

3262 Principles of curing meat		
SQA Unit Code		H3JC 04
Level 3	SCQF Level 6	SCQF Credit value 6

Unit Summary

This unit is about the principles of curing meat and poultry in food and drink manufacture and/or supply operations. The curing of meat or poultry is important to the production of added value products and extending the shelf life of meat.

You will need to know and understand the principles underpinning the curing of meat or poultry including regulatory requirements, the major systems typically used to cure meat or poultry and the factors affecting the final product flavour and quality and shelf life.

This unit is for you if you work in food and drink manufacture and/or supply operations and need a broad understanding of the principles of meat curing to support your role.

In order to be assessed as competent you must demonstrate to your assessor that you can consistently perform to the requirements set out below. Your performance evidence must include at least one observation by your assessor.

Evidence of knowledge and understanding should be collected during observation of performance in the workplace. Where it cannot be collected by observing performance, other assessment methods should be used.

You need to know and understand:

1. why meat products are cured
2. the common types and cuts of meat commonly cured
3. the different production processes available to cure meat or poultry
4. the effect of curing on final product shelf life
5. the key differences between dry and wet curing including the advantages and disadvantages of each process
6. why it is important to apply dry cures mainly to the muscle area of the meat product
7. how to measure brine strength and temperature using a variety of different methods
8. the major features of large scale curing equipment including the use of massaging and tumbling systems
9. the key features of smoking as a curing process
10. why different time/temperature combinations are used in the smoking process
11. how meat can be air dried to produce a cured product
12. the cuts of meat most suitable for wet curing, dry curing, smoking, air drying, tumbling and massaging
13. regional and national differences in production of cured meat products including

- examples of typical products
14. how raw material quality and temperature can impact on the curing process and how this may be monitored
 15. how the thickness/size of the meat joint impacts on curing times
 16. how to establish what are appropriate curing times
 17. how to assess the suitability of curing ingredients for use in curing
 18. common product quality problems associated with each of the curing processes
 19. how the different curing processes affect the flavour of the meat product
 20. why it is important to store cured meat separately from other meat including during the curing process
 21. how the curing processes affect yield and economic value of the meat product
 22. the process of osmosis and its impact on flesh during the curing process.

Evidence of performance may employ examples of the following assessment:

- observation
- written and oral questioning;
- evidence from company systems (e.g. Food Safety Management System)
- reviewing the outcomes of work
- checking any records of documents completed
- checking accounts of work that the candidate or others have written