Meats,  
Wilberforce, NSW, Australia*

*Want to know more? Go to*  
**www.mla.com.au/msa**



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