

9.0 ON-FARM SLAUGHTERHOUSES AND MEAT INSPECTION

Slaughter Facilities for Own Use

A number of livestock operations have their own slaughter facilities. Under the Meat Inspection Act (Newfoundland), those who slaughter their own animals on their property for their own use do not need a facility license or to have individual animals inspected. You can, however, minimize environmental and food standard problems in your facility by following guidelines for inspected facilities.

Commercial Slaughter Facilities

Under the Meat Inspection Act (Newfoundland), the slaughter of all livestock must be done in a licensed slaughterhouse. There is no exception for custom kill. The only exemptions are as indicated above (personal use) or for slaughterhouses registered under the Meat Inspection Act (Canada).

In addition to mandatory licensing, the Meat Inspection Act (Newfoundland) provides for voluntary inspection of animals before and during the slaughter process. This results in the stamping of finished product allowing easier access to retail markets.

Construction and Design

A slaughter facility must be located at a site which is free from conditions that interfere with its sanitary operation. These include but are not limited to:

- ! a reasonable offset from barnyards, stables, dead meat (rendering) operations, waste disposal facilities or other offensive facilities;
- ! a reasonable offset from any source of pollution or any place that harbours insects, rodents or other vermin likely to cause meat or meat products to become contaminated;
- ! a reasonable offset from residential property; and
- ! specific regulations imposed by the Department of Environment (currently being updated).

A reasonable offset is the equivalent of 100 metres (330 ft) unless otherwise determined by the inspector for abattoirs.

In addition to proper construction, it is important that slaughterhouse facilities and equipment are operated in a manner that minimizes the chances of contamination and thereby the risks of food-borne diseases. This includes regular cleaning during and after each day's slaughter and the proper separation and disposal of condemned products.

For more information on the Meat Inspection Program and construction and operational guidelines, please contact the Animal Health Division, Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods or the

Special Requirement for Poultry Processing

Inspected poultry slaughter and processing facilities must follow additional regulations which are listed below.

- (1) *Poultry Receiving and Holding Rooms.* Poultry receiving and holding rooms must be designed to accommodate the unloading of poultry and storage of crates under cover. Dead birds on arrival and those condemned after inspection must be stored in acceptable containers. Bleeding time shall not be less than ninety seconds, and blood must be restricted to the poultry receiving and holding rooms, but separate from holding area and the scalding tank.
- (2) *Scalding and Defeathering Rooms.* Scalding and defeathering processes must be conducted in a separate room such that dressing processes are not contaminated by feathers or steam and condensation from the scalding tank. The scalding tank must be adequately vented, temperature monitored and provided with a drain for overflow. Scalding temperatures must remain at approximately 60.5°C (140.9°F). All water used in the process of scalding must be from a potable (drinkable) source.
- (3) *Transfer Facilities.* If poultry are transferred by a non-mechanized system (eg. along a stainless steel table), this shall be done in a manner such that no carcasses touch the same surface before the surface is sanitized. Operators should consider having a suspension system for ease of evisceration and inspection.
- (4) *Washing and Singeing.* Sprays at all washing stations shall be directed to wash the hock surface and the carcass below the hock. Water used for washing birds must be from a potable source. Singeing or finishing facilities must be provided to remove any remaining feathers from poultry carcasses.
- (5) *Evisceration and Inspection.* There must be adequate facilities to remove the inedible portions of the bird and the transfer of these inedible portions must be in a direction opposite to the evisceration sequence. Potable water is required for washing both the inside and outside of carcasses. Harvesting and preparation of giblets must be carried out without delay. The working space at each inspection station must not be less than 2.44 m (8 ft) in length and shall be for the exclusive use of inspectors and trimmers. Each trimmer shall have access to a knife sanitizer, providing water at 82°C (179.6°F) or higher. If vacuum guns are used, the contents of the tank shall discharge directly into the inedible waste section of the establishment.
- (6) *Chilling.* The chilling system must have the capacity to lower the temperature of eviscerated carcasses to 4°C (40°F) within one hour. All poultry must be chilled before it is packaged.

