
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, which adheres to federal regulations set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 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 also 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.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs)

CSAs that offer shares of local meat to members will face different regulatory and inspection requirements depending on how they are organized. Any livestock producer considering selling shares of meat themselves, through another producer’s CSA, or at a retail location for members only, should call MDA’s Meat and Poultry Inspection Program at 573-522-1242 to learn more about which regulations apply to their situation.

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

Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) 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 also 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 (in-state markets unless otherwise indicated)					
Species	Farmers market¹	Direct-to-consumer sales (on-farm or delivery)²	Restaurant³	Grocery stores/co-ops/other retailers	Out-of-state and online
Cattle, veal calves, swine, sheep, goats, llamas, alpacas, bison and captive elk					
Any size operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDA registration required. MDA or USDA inspection required, or retail-exempt product produced under a retail exemption (LPHA) from inspected sourced product. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDA registration required. MDA or USDA inspection required. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA inspection⁴ required.
Poultry⁵					
Raise and slaughter fewer than 1,000 birds per year Whole carcasses only.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must apply for an MDA exemption prior to operation. Once exempted, no inspection required for on-premise slaughter.⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must apply for an MDA exemption prior to operation. Once exempted, no inspection required for on-premise slaughter.⁶ 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA inspection⁴ required.
Producer/grower slaughtering 1,000 to 20,000 birds per year Whole or cut-up birds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved facility required. Must apply for an MDA exemption prior to operation. Once exempted, no inspection required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved facility required. Must apply for an MDA exemption prior to operation. Once exempted, no inspection required. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA inspection⁴ required.
Producer/grower or other person slaughtering 1,000 to 20,000 birds per year⁷ Whole or cut-up birds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved facility required. Must apply for an MDA exemption prior to operation. Once exempted, no inspection required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved facility required. Must apply for an MDA exemption prior to operation. Once exempted, no inspection required. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not allowed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA inspection⁴ required.
Raise and slaughter more than 20,000 birds per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All product must be MDA or USDA inspection required. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA inspection⁴ required.

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

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

(continued)

Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) 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 also 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 market¹	Direct-to-consumer sales (on-farm or delivery)²	Restaurant³	Grocery stores/co-ops/other retailers	Out-of-state and online
Rabbits					
<p>Fewer than 1,000 processed per year⁸ Whole carcasses only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must apply for an MDA exemption prior to operation. • Once exempted, no inspection required. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA inspection⁴ might be required. Contact buyer for requirements in their state.⁹ 	
<p>More than 1,000 processed per year⁸ Whole or cut-up rabbits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDA or USDA inspection required. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA inspection⁴ might be required. Contact buyer for requirements in their state.⁹ 	
Other					
<p>Heat-and-serve meals and/or pizza containing at least 2% fully cooked meat and/or poultry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must use MDA- or USDA-inspected product. • Contact local health department¹⁰ for further regulations. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDA or USDA inspection required. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA inspection⁴ required.
<p>Cooking raw meat and/or poultry product to serve hot (for example, hamburgers, burritos, chicken wings)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must use MDA- or USDA-inspected product. • Contact local health department¹⁰ for further regulations. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely to occur. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA inspection⁴ required.

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

Table 1. Missouri slaughter and inspection requirements for meat producers.**(continued)**

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.

Note: Missouri producers that are considering selling any other meat or poultry product or the meat of any animal not listed above should contact the Missouri Meat and Poultry Inspection Program at 573-522-1242.

1. Farmers market managers, the city or the county might have additional requirements.
2. Direct-to-consumer is a transaction between the producer and the consumer and can occur through on-farm sales or home delivery. Any livestock producer considering selling shares of meat through another producer's CSA or a retail location for members only should call MDA's Meat and Poultry Inspection Program at 573-522-1242 to learn more about which regulations apply to their situation.
3. Producers can only sell to restaurants that hold licenses required for restaurant operation.
4. 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.
5. 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)].
6. On-premise slaughter can only be done for birds you have raised (cannot process neighbor's birds 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.
7. 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.
8. From Missouri Department of Agriculture Code of Regulations, Division 30, Chapter 10, Food Safety and Meat Inspection.
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 U.S. Food and Drug Administration (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.