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## EXOTIC GAME MEAT, NATURAL FUTURE

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### Kangaroo » Origin



Kangaroo harvests are carried out by licensed shooters, who are issued with permits by state and territory wildlife authorities. With the landholder's consent, the shooters work on those properties where authorities consider kangaroos are causing damage.

Game meats are amongst the safest and most nutritionally sound meats available to domestic and commercial consumers. The highest and most exacting quality control and hygiene standards are applied to the processing of Game meat. Every carcass is inspected by qualified veterinarians before it can be sold for human consumption.

All kangaroo harvesters must be licensed by the Government and pass a Government approved course which instructs them in aspects such as the laws controlling kangaroo harvesting, meat hygiene and animal welfare. In addition their harvest equipment must be approved by a Government inspector to ensure it is of the right standards. The RSPCA has described Kangaroo harvesting as "one of the most humane methods of animal slaughter possible".

There is only a small number of licensed shooters and processors. It is therefore in their best interests to work within the regulations. This pressure to comply is one of the controlling factors in the industry.

Commercial harvesting of kangaroos is restricted to leasehold and freehold land which is being used for primary production. Such harvesting takes place in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia. It does not occur in national parks, state forests or conservation reserves, which currently constitute over 68 million hectares or 8.9 per cent of Australia.

At present, the five most common species are harvested on a commercial basis. These are:

- the Eastern Grey Kangaroo
- the Western Grey Kangaroo
- the Red Kangaroo
- the Wallaroo and
- the Whiptail Wallaby

The first three species make up over 95 per cent of the harvest. Early each morning the hunters bring the night's harvest into small

outback towns in Queensland and NSW. In each town Aussie Game Meats has a local representative who buys only those beasts that have been killed humanely. Any kangaroo, wild boar or goat that has not been head shot is rejected. The carcasses are stored in large portable cool rooms and transported immediately to Aussie Game Meats processing plant in Roma, Queensland. Carcasses are inspected by state and territory wildlife authorities to check that only those taken legally are sold (identifying plastic tags must be attached to every animal shot).

Kangaroo are a remarkably healthy animals, they carry very few of the diseases commonly carried by domestic animals. This makes sense since if a wild animal gets sick it will generally die, if a domestic animal gets sick we treat it thereby maintaining the disease in the population. For example rejection rates for disease conditions identified by inspectors when animals are processed are only 0.7%, this is about half to one-third of what is usually rejected for cattle and sheep.