



Meat Marketing Regulations in Wisconsin

Presented at the Value Added Meat
Marketing Workshops in Lancaster,
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Lots of Ways to Sell Meat

- ✦ Portions of live animal
- ✦ From the processing plant
- ✦ Out of a freezer on the farm
- ✦ At farmers' markets
- ✦ Home delivery
- ✦ Selling to retailers and restaurants

Sale of live animals (beef, pork, lamb)

✦ No license required

✦ Customer is responsible for slaughter

- ◆ Must be done in a licensed plant if selling portions of an animal
- ◆ Customer can slaughter the animal themselves or hire a mobile slaughterer on their own property if the meat is only for their own consumption

✦ Slaughter cannot take place on the producer's farm

Selling from a processing plant

(beef, pork, lamb)

- ✦ Slaughter must take place in an inspected plant
- ✦ Meat must be properly wrapped
- ✦ Meat must be properly labeled
 - ◆ Name, address, zip code of the plant and inspection legend with state ID number
 - ◆ Each package must be marked with true identity of cut or list of ingredients
 - ◆ Each package must be marked “NOT FOR SALE” if custom slaughtered
 - ◆ Weight of product if sold by package
 - ◆ Safe handling label and warning statement such as “Keep Refrigerated”

Selling from a farm freezer

(beef, pork, lamb)

- ✦ Seller must obtain a “retail food establishment” license (costs \$40)
- ✦ Freezer can only contain meat for sale
 - ◆ Must be kept below 0 degrees F.
 - ◆ Must be kept in a clean, neat area
- ✦ Meat must be inspected and labeled as noted above

Selling meat at a farmers' market

(beef, pork, lamb)

- ✦ Must obtain a “mobile retail food establishment” license in addition to the retail food establishment license (\$40)
- ✦ Frozen meat must be kept below 10 degrees F.; unfrozen meat must be kept below 40 F.
- ✦ “Any effective method” can be used to maintain temperature
- ✦ Same labeling requirements as above

Home delivery of meat

(beef, pork, lamb)

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- ✦ Same licensing and handling requirements as farmers' market sales
 - ✦ Delivery vehicle must be inspected once a year – no mechanical refrigeration required

Selling to grocers, restaurants, etc. (beef, pork, lamb)

- ✦ Must register as a “meat distributor” with the Division of Food Safety
- ✦ Warehouse license is also required
- ✦ Meat must be inspected
- ✦ After purchase, grocers can cut, wrap and sell meat

Rules for poultry and rabbits


- ✦ Exemption for up to 1,000 birds and unlimited number of rabbits processed and sold on the farm
- ✦ Must be labeled
 - ◆ Net weight of the product
 - ◆ Producer's name and full address
 - ◆ Must be marked "Not Inspected"

Rules for poultry and rabbits

- ✦ To sell at farmers' markets, poultry and rabbits must be processed in a state-licensed (not necessarily "inspected") facility
 - ◆ Must be labeled as above
 - ◆ Mobile retail food establishment license is required
 - ◆ Check local ordinances

Illegal Practices

- ✦ Selling meat that has not been processed in an inspected plant (other than poultry and rabbits)
- ✦ Selling meat slaughtered by a mobile slaughterer
- ✦ Renting land for ritual slaughter
- ✦ Interstate shipment of meat processed in a state-inspected facility



For questions about other species or
more specific questions about what's
been discussed here, contact the
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection's
Division of Food Safety
608-224-4661