

# ALBERTA SHEEP

## Questions and Answers for Distributing Meat

### Is it legal to slaughter and process lambs on my farm for the consumption of other persons outside of my own family?

No, doing so could lead to fines up to \$10,000 for operating an unlicensed abattoir.

Under the Slaughter of Animals section of the Meat Inspection Act, it states that “No person shall slaughter an animal unless the animal has been inspected by an inspector immediately before the time of slaughter.”

It is unlawful for a person to sell, barter, give away or transfer uninspected meat to a person outside of the producer’s household, or offer to do so.

### Can I slaughter my own lambs for myself and my immediate family?

Yes, producers are exempt from the Meat Inspection Regulations if they are slaughtering animals on the producer’s own premises for consumption only by persons who form part of their producer’s household.

Meat that is uninspected may be consumed by the producer and producer’s household.

Household means,

- the producer and the producer’s spouse and the producer’s children, siblings and parents, whether in a blood, step or foster relationship or a relationship by marriage to the producer, and
- current employees of the producer living in or on property belonging to the producer.

Producer means (in relation to an animal) an individual who, directly or indirectly,

- owns the animal(s) and has owned the animal(s) throughout the previous 30 days, and
- has and throughout that period has had responsibility for its care and maintenance on that person’s own premises.

### Is it legal to sell live lambs or sheep to a person outside of my household and let them butcher it on my land?

No, they are not household members and do not meet the criteria for being a producer. You may be faced with fines up to \$10,000 for operating an unlicensed abattoir.

### I would like to sell lamb at my on-farm store. Are there any regulations that I should be aware of?

If you are considering selling lamb, it is necessary to contact your local Health Authority to apply for permits to become a “Food Establishment”. People who sell meat

products from their own freezer, on-farm store or at the local Farmers Market require permits and must follow guidelines set by the local Health Authority. All Food Establishments are subject to the Public Health Act and it is advised that persons involved in the food industry are familiar with this Act.

The cost of permits may vary from region to region. Permits are required for public safety purposes as well as for industry protection. These permits include restrictions on the manner or type of food that may be distributed, manufactured, processed, sold, stored or supplied. The permit in a store setting must be displayed in a conspicuous place that is visible to all patrons.

All meat sold must be inspected and properly transported. Permits may be required for transporting meat in certain regions of the province (contact your local Health Authority). When transporting meat from a processing plant it must be transported in the vehicle that maintains at a temperature below 4°C while it is in the vehicle.

A home-based food establishment must be separate from your domestic kitchen. You must have a way to keep your domestic food activities completely separate from your business. Restrictions and regulations on operating a home-based food business vary with the municipality. Before you can begin operating you'll be required to get a food establishment permit from the Health Authority in your area.

**As part of my customer service, I pick up the processed lamb from the abattoir and deliver it to my customer. Is there anything that I should be aware of?**

Often producers invoice their customers for the total amount (the animal plus the cost of the slaughtering and processing) as well as delivering the meat to their home. This act is often seen as part of their customer service program and a way to maintain repeat customers. Transporting meat in certain municipalities and cities require permits.

When considering selling meat products it is necessary for producers to be aware of the conditions that could lead to fines or liability lawsuits.

Please, contact your local Health Authority or the Alberta Ag-Info Centre – 1-866-882-7677 for more detailed information.

Information and definitions are from Alberta Agriculture & Food (AF) as well as the Meat Inspection Regulation – Meat Inspection Act.

Contact your regional health authority for further information. Refer to <http://www.health.gov.ab.ca>

For information regarding meat inspection contact Alberta Agriculture & Food, Meat Inspection at 1-403-948-8505.