
Missouri Slaughter and Inspection Requirements for Livestock and Poultry Producers

The Missouri Department of Agriculture requires all individuals who sell meat in Missouri to register with the Missouri Meat and Poultry Inspection Program, 573- 522-1242.

Consumers desire locally grown meat and poultry products, creating a market opportunity for producers who can meet safety regulations and market their products. Consumer motivation to purchase local products stems from the desire to know where and how their food is raised as well as perceptions of the products being fresher and of a higher quality than nonlocal products. Because consumers perceive a higher value in these products, producers can capture a premium selling meat and poultry directly — increasing their profit potential. They can add further value to their products through specialized production practices (hormone free, humanely raised, etc.), packaging (biodegradable, recycled material, etc.), and marketing strategies (telling the farm’s story, providing recipes, etc.).

To capture this additional potential profit, producers must navigate inspection requirements, relationships with processors, and building their brand. Inspection for meat and poultry products in Missouri is governed by the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Inspection requirements are not universal but vary based on

the species and the specific outlet where the meat/poultry product is sold. Table 1 provides an overview of inspection requirements for different combinations of animal species, selling outlets, and, in the case of poultry and rabbits, the number of animals processed.

This guide is meant to serve as a quick reference to connect producers to the appropriate regulatory agency. To ensure proper compliance, contact the Missouri Department of Agriculture’s Meat and Poultry Inspection Program at 573-522-1242. The Missouri Department of Agriculture requires all individuals who sell meat in Missouri to register with the department. Registration categories vary; individuals who sell meat and poultry from animals they raise are registered as a farm-to-fork distributor. All owners or operators who want to sell meat/poultry or meat/poultry products, wholesale or retail, within the state (intrastate) should first contact the Missouri Meat and Poultry Inspection Program. Note that these requirements apply to livestock and poultry **producers**. Also, always check with your local public health department to find out if they have stricter requirements for that sales channel.

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Table 1. Missouri slaughter and inspection requirements for meat producers.

Missouri Department of Agriculture requires all individuals who sell meat in Missouri to register with the department: Registration categories vary and individuals who sell meat and poultry from animals they raise are registered as a farm-to-fork distributor. Therefore, all owners or operators who want to sell meat/poultry or meat/poultry products, wholesale or retail, within the state (intrastate) should contact the Missouri Meat and Poultry Inspection Program at 573-522-1242. Note that these requirements apply to livestock and poultry **producers**. Always check with your local public health department to find out if they have stricter requirements for that sales channel.

Selling your product to (<i>in-state markets unless otherwise indicated</i>)						
Species	Farmers market	CSA members or other on-farm sales¹	Another CSA selling to their members	Restaurant²	Grocery stores/co-ops/other retailers	Out-of-state and online
Cattle, veal calves, swine, sheep, goats, llamas, alpacas, bison, and captive elk (<i>any size operation</i>)						
The sale of meat products in MO requires an MDA registration.	MDA or USDA inspection					USDA inspection ³
Poultry⁴						
Raise and slaughter < 1,000 birds per year Whole carcasses only. Must apply for this exemption with MDA prior to operation. Otherwise, inspection is required.	No inspection required for on-farm slaughter ⁵	MDA or USDA inspection	No inspection required for on-farm slaughter ⁵		USDA inspection ³	
Producer/grower slaughtering 1,000 –20,000 birds per year⁶ Approved facility required. May sell whole or cut-up birds. Must apply for this exemption with MDA prior to operation. Otherwise, inspection is required.	No inspection required for on-farm slaughter ⁵	MDA or USDA inspection	No inspection required for on-farm slaughter ⁵		USDA inspection ³	
Producer/grower or other person slaughtering 1,000–20,000 birds per year⁶ Approved facility required. May sell whole or cut-up birds. Must apply for this exemption with MDA prior to operation. Otherwise, inspection is required.	No inspection required for on-farm slaughter ⁵	MDA or USDA inspection	No inspection required	Not allowed	USDA inspection ³	

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(continued)

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Species	Selling your product to (<i>in-state markets unless otherwise indicated</i>)					Out-of-state and online
	Farmers market	CSA members or other on-farm sales ¹	Another CSA selling to their members	Restaurant ²	Grocery stores/co-ops/other retailers	
<p>Raise and slaughter > 20,000 birds per year (all product must be inspected)</p> <p>The sale of poultry products in MO, without an exemption, requires an MDA registration.</p>	MDA or USDA inspection				USDA inspection ³	
Rabbits						
<p>< 1,000 processed per year⁷</p> <p>Whole carcasses only. Must apply for this exemption with MDA prior to operation. Otherwise, inspection is required.</p>	No inspection required	MDA or USDA inspection	No inspection required		USDA inspection ³ may be required. Contact buyer for requirements in their state. ⁹	
<p>> 1,000 processed per year⁷</p> <p>The sale of rabbit products in MO, without an exemption, requires an MDA registration.</p>	MDA or USDA inspection				USDA inspection ³ may be required. Contact buyer for requirements in their state. ⁹	
Other						
<p>Any other meat species (nonamenable)⁸</p>	Contact the Missouri Meat and Poultry Inspection Program. Sale of wild game not allowed. Commercially raised game must be USDA or MDA inspected.				Sale of wild game not allowed. Commercially raised game must be USDA inspected. ³ Contact buyer for requirements in their state. ⁹	
<p>Cooked, hot product containing at least 2% meat or poultry</p>	Must use MDA- or USDA-inspected product. Contact local health department ¹⁰ for further regulations on catering.	Unlikely to occur			USDA inspection ³	

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Selling your product to (<i>in-state markets unless otherwise indicated</i>)						
Species	Farmers market	CSA members or other on-farm sales¹	Another CSA selling to their members	Restaurant²	Grocery stores/co-ops/other retailers	Out-of-state and online
<p>Prepackaged meals/ foods containing meat and poultry (<i>raw meat comprises > 3% of the total product, by weight</i>)</p> <p>The sale of meat products in MO requires an MDA registration.</p>	<p>Meal/product must be produced at an MDA- or USDA-inspected facility (using inspected meat and poultry). Contact local health department¹⁰ for further regulations.</p>	<p>Meal/product must be produced at MDA- or USDA-inspected facility (using inspected meat). Wholesale license required.</p>	<p>Unlikely to occur</p>	<p>MDA or USDA inspection</p>	<p>USDA inspection³</p>	

Shaded cells: Inspection not required. White boxes: Inspection required.

1. Note that CSAs can have distribution points at places other than the farm or farmers markets as long as the sale has already taken place and **only distribution** is occurring.
2. Producers can only sell to restaurants that hold licenses required for restaurant operation.
3. Missouri is one of 10 states to participate in the USDA Cooperative Interstate Shipping Program. Under this program, participating states have the ability to select state-inspected plants to operate as federally inspected facilities, under specific conditions, allowing for interstate sales.
4. Includes chicken, turkey, geese, duck, guinea hen, squabs. Poultry inspection exemptions in United States Code 21 U.S.C. Section 464 (2021). [PPIA Section 464(c)(4); Title 9 CFR Section 381.10(c)].
5. On-farm slaughter can only be done for birds you have raised (cannot process neighbor's birds, which they intend to sell, at your farm). Birds must be healthy when slaughtered. Slaughter, processing and transportation must be done under sanitary conditions. Additional specifications required for each exemption. For further clarification of the poultry inspection exemptions, contact the Missouri Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Inspection Program at 573-522-1242.
6. The producer/grower or other person exemption is separate from the producer/grower exemption. Besides producers, this exemption can be used by those who purchase live poultry from a grower and slaughter/process them for sale directly to household consumers, restaurants, hotels and boarding houses to be served in those homes or dining rooms for the preparation of meals sold directly to customers. For further clarification of the poultry exemptions, contact the Missouri Department of Agriculture's Missouri Meat Inspection Program at 573-522-1242.
7. From Missouri Department of Agriculture Code of Regulations, Division 30, Chapter 10, Food Safety and Meat Inspection.
8. Nonamenable species are exotic species under voluntary inspection, including animals such as moose and water buffalo.
9. Each state has different requirements as to which species are amenable versus nonamenable, so you need to contact the authorities in the state in which you are trying to sell to find out the requirements. Voluntary (not required by law) inspection from USDA is available if desired, but the producer would need to pay for this inspection. Interstate shipment of nonamenable species is under FDA jurisdiction.
10. More information is available from your local health department and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Environmental Health Services, Section for Environmental Public Health, 573-751-6095.



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