



# Meat and Poultry Inspection

## Rabbit Exemption

### Exempt Rabbit Slaughter and Processing Guidelines

**Is rabbit considered meat?** Yes. The definition of meat food product in the Kansas Meat and Poultry Inspection Act includes domestic rabbits.

**Can I slaughter and process some rabbits without inspection?** Yes. K.A.R. 4-16-3a(d) allows a person to slaughter or process 250 or less in a calendar year without inspection. The following requirements must be met to qualify for this exemption:

**Registration:** There is no requirement to register with the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Meat & Poultry Inspection Program under this exemption. The department will inspect these operations on a complaint basis.

**Business operations:** You do not engage in the business of buying and selling any rabbits or rabbit products capable of use as human food in a calendar year. Therefore, the rabbits must be raised by you.

**Sale of rabbit meat:** Rabbits are for distribution directly to the household consumer from that person's own premises. If you maintain control of the meat products, you can deliver the meat products directly to household consumers from your premises.

**Healthy rabbits:** Only healthy rabbits may be slaughtered to preclude adulteration of the finished product.

**Sanitation and adulteration:** Sanitation and adulteration requirements of the Kansas Meat and Poultry Inspection Act apply to the slaughter and processing of rabbits under this exemption. The applicable regulations can be found at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2008-title9-vol2/pdf/CFR-2008-title9-vol2-part354.pdf>.

**Sanitation:** Sanitation is found specifically in 9 CFR 354.210 through 354.248, and can be accessed through the link above. This includes maintaining proper temperatures in freezers or coolers. If you freeze the meat products, keep the product solidly frozen. If the meat is fresh, you should hold it at a temperature not to exceed 36° F. (9 CFR 354.244(d))

**Adulteration:** Adulteration includes rabbits:

- that contain any substance that might make it injurious to health,
- that have been fed or injected with a poisonous substance,
- that consist of any filthy, or decomposed substance, or is otherwise unwholesome,
- that have been prepared or held under insanitary conditions that may contaminate the meat product,
- that die other than by slaughter, or
- that are put in containers that are composed of any poisonous substance that may render the rabbit injurious to health.

If your operation does not meet the exemption requirements, you should contact our office to discuss the requirements for inspection.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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