



Ministry of  
Agriculture

**Guidelines for Establishment Operators and Animal Producers or Agents**

**Emergency Slaughter Under the B.C. Meat Inspection Regulation**



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## **Introduction**

The B.C. Government's new meat inspection program reinforces the province's reputation for safe and wholesome meat by continuing the current safeguards and inspection system in provincially licensed Class A and B slaughter establishments.

In exceptional circumstances the emergency slaughter of a red meat species or ratite species animal(s) may be necessary to ensure that no undue suffering occurs to the animal(s) or that there is no significant hazard to humans.

The B.C. Meat Inspection Program is authorized to permit the emergency slaughter of an animal(s) at a provincially licensed abattoir (now referred to as establishment) or on farm, when a Meat Hygiene Inspector is not present. In both these situations, the emergency slaughter must occur under the supervision of a veterinary practitioner.

The following document provides establishment operators and or animal producers or agents with detailed guidelines on the requirements and obligations of conducting an emergency slaughter under the authority of the B.C. Meat Inspection Program when a Meat Hygiene Inspector is not present.

## **Requirements For An Emergency Slaughter At A Provincially Licensed Establishment**

When an animal(s) must be slaughter and a Meat Hygiene Inspector is not present to approve the slaughter, the establishment operator may either:

- Euthanize the animal(s), and remove and destroy the carcass(es) without approval, or
- Conduct the emergency slaughter of the animal(s) and hold the carcass(es) for inspection.

If the establishment operator conducts an emergency slaughter they must comply with the following requirements:

1. If the Meat Hygiene Inspector is not scheduled to be at the establishment within 24 hours of the slaughter, the establishment operator will inform the Meat Inspection Program Regional Supervisor of the required emergency slaughter.
2. The establishment operator will hire the services of a veterinary practitioner that is familiar with the species to attend the establishment prior to the slaughter. The establishment operator is responsible for the cost of the veterinarian practitioner's services.
  - The veterinary practitioner must perform an ante mortem inspection (clinical examination) of the animal(s) and deem the animal(s) fit for slaughter. The veterinary practitioner must approve that an emergency slaughter is required.

- The veterinary practitioner must fill in the relevant section of the **“Document for an Approved Emergency Slaughter at a Provincially Licensed Establishment”** for each animal(s).
3. The establishment operator will slaughter the animal(s) and identify the carcass(es) as held.
- The establishment operator must hang the carcass(es) on the Held Rail in a manner that the carcass(es) is not brought into contact with any other carcass(es), and
  - The establishment operator must store the head(s) and offal(s) separately from the carcass(es), in a manner that allows this material to be matched with the carcass(es) to allow for a complete post mortem inspection.
4. The establishment operator will tell the Meat Hygiene Inspector about the emergency slaughter as soon as they arrive for their shift at the establishment and provide the Meat Hygiene Inspector with the **“Document for an Approved Emergency Slaughter at a Provincially Licensed Establishment”**.
- The Meat Hygiene Inspector will perform the post mortem inspection of the carcass(es), head(s) and offal(s) as soon as possible.

### **Requirements For An Emergency Slaughter On Farm**

The animal producer or agent must comply with the following requirements when an emergency slaughter is required on farm to ensure that there is no undue suffering due to transport or any significant hazard to humans.

1. The producer or agent will obtain pre-approval from the establishment operator that the establishment can accept the carcass(es) before the animal(s) is slaughtered and shipped.
2. The establishment operator can only approve the acceptance of a carcass(es) if:
  - A Meat Hygiene Inspector is scheduled to be on site at the establishment for the acceptance of the carcass(es), and
  - The slaughter establishment license includes the slaughter of the species for which approval is being requested.

If neither of the above criteria is met, the establishment operator must contact and obtain approval from the Meat Inspection Program Regional Supervisor to receive the emergency slaughtered carcass(es).

3. The producer or agent will hire the services of a veterinary practitioner that is familiar with the species to attend the location prior to the slaughter. The producer or agent is responsible for the cost of the veterinarian practitioner’s services.

- The veterinary practitioner must perform an ante mortem examination (clinical examination) of the animal(s) and deem the animal(s) fit for slaughter. The veterinary practitioner must approve that an emergency slaughter is required.
  - The veterinary practitioner must fill in the relevant section of the **“Document for an Approved Emergency Slaughter On Farm”** for each animal(s), and ensure it is shipped with the carcass(es) to the establishment.
4. The producer or agent must obtain a SRM transportation permit for all emergency slaughtered cattle prior to transporting the carcass(es) to the slaughter establishment, as per federal regulation. The bled carcass(es) is considered SRM in its entirety regardless of its age due to the fact that the distal ileum of all *Bos indicus* and *Bos taurus* carcass(es) is legally defined as SRM.
  5. The producer or agent must ensure that there is no food safety risk resulting from the method of transportation.
    - The trailer must be clean so that further contamination of the bled carcass(es) does not occur.
    - Care must be taken to ensure that the carcass(es) is free of manure or other debris, and that any bodily fluids exiting from the bled carcass(es) are contained. This includes brain tissue and blood which may seep out of a stun wound in the head.
    - The transportation time of the bled carcass(es) to the slaughter establishment, must be carefully managed. The maximum time for delivery of the bled carcass(es) from the time of stunning is two hours. Shorter delivery times may be specified depending on the method of transportation (no refrigeration), and weather conditions. Shipment during warm weather may necessitate shipping times as short as 30-45 minutes.
  6. The establishment operator will immediately tell the Meat Hygiene Inspector when the carcass(es) has arrived at the establishment.
    - The Meat Hygiene Inspector should observe the unloading of the carcass(es).
    - The establishment operator will immediately eviscerate and chill the carcass(es).
  7. The establishment operator will give the **“Document for an Approved Emergency Slaughter On Farm”** to the Meat Hygiene Inspector before the post mortem inspection.

### **Post Mortem Inspection Of Emergency Slaughtered Carcasses**

The Meat Hygiene Inspector will verify that all emergency slaughter requirements were met and will conduct the post mortem inspection of emergency slaughtered carcass(es), head(s) and offal(s).

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The final disposition of the carcass(es) will be based on the combined ante mortem and organoleptic findings at post mortem. The Meat Inspection Program Veterinarian may also be called upon to evaluate a carcass(es).

An approved carcass(es) will be marked with the B.C. Inspection Legend stamp and is approved to be sold in B.C. as an inspected meat product.

### **Documentation For Emergency Slaughter**

This guideline document and the two forms: “**Document for an Approved Emergency Slaughter On Farm**” and “**Document for an Approved Emergency Slaughter at a Provincially Licensed Establishment**” are posted on the Ministry of Agriculture website). <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/meatinspection/>.

The “**Guidelines for Veterinary Practitioners for the Emergency Slaughter Under the B.C. Meat Inspection Program**” are also posted on the Ministry of Agriculture website <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/meatinspection/>.

Both SRM permits can be obtained by calling the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at 1.800.788-8155 or the nearest District Office. The bled carcass(es) will not be accepted at the slaughter establishment unless it is accompanied by the SRM transport permit.

For more information please visit our website at:  
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/meatinspection/>  
or contact us at:  
[bcmeatinspection@gov.bc.ca](mailto:bcmeatinspection@gov.bc.ca)