

Food Safety Sentinel

ISSUE NO. 4 Quarterly Newsletter for Alberta Agriculture's Provincially Licensed Meat Operators

Changes to the Meat Inspection Regulation: What has Changed and What is the Impact?

Changes to the Meat Inspection Regulation came into effect on July 8, 2014, and they are part of the Agriculture and Rural Development's ongoing work to improve Alberta's food safety system. These changes enhance food safety practices such as food handling and ensure continuous improvement and alignment with other processes.

What has changed?

- A statement was added in **Section 15.1 a & b**: ensure that all food handling is done in a manner that makes the meat safe to eat.
- An Inspector is now allowed to order an Operator to remove parts of an animal during slaughtering or butchering and dispose of some or all of those parts as if they were condemned. Previously, only the Director was able to do this. The change is shown in both **Section 36(1) a & b** and **Section 56**.
- The Operator is required to remove visible contamination by trimming as a requirement for dressing of red meat carcasses before chilling. The change is shown in **Section 58.1(1) b.1**.

What is the impact?

- Inspectors will be able to assess risk on a case by case basis and use their judgment to determine required action in real time. This also aligns with Alberta Health and the inspection standards set out in the *Food Regulation* under the *Public Health Act*.
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness of inspections by limiting the red tape involved in issuing an order for the removal of condemned and/or unsafe meat.
- Reduced risk of microbial contamination to the meat. Scientific evidence has shown that thoroughly washing the carcass is not sufficient to remove microorganisms when contamination is visible.

Note: The Regulation was renewed, with the next expiry date being August 1, 2017. This is shown in **Section 80**.

To view the amended *Meat Inspection Regulation* please visit:
[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/acts6137](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/acts6137)

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Emergency Slaughter: What are the Options in Alberta?

When dealing with compromised animals (e.g. broken legs) that cannot be transported there are two options to ensure the humane treatment of animals and alignment with the provincial *Meat Inspection Act*:

Inspected Meat

For inspected meat, an Appointed Veterinarian under the *Meat Inspection Act* has to perform an ante-mortem (AM) inspection at the farm or feedlot. Once the animal has had an AM inspection performed by the Appointed Veterinarian, an emergency slaughter (humane stunning and bleeding) can be performed. The carcass is then to be transported, protecting it from contamination or spoilage, to a Provincially Licensed Abattoir for a post-mortem (PM) inspection. The PM inspection can be done by either the Appointed Veterinarian or by a Meat Inspector. The product is then legal to sell as inspected.

Important Note: The appropriate form (MIR 22) must be filled out and signed by the Appointed Veterinarian confirming that the AM was completed on farm or feedlot and these forms will need to accompany the carcass to the licensed facility.

Uninspected Meat

For uninspected meat, which cannot be sold and is for consumption by the animal owner only, the animal can be slaughtered by a licensed mobile butcher or the owner at the farm or feedlot. The carcass can then be transported to a facility to be processed.

Important Notes:

The carcass must:

- be clean and free from contamination
- have an "UNINSPECTED NOT FOR SALE" tag applied
- be kept separate from any inspected meat products
- Packaging must be labelled as "UNINSPECTED NOT FOR SALE"

For more information about emergency slaughter, contact the Meat Inspection Branch Supervisor in your region.

CFIA Food Labelling Information Service in Alberta

Food processors can receive general labelling advice, including nutritional labelling, and have draft labels reviewed by contacting Food Safety and Fair Labelling offices in Edmonton and Calgary.

For more information call the Canadian Food Inspection Agency:

Edmonton: 780-395-6700

Calgary: 403-292-4620

Or visit: www.inspection.gc.ca/food/labelling/food-labelling-for-industry/eng/1383607266489/1383607344939



Canada-Alberta Job Grant

Alberta employers can apply to be reimbursed for two-thirds of training costs for tuition, books and supplies, and mandatory fees.

Examples of training costs covered include:

- Third-party trainer costs
- Training related software
- Examination expenses
- Course registration fees

For more information visit:

www.albertacanada.com/opportunity/employers/jobgrant.aspx

Five-Step Method for Cleaning and Sanitizing

Sanitation is one of the most important aspects of operating any food processing facility. Poor sanitation can have an adverse effect on product safety and can result in poor product quality. This method outlines five basic steps that need to be followed to ensure that cleaning and sanitizing operations remain effective.

1. Rough Cleaning

- First remove all debris either by hand or use of brushes, brooms, scrapers, squeegees, etc.
- Collect and dispose of all debris appropriately (e.g. inedible containers).
- A warm rinse is recommended to complete the rough cleaning.

2. Chemical Cleaning and Sanitation

- After rough cleaning, apply an appropriate application of cleaning agents to surfaces and equipment. Concentrations to use are in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Scrub all surfaces manually or mechanically.
- Make sure equipment used for cleaning and sanitizing is kept in clean and sanitary condition (e.g. hand held hoses) to prevent cross contamination.
- Apply cleaning agents to production areas, including walls and floors.

3. Rinsing

- After chemical cleaning and scrubbing, rinse all areas and equipment with hot potable water.
- After rinsing, check surfaces to ensure that all grease and debris has been removed. This should be done by physical touch.
- Repeat above steps if necessary.

4. Sanitizing

- After rinsing, apply an approved sanitizer.

- Sanitizers are only effective on surfaces that have been thoroughly cleaned.
- Use sanitizing agents as per manufacturer's recommendations. This is especially important since some sanitizers require a final rinse and some do not.

5. Removal of Excess Water

- Any areas where water has extensively pooled may serve as a medium for bacteria growth and should be dried.
- Equipment that has the potential to rust should also be dried.



UPCOMING EVENTS

AFPA Food Safety Conference

March 4, 2015 Calgary, Alberta

For more information visit: www.afpa.ca



Industry Day 2015

April 11, 2015 Red Deer, Alberta

To register, please call Ag-Info Centre at 1-800-387-6030



ALMA FutureFare 2015

June 16, 2015 Calgary, Alberta

For more information visit: <http://alma.alberta.ca/>



2015 Livestock Care Conference

March 26—27, 2015 Calgary, Alberta

For more information visit:
www.afac.ab.ca



Food Safety and Lean Manufacturing: What is the Connection?

Food Safety focuses on preventing, controlling or reducing hazards in a food processing business to prevent foodborne sicknesses.

Lean Manufacturing is one of the most recognized Continuous Improvement (CI) methodologies. CI is defined as an ongoing effort to improve products, services, or processes. It focuses on providing value to the customer while minimizing waste throughout the entire business. The focus is on continuously seeking a better way to improve all operations, as well as setting your business up to successfully access growth opportunities.

What's the connection between food safety and continuous improvement?

Food safety is sometimes seen as something that needs to be developed and maintained only to meet regulatory or retailer requirements. It may be viewed as an extra cost because it requires manpower, time and money. It can also require a shift in culture and behaviour to implement and maintain.

On the other hand, continuous improvement activities are often seen positively by food processing business owners. They may be viewed as quick wins that can occur through waste reduction or realizing customer value.

However, when food safety and CI are compared, we see that they are connected through culture, behaviours and values. Both require the business to invest in ongoing improvements and working on supporting the results over the long term. Most importantly, both focus on achieving customer value!

Customer Value

Value is seen through the eyes of your customer. Value is what your customer is asking for, and willing to pay for. This may also include items that the customer is not specifically defining, but would expect to be part of the product.

Examples of value include:

- square vs. round ham slices for sandwiches
- shelf stable vs. refrigerated beef jerky
- sausage with allergen vs. free of allergens

Meeting regulations and producing a safe product is an expectation of all customers, it's what you must do, to operate a food business.

Waste

Waste is any activity that does not add value to meet your customers' needs. Waste is not only mistakes and flaws; it may also include, duplication, waiting/delays, or variation in the process or product. Therefore, from a food safety perspective, recalled product is considered waste. However, when we view customer value and food safety...we realize that food safety is critical in the customer value definition.

Holistic View (The Big Picture)

It is important to view your food-processing business holistically, from both a food safety and continuous improvement perspective. Determine which activities create customer value and which ones you must do to operate your business. One of the best ways to understand your customers' values is to ask them directly. Some of your business activities may not necessarily be viewed by your customer as "value", yet these activities may be required from a food safety or operational perspective. In lean manufacturing, these activities would be referred to as "necessary" and eliminated, we can improve our business to be more effective and smooth running. These are the combined benefits of food safety and lean manufacturing.

To learn more about lean manufacturing and productivity improvement visit: www.agriculture.alberta.ca/productivity.

