



Meat Messenger

State Meat Plants Await Ok

FARGO, N.D. — Will 2012 be the year that qualifying North Dakota meat processors are allowed to ship meat to other states in a federal program authorized four years ago?

Andrea Grondahl hopes so.

A new Cooperative Interstate Shipment Program, passed in the 2008 farm law, is still awaiting implementation, says Grondahl, director of the North Dakota State Meat and Poultry Inspection Program in the North Dakota Department of Agriculture.

“We’re doing everything as fast as we can,” Grondahl says, noting the program is awaiting U.S. Department of Agriculture details within its Food Safety and Inspection Service. In the past month, USDA has named a new federal coordinator for the program, which may expedite the implementation, she adds.

North Dakota’s state meat program is one of 26 like it in the country, says Grondahl, a veterinarian. The staff includes 14 people, including eight inspectors, two supervisors and a compliance officer.

The program inspects 14 Official State Establishments that do slaughtering and processing, as well as 85 Custom Exempt establishments.

For the Official State Establishments, the state provides continuous inspection on inspected slaughter days, and is “physically present at least daily at plants on inspected processing days.” Products carry a “North Dakota Inspected and Passed” mark, and allow the plant to wholesale meat to retailers within the state.

Custom exempt facilities serve hunters and others who

bring animals to a facility to be processed for a fee, and not for sale to the public. Custom exempt plants also include establishments such as grocery stores that buy “boxed meat” from federal or state plants, and further process products for retail sale.

Federal inspection is primarily for meat that is meant for interstate sale. Federal inspection charges a fee for bison and elk, but most inspections are free. One of the reasons the state program was initiated is that it is free for bison and elk.

The first decade

State meat inspection started in October 2000, and grew rapidly.

Cattle numbers under the North Dakota program grew rapidly and then leveled off at about 800 to 900 per year today, although Grondahl believes there is room for growth. Hog numbers have increased since 2009 and are now at a record-high of about 400 per year. Meanwhile, elk and bison numbers have declined to fewer than 100 each in recent years.

Meat processing in the program hit a peak of more than 600,000 pounds in 2007, 2008 and 2010, but dipped in 2011.

Grondahl thinks the demand for state inspection will increase if the new program allows interstate shipping. FSIS came out with a final rule for the new program in June. “You’d be inspected by state personnel, but it will have a federal mark on the products,” she says. The new stamp will have a “SEND” indication, which stands for “Selected Establishment North Dakota.” Designating that the product is from North Dakota is important for

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Regulation Reminder

North Dakota Administrative Code
Chapter 7-13-05:
Slaughter Requirements

7-13-05-07. Horse slaughter. The slaughter of horses, mules, and other equines and the preparation and handling of the products thereof must be conducted in establishments separate from those used for the slaughter and preparation of other animals. All carcasses, parts, meat, meat food products, or other products thereof must be conspicuously labeled, marked, branded, or tagged "Horse Meat" or "Horse Meat Product" by a method approved by the department.

History: Effective August 1, 2000.
General Authority: NDCC 36-24-08
Law Implemented: NDCC 36-24-08

What this regulation means:

Horses and other equines may NOT be slaughtered or processed in the same establishments where other animals are slaughtered or processed even if there is adequate separation. All carcasses or parts from carcasses derived from horses or other equines must be labeled "Horse Meat" or "Horse Meat Product" by a method approved by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture.

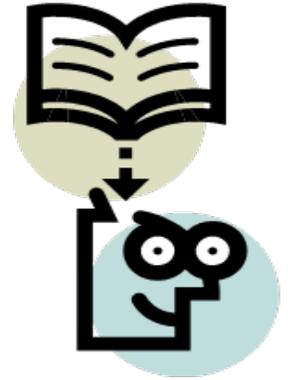
Sanitary Dressing

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture has prepared a new guide to help custom exempt and official establishments that slaughter cattle reduce the possibility of bacterial contamination.

The new guide is based on Directive 6410.1 Revision 1, implemented Dec. 3, 2011, by the Food Safety Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This directive provides inspection staff in beef slaughter operations with information on verifying sanitary dressing procedures and process control procedures and ensuring that these procedures are preventing contamination of carcasses and those sanitary conditions are maintained.

The guide describes the steps in the beef slaughter process that are most frequently associated with carcass contamination; explains why these steps have increased potential for bacterial contamination, and offers tips for reducing pathogens at each step.

You can obtain a copy of the new guide by contacting your inspector or Jerry Sauter at 701-328-4767.



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consumers who want to buy locally produced products.

Former agriculture commissioner Roger Johnson was one of the proponents of the new federal program. Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D., and former Rep. Earl Pomeroy, D-N.D., pushed for it, and current Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring is a strong proponent.

North Dakota's role

Grondahl says only three states — North Dakota, Wisconsin and Ohio — have actively pursued participation in the new federal program. Some other states qualify for a similar program called the Talmadge-Aiken Act or T-A program. This created federally inspected plants that were manned by state officials.

“That sounds the same, in my opinion, in that the T-A plants are within the federal system, whereas the new system would be state run but with federal oversight,” Grondahl says. “What hasn’t been established is whether federal oversight for the new program would be once a day, once a year, or something else.”

Grondahl acknowledges there is a lot of semantics in the issue.

State programs already must be “at least equal to” federal inspection, but FSIS has control over approving T-A for larger plants and a similar “cross-utilization” plant for smaller operations. North Dakota applied for the cross-utilization program for a Bowman, N.D., plant, but was turned down on grounds that the plant could be federally inspected. That plant has since shifted back to state inspection under the custom-exempt provision.

Dakota Territories Convention

It is convention time again! This years Dakota Territories convention will be Friday, April 20th through Saturday , April 21st in Fargo, ND with North Dakota and South Dakota processors meeting to learn, share, and support one another.



The convention is a great time to get together with others in the meat industry. There will be many suppliers available to order from and to talk to about their products. The sessions will provide information on a variety of topics and the product show will give your own products a chance to shine. We are fortunate, again, to have officers from the American Association of Meat Processors (AAMP) attending our convention and doing a few sessions for our benefit. Friday night at the banquet we will be entertained by “Da Lutherlic Ladies”.

For convention information, please contact Terri Haugtvedt at 1-800-752-5142 or by cell phone at 701-840-1299 or check the following websites www.ndmpa.com or the South Dakota website www.wix.com/jfrohlingmeats/sdamp. The pre-registration deadline is April 6th.

There is a room block available at the Howard Johnson Inn at 1-701-232-8850. There are rooms blocked for the meat processors at a rate of \$75.00 / night.

Grant Opportunities

Grants and low interest loans are available for development projects in rural communities. Program assistance is provided through direct or guaranteed loans and grants.

Grants Available Through the United States

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)

Purpose: The RBOG program promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs through provision of training and technical assistance for business development, entrepreneurs, and economic development officials and to assist with economic development planning.

What types of projects are eligible? The RBOG program is primarily a training and technical assistance program. Funds may be provided for development of export markets; feasibility studies; development of long term trade strategies; community economic development planning; business training and business based technical assistance for rural entrepreneurs and business managers; establishment of rural business incubators; and assistance with technology based economic development. The types of projects that may be funded might include identification/ analysis of business opportunities that will utilize local material and human resources; provision of leadership development training to existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers; business support centers; centers for training, technology and export trade; and, economic development planning.

More details along with other grant and low interest loan opportunities/programs can be found at: www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_RBOG.html.

Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) Program

The RBEG program provides grants for rural projects that finance and facilitate development of small and emerging rural businesses to help fund distance learning networks, and help fund employment related adult education programs. To assist with business development, RBEGs may fund a broad array of activities. What types of projects are eligible?

The RBEG program is a broad based program that reaches to the core of rural development in a number of ways. Examples of eligible fund use include: Ac-



quisition or development of land, easements, or rights of way; construction, conversion, renovation of buildings, plants, machinery, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, utilities; pollution control and abatement; capitalization of revolving loan funds including funds that will make loans for start ups and working capital; training and technical assistance; distance adult learning for job training and advancement; rural transportation improvement; and project planning. Any project funded under

the RBEG program should benefit small and emerging private businesses in rural areas. Small and emerging private businesses are those that will employ 50 or fewer new employees and have less than \$1 million in projected gross revenues.

More details along with other grant and low interest loan opportunities/ programs can be found at: www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbeg.htm.

Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

Grants may be used for planning activities and for working capital for marketing value-added agricultural products and for farm-based renewable energy. Eligible applicants are independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives, agricultural producer groups, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures.

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For more information about the program, contact your State Rural Development Office to obtain additional information and assistance. A contact person, address, phone number, and e-mail address for each State Office is posted on this website: www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm.

How to Apply For the Above Grants

To apply for funding for the RBEG program, please contact your Rural Development State Office.

USDA Offices in North Dakota

Devils Lake

706 8th Ave. SE, Suite 5
Devils Lake, ND 58301
Phone: (701) 662-8634 Ext. 4 Fax: (701) 662-1227

Devils Lake services the following counties:

Benson, Cavalier, Eddy, Foster, Nelson, Ramsey, Town-
er, Wells, Grand Forks, Pembina and Walsh Counties

Valley City

110 Winter Show Road SW, Suite 2
Valley City, ND 58072
Phone: (701) 845-5150 Ext. 4 Fax: (701) 845-3177

Valley City services the following counties:

Barnes, Cass, Dickey, Griggs, LaMoure, Logan, McIn-
tosh, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, Stutsman, and
Traill Counties

Minot

1920 13th Street SE Minot, ND 58701
Phone: (701) 852-1754, Ext. 4 Fax: (701) 839-3624

Minot services the following counties:

Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, McLean, Mountrail,
Pierce, Renville, Rolette, Sheridan, Ward, Divide,
McKenzie, and Williams Counties

Dickinson

2493 4th Ave. W., Room B Dickinson, ND 58601
Phone: (701) 225-9168 Ext. 4 Fax: (701) 845-3177

Dickinson services the following counties:

Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Het-
tinger, Slope, Stark, Burleigh, Emmons, Grant, Kidder,
Mercer, Morton, Oliver, and Sioux Counties

Bismarck

220 E. Rosser Ave., Rm. 334 Bismarck, ND 58501
Phone: (701) 250-3905 Fax: (701) 530-2116

Bismarck services the following counties:

Burleigh, Emmons, Grant, Kidder, Mercer, Morton,
Oliver, Sioux, and Corson (SD) Counties

The preceding information can be found online at
www.rurdev.usda.gov/ND_StateContacts.html.

Grant Opportunity From North Dakota

North Dakota Department of Commerce Agricultural Products Utilization Commission

The mission of the Agricultural Products Utilization Commission (APUC) is to create wealth and jobs through the development of new and expanded uses of North Dakota's agricultural products through a grant program.

A maximum of 15 qualifying applicants present fund-
ing proposals on a quarterly basis

- basic and applied research grants
- marketing and utilization grants
- farm diversification grants
- agricultural prototype development grant program

The preceding information can be found at www.business.nd.gov/businessInformation/apuc. The applica-
tion process can be found at: [www.business.nd.gov/
businessInformation/apuc/application-process/](http://www.business.nd.gov/businessInformation/apuc/application-process/).

For more information, contact John Schneider at (701)
328-5350 or Kerri Kraft at (701) 328-5318.

Pictures Make the Difference

Can posters encourage employees to frequently wash their hands? A study by researchers from Kansas State University and North Carolina State University says the answer is yes.

The researchers observed more than 5,500 patrons of a hospital cafeteria. When informational posters and hand sanitizers were placed at the cafeteria entrance, hand hygiene attempts almost doubled from 3.16 percent to 6.17 percent. The study concluded that posters and proper hand sanitizers can encourage hand hygiene.

Although the study was conducted in a hospital cafeteria, the findings are probably valid in most food preparation settings, including meat processing establishments. A small investment in posters and hand sanitizing equipment, together with employee information and training, can help prevent product contamination and ensure the food safety that consumers demand and is required by law.

Adopted in North Dakota, Article 7-13, Part 9 Code of Federal Regulations, §416.5 Employee hygiene states:

- (a) Cleanliness. All persons working in contact with product, food-contact surfaces, and product-packaging materials must adhere to hygienic practices.
- (b) Clothing. Aprons, frocks, and other outer clothing worn by persons who handle product must be of material that is disposable or readily cleaned. Clean garments must be worn at the start of each working day and garments must be changed during the day as often as necessary to prevent adulteration of product and the creation of insanitary conditions.
- (c) Disease control. Any person who has or appears to have an infectious disease, open lesion, including boils, sores or infected wounds, or any other abnormal source of microbial contamination, must be excluded from any operations which could result in product adulteration and the creation of insanitary conditions until the condition is corrected.

For more information on the university study, see www.barfblog.com/blog/150160/11/08/31/handwashing-motivator-study-shows-posters-can-help-increase-hand-hygiene-practi

FSIS Extends Implementation Date on Routine Sampling Program for Non-O157:H7 February 8, 2012 - Special Edition 2012

FSIS announced that it extended for 90 days the implementation date for routine sampling of six additional STEC serogroups (O26, O45, O103, O111, O121 and O145); the implementation date will begin June 4.

The purpose of the extension is to provide additional time for establishments to validate their test methods and detect these pathogens prior to entering the stream of commerce.

FSIS will initially sample raw beef manufacturing trimmings produced domestically and imported, and test the samples for the serogroups.



On September 13, 2011, USDA announced that if the serogroups are found in raw ground beef or its precursors, those products will be prohibited from entering commerce.

An advance copy of an updated Federal Register notice will be posted on the FSIS website as soon as it becomes available.

www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2010-0023N.htm

Reminder To Keep Species Separated

By Jane Johnson, DVM

www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Small_Plant_News_Vol4_No8.pdf

As a small or very small plant owner/operator, you may slaughter and/or process different species of animals at your facility. If you do, it's important to remember that each species should be separated in space or time if your products are labeled or packaged in such a way that only one species is represented or is listed in the ingredients.

For example, a product labeled as "all beef hot dogs" cannot contain trace amounts of pork, and a product labeled as "ground pork" cannot contain trace amounts of beef.

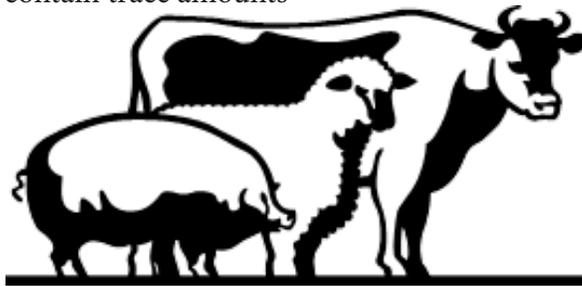
So what are the requirements when an establishment that slaughters or processes more than one species switches from one species to the other, and the labeling is intended to address only one of the species?

While the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) regulations do not explicitly require a complete cleanup before the switch, failure to conduct a cleanup sufficiently to remove all visible debris would likely result in regulatory concerns for the Agency.

Three of the biggest concerns are that:

- The finished product could be considered adulterated because of the creation of an insanitary condition during processing due to the presence of visible debris from another species. This would be a deficiency related to Title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 416 (9 CFR Part 416), Sanitation Standard Operating Procedure.
- The finished product could be considered adulterated because the incorporation of a food safety hazard that is present in one species might not be adequately addressed in the hazard analysis. The regulations affected in this case would be those associated with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point, 9 CFR Part 417.

- The finished product could be considered both adulterated and misbranded because of species substitution. In this case, labeling regulations would be impacted.
 - o For meat, 9 CFR 317.8, False or misleading labeling or practices generally; specific prohibitions and requirements for labels and containers.
 - o For poultry, 9 CFR 381.129, False or misleading labeling or containers.



FSIS inspectors perform species identification tests when there is a concern that a product may contain a species not declared on the label. When the inspector collects samples for species testing, he or she will notify you that the sample is to be collected.

The inspector will then collect at least 2 pounds of product and put it in a plastic bag supplied by one of the Agency's laboratories. If the product is in a natural casing, the inspector is to collect a sample of the emulsion. The inspector will then attach the product's label, showing the ingredient statement, and ship the sample to the lab.

The laboratory will test the product and report species results that correlate with the ingredient statement as "Acceptable." Likewise, if the laboratory finds that a species not declared on the ingredient statement is present in the sample, or one of the species on the ingredient statement is not present in the sample, the result will be reported as "Not Acceptable," and the inspector will take the appropriate action based on the regulations. This may include issuing a non-compliance record (NR), retaining product, rejecting equipment or facilities, stopping lines, or refusing to allow the processing of specifically identified product (9 CFR 500.1(a)). Additionally, FSIS may rescind or refuse approval of false or misleading marks, labels, or sizes or forms of any container for use with any meat or poultry product per 9 CFR 500.8.

InfoSource@fsis.usda.gov

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