

What is Custom Meat?

Meat exempted from federal inspection is called "custom meat" or "uninspected meat." Custom meat or uninspected meat includes any part of a meat food animal: cattle, pig, sheep, or goat.

Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Food Safety Program regulates custom meat facilities and custom slaughter operators.

Custom meat is not federally (USDA) inspected at slaughter or at any processing point. This meat is intended for personal household use. The exemption from USDA inspection carries with it specific requirements for the use of the meat and all other parts of the uninspected carcass.

For assistance, contact:

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<http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/CustomMeats/>



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CUSTOM MEAT



How to Legally Participate in a Custom Meat Transaction

Custom meat is meat from a cow, pig, sheep or goat that has not been inspected by USDA at slaughter or any processing point.

What do I need to do as a participant in a custom meat transaction?

SELLER OF LIVE ANIMAL

- Sell live animals only. The transfer of ownership of any portion of a custom animal after slaughter is illegal.
- Complete the sales transaction prior to slaughter.
- Provide all names of buyers to slaughterer or cut/wrap facility.
- If you are an employer and want to compensate your employees, it must be with live animals only. A legal transaction includes providing a bill of sale for the live animal listing the employee's name as the recipient. Transfer of ownership of any portion of custom carcass after slaughter is illegal. The employee, as the owner of the live animal, must be listed at the cut/wrap facility as the ultimate owner of the meat. The employer may pay for the cut/wrap charges as a benefit for the employee.

BUYER OF LIVE ANIMAL AND/OR GROWER/CONSUMER

- Complete all sales transactions while the animal is alive.
- Persons who raise their own animals and have them slaughtered as custom meat are subject to the same provisions as buyers of live animals listed below.
- Inform the slaughterer or cut/wrap facility that you own an animal and which portion of the animal is yours. Include the amount you own (i.e., 1/2, 1/4 or splitting a half or quarter).
- Give detailed cutting instructions. Request all items from the carcass that you want delivered to you. Include liver, heart, tongue, oxtail, head, and dog bones. You are the owner of the complete carcass including these parts. If you do not want some carcass components returned to you, tell the facility operator.
- Custom meat is for the sole use of the owner in their household, for their immediate family, and non-paying guests.
- You may not sell, give away or transfer ownership of uninspected meat in any way.

CUSTOM FARM SLAUGHTERER

- Record accurate transaction information about the sale of the live animal. Ownership may include many parties. Get the names of all owners to pass along to the cut/wrap operator.
- Tag all beef animals with beef tags. All other animals must be tagged with the words "not for sale" and the name of the owner(s).
- Identify owner's name on all portions of the carcass including organ meats and other portions of the carcass that don't hang on the rail with the carcass.
- The custom farm slaughterer must legally render all portions of the animal not delivered to the custom facility, except the hide, which may be sold by the slaughterer.

CUT/WRAP OPERATOR

Provides the service of cut and wrap and does not own any portion of the carcass. All portions of the animal that are not returned to the owner must be rendered.

- Tag all animals not tagged upon arrival at the facility.
- Maintain owner's identity on all carcass parts throughout the cut/wrap process.
- Names of all owners of each animal must be included in your records.
- Use an approved scale to record rail weights.
- Denature rendered items with ink or other approved method.

For sausage or other ground meat products:

- The source of fat or trim added to sausage or other ground custom meat products must be from USDA inspected meat products.

OR

- All fat trimmings and meat that make up the ground product must come from custom animals owned by the same customer who owns the end product.
- Transfer of fat and trim from a custom animal for use in another product for another customer is not legal.



- **WSDA Food Safety Program regulates custom meat facilities and custom slaughter operators.**
- **Custom meat is for the sole use of the owner and end consumer of the animal. Once slaughter has occurred, exchange or sale of the meat or any part of the carcass is illegal. The sales transaction must be complete while the animal is alive.**
- **All carcasses and parts must be identified as to owner and with the words "not for sale" from the point of slaughter.**
- **All portions of the carcass not returned to the owner must be denatured and rendered. The only allowed exception is that hides may be sold by the slaughterer as compensation for the service of slaughter.**