



Slaughter of Livestock and Poultry for Food

Indiana State Board of Animal Health • Technical Bulletin

The general rule in Indiana is: **All** meat from livestock and poultry intended for human food must be slaughtered and processed in an establishment inspected by the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) or the United States Department of Agriculture-Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS). *IC 15-17-5-6, IC 15-17-5-9.*

Inspected facilities, called “official establishments,” must meet minimum standards for facility construction, sanitary operation, H.A.C.C.P. systems, and labeling of products. Each animal slaughtered at an official establishment undergoes an antemortem and postmortem inspection by a government inspector. The inspector will not allow diseased animals and animals unfit for human consumption to be slaughtered and processed for human food. Inspected meat products will bear a state or federal mark of inspection on the meat product or its packaging.

To transfer the meat to another person, livestock or poultry must be slaughtered and processed at an official establishment. This includes meat sold directly by the livestock producer, sometimes called freezer beef or pork.

Livestock and poultry sold or donated to schools, churches, charities, or other organizations for

raffles, meals, or other gatherings and fund-raising events must be slaughtered at an official establishment to be raffled or served.

Some limited exceptions to general inspection requirements exist including:

Custom Exempt Exception

An individual who raises livestock or poultry may have his/her animals slaughtered and processed at a custom exempt establishment. The use of custom exempt meat products is limited by state and federal law.

In limited cases, livestock or poultry may be slaughtered and processed at an establishment operating as a custom slaughterer. *IC 15-17-5-11, 345 IAC 9-2.1-1, 9 CFR 303.1(a)(2).*

Custom exempt establishments are not subject to daily inspection of slaughter and processing activities. They must meet minimum state facility and sanitation requirements. Animals slaughtered at a custom exempt facility will **not** undergo an antemortem and postmortem inspection. Therefore, these meat products will not bear a state or federal mark of inspection.

Products must be marked “Not for Sale”. Products produced at a custom exempt facility must go back to the animal owner for use **exclusively** in his/her household.

The owner may personally use the products and may use them for his or her nonpaying guests and employees, but may not transfer any custom exempt product to another person. *IC 15-17-5-11, 345 IAC 9-2.1-1, 9 CFR 303.1(a)(2).*

Home Raised Exception

A person may slaughter and process his/her own livestock or poultry that he/she has raised. The owner of the animal must use the meat products exclusively in his/her household. The owner may use them for his/her nonpaying guests and employees, but may not transfer (i.e., sell, donate, give) any product to another person. *IC 15-17-5-11, 345 IAC 9-2.1-1, 9 CFR 303.1(a)(1).*

Other Exceptions

Animals not defined as livestock or poultry under state or federal law may be subject to inspection under the Indiana Retail Food Code. *410 IAC 7-24.* Examples include farm-raised rabbits, quail, pheasants or llamas.

Limited sales of poultry and rabbit products slaughtered and processed on a farm are allowed from the farm, at farmers' markets and roadside stands. *IC 16-42-5-29; IC 15-17-5-11*

Wild game is not subject to inspection requirements. Examples include wild deer and game birds taken during hunting seasons.

Definitions

Livestock, for the purposes of the Indiana meat inspection laws, includes cattle, sheep, swine, goats, bison, farm-raised cervidae (deer, elk, reindeer), horses, mules, and other equine. Poultry inspection rules apply to chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese and ratites (emu, ostrich). *IC 15-17-2-47.*

Offal

Any part of livestock or poultry that is not fit for human food, not including hides, horns or other parts that have non-food uses, must be disposed of in accord with state dead animal disposal laws.

State law specifies all offal be buried, rendered, composted or incinerated. *IC 15-17-11-20.* Official plants and custom-exempt plants must follow additional requirements for handling inedible products. Under Indiana law, anyone selling inedible meat must first obtain a permit from the State Veterinarian. *IC 15-17-11-25 .*

For More Information

The information in this bulletin is general in nature, and not intended to convey all of the legal requirements for the slaughter and processing of meat products.

For more specific information, contact the Indiana State Board of Animal Health; Meat and Poultry Division at 1202 E. 38th Street; Discovery Hall, Suite 100; Indianapolis IN 46205; or call 877-747-3038

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