

# Meat Inspection Regulation Amendment On-Farm Slaughter Operations and Large Animal Co-ownership

## What you need to know

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### Background

Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development completed a review of the Meat Inspection Regulation (Regulation) in July 2020 that enabled an additional slaughter option: Uninspected Slaughter Operations licensed as On-Farm Slaughter Operations (OFSOs). This amendment to the Regulation focused on increasing economic opportunities for producers and to allow consumers increased access to local meat directly from producers.

Feedback from stakeholders resulted in additional amendments to the Regulation in December 2021.

#### **NOTE:**

**The sale of uninspected meat products by anyone is still prohibited in Alberta.**

**Uninspected meat cannot be sold to anyone, including direct to consumers, commercial food establishments (retail, wholesale or restaurants), or at Farmers' Markets.**

### What has changed

#### **Co-ownership of a Large Animal**

- The amendment enables:
  - a large, live animal over 227 kg (500 lbs), live weight, such as bison, beef or elk, to be co-owned by up to four individuals
- The meat harvested from these large animals, slaughtered at an OFSO, can only be consumed by the households of the four individuals.
- The meat from the co-owned animal is uninspected and is not for sale or further distribution.

### Additional Information

- Animals smaller than 227 kg (500 lbs) can have only one owner and cannot be shared. The meat resulting from small animals is for consumption by the household of the animal owner and it cannot be shared.
- The sale of uninspected meat remains illegal in Alberta; therefore, arrangement for co-ownership of the large animal by up to four individuals must be arranged prior to slaughter. Sharing of the meat cannot be arranged after slaughter occurs.
- The names and contact information of all co-owners is included in the OFSO quarterly reports for traceability purposes. If a recall is necessary, this information would be used to contact all affected households.

## Meat Inspection Regulation

2 (1) (c.3) “large animal” means an animal with a live weight exceeding 500 pounds (226.8 kilograms)



## What it means for mobile butchers

- The animal sharing option is not enabled under a mobile butcher licence. Customers of mobile butchers cannot co-own the animal with other individuals for the purpose of slaughter and cannot share the meat resulting from it.
- The existing [Mobile Butcher Licence](#) enables the slaughter of an individual’s animal on the individual’s land. The meat is uninspected and is only for consumption by that individual and members of their household. The meat is not for sale or further distribution. There have been no changes to the Mobile Butcher Licence.

### For more information, contact:

The Food Safety Branch at:  
[af.foodsafety@gov.ab.ca](mailto:af.foodsafety@gov.ab.ca)

## What it means for livestock producers

- Livestock producers can continue to have animals slaughtered and processed in a licensed abattoir to enable the sale of inspected meat products to retail, wholesale and foodservice.
- Livestock producers, with an [On-Farm Slaughter Operation Licence](#), can sell a large animal to up to four co-owners and offer on-farm slaughter of the large animal and meat processing services of the uninspected carcass. Livestock producers of animals that weigh less than 227 kg (500 lbs) cannot sell their animals through this animal sharing option. Small animals slaughtered at an OFSO can have only one owner and the meat cannot be shared with other households.

## What it means for abattoir owners

- Abattoir owners retain exclusive market access to sell meat in retail, to restaurants, wholesale and at Farmers’ Markets as the meat is inspected.
- Abattoir owners will continue to have the ability to process uninspected carcasses for customers who have chosen to have their animals slaughtered on-farm with the meat being for consumption by their customers’ households only.

## What it means for Albertans

- Albertans will still purchase inspected meat in retail, at restaurants and at Farmers’ Markets.
- More Albertans now have an option to buy an animal directly from a producer for slaughter by an OFSO.
- Albertans have increased access to local uninspected meat products for their own household’s consumption.