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## **MSM Mechanically Separated "Meat"**

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According to present legislation any "meat" obtained by mechanically removal of residual meat from carcasses or bones, after the primal cuts have been removed, should if used for human consumption, be included in the list of ingredients. Technical developments within the industry now allows for production of MSM, which in terms of quality, hardly, if at all, can be distinguished from regular minced meat. Consequently there are no objective reasons for maintaining the ban or downgrading of higher qualities of MSM. The legal text states, that the level of degradation of muscle tissue is the key factor for quality, although this rarely, if ever, is considered in standard quality assessments. Audit reports from EU countries on the interpretation and implementation of the regulation showed, that individual countries and even regions had developed different ways of interpreting and implementing the regulations and a scientific opinion from EFSA on the topic concluded, that microscopic examination of tissue structure was one of the most promising methods for characterizing levels of degradation and would be the best prerequisite for setting threshold values for different classes of MSM. This is the scope of the MACSYS project which is a project funded by the European Union's Seventh Framework Program ([www.macsysproject.eu](http://www.macsysproject.eu)) for further information). The presentation will include a comparison of the 3 currently available histochemical methods (a German, English and a Danish method) on reference material as well as standard material from factory production lines. We will attempt to validate these methods with the limitation of the size of the project, suggestions will be made to threshold values, by which MSM can be graded and finally we open up for a discussion on alternative quality traits that could be included in an overall assessment of quality of MSM.

**Keywords:** MSM, quality, grading, methods