

Fact Sheet # 28 Processing Your Livestock



If you intend to sell meat or poultry, you will need to have it slaughtered and processed at a special facility. [See the next page for a listing of such facilities in the region.]

Livestock (Non-poultry)

All livestock (beef, pork, lamb, goat, etc.) must be slaughtered in a USDA-inspected slaughterhouse with an inspector on-site. Livestock must be inspected before slaughter. If an animal shows signs of having a disease, it may be separated and rejected. After slaughter, carcasses must also be inspected to ensure that the meat is in good condition. If your meat is packaged at the slaughterhouse, the package label should be stamped with the inspection symbol including the facility identification. Otherwise, this stamp will go on the meat itself. All meat packages should also be labeled with [safe handling instructions](#). All meat for wholesale or retail sale must bear the stamp of USDA inspection package.

Small-Scale Poultry

Poultry slaughter falls under several USDA exemptions from continuous inspection. You may slaughter up to 5,000 turkeys or 20,000 other birds on your farm each year without a USDA Inspector if you meet certain state requirements and sanitation criteria and raised them on your farm and you sell them directly to consumers. New Entry has a Mobile Poultry Processing Unit and requires a [training program](#) before you can use the unit to process your poultry. The training requirement will prepare you to complete the application for a special state slaughter license, to approach your local board of health for appropriate approvals, and to operate and manage the MPPU on your farm for direct commercial sale to consumers. Your local board of health has the right to inspect your slaughter area to ensure it meets sanitary requirements, such as maintaining cool temperatures to reduce the growth of bacteria. All poultry slaughtered on-farm must be labeled as "Exempt."

The Massachusetts Department of Agriculture has compiled lists of businesses in New England that are licensed by USDA to do slaughter and/or meat processing – listed here are those that do slaughter in Massachusetts.



Licensed slaughter facilities

Adams Farms

USDA inspected for red meat slaughter
USDA inspected smoke house
Athol, MA
Phone: [978] 249-9441

Blood Farm

USDA inspected for red meat slaughter
Groton, MA
Phone: [978] 448-6669

Eastern Massachusetts Mobile Poultry Processing Unit

Lowell, MA
Contact: Sam Anderson, sanderson@comteam.org
Phone: [978] 654-6745

