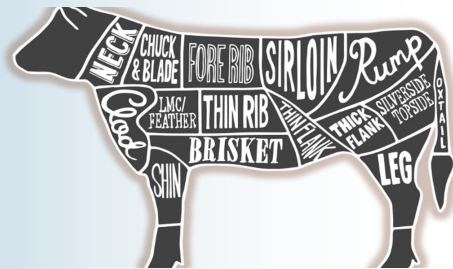


Montana Department of Livestock
MEAT, MILK & EGG INSPECTION BUREAU
FY 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Mission Statement

To protect the meat, egg and dairy consumers of Montana from potentially harmful products by site inspections and product sampling ensuring that all products meet or exceed strict federal and state regulations and standards.

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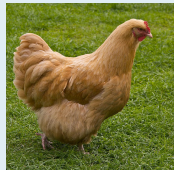
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FY23 Summarization Statement from Alicia Love, Bureau Chief

FY 23 was a year for big changes! In March, the Board of Livestock voted to recombine the Meat and Poultry Inspection and the Milk and Egg Bureaus. Together, it is now called the Meat, Milk, and Egg Inspection Bureau (MMEI) and combines all of Livestock's food safety team under one umbrella. This allowed for more logical use of resources and allowed the focus on food safety to be within one group. The Bureau also joined the Cooperative Interstate Shipping (CIS) Program in March. This program allows facilities to ship anywhere in the United States while still working with state inspectors. Thus far, one establishment has applied to join this program.

Montana is seeing increased interest in inspection services statewide. There are currently four facilities in the application process. We are optimistic that the demand for local meat and poultry products will bring more businesses to serve the population.

What the Future Holds

This year has indicated that the need for inspection services will continue to increase as industry expands throughout the state. The program is working to streamline training for established and new staff and provide metrics for staff to give feedback.

Meat and poultry inspection will have an onsite audit from the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) in 2023. We are confident that this will be successful visit with improved program training and management. We have streamlined our training process and staff are now being cross trained by other supervisors to ensure that the statewide program has consistent inspections.

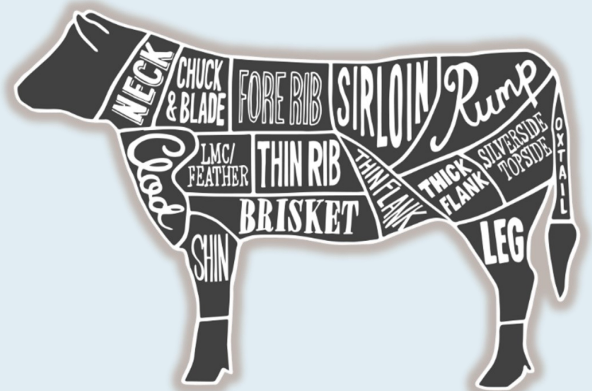
Authorization

According to section two of the Federal Meat Inspection Act, "Meat and meat food products are an important source of the nation's total supply of food. They are consumed throughout the nation and the major portion thereof moves in interstate or foreign commerce. It is essential in the public interest that the health and welfare of consumers be protected by assuring that meat and meat food products distributed to them are wholesome, not adulterated, and properly marked, labeled and packaged..."

The Meat section operates in a manner similar to the other 26 states with a cooperative state meat inspection program. Montana carries out its own inspection services in a manner that is "at least equal to" inspection services provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), as well as utilizing the federal Public Health Information System (PHIS) a web-based data driven system that utilizes role assignments and predictive analytics to collect, consolidate and analyze establishment data to generate and assign specific inspection tasks to improve food safety.

To help meet the federal "at least equal to" standard, Montana has adopted both federal law and rule. Under 81-9-219, Montana Code Annotated (MCA), Montana adopts the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Federal Poultry Inspection Act, and the Federal Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. Each of these federal acts addresses various aspects of how the Montana program operates.

Further, Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 32.6.712 adopts Title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). These rules outline how Montana is to carry out its meat and poultry inspection program. In



Organization and Funding

The Meat section operates on an annual budget of approximately \$2.3 million which consists of 50% federal funding and 50% state general fund. The program has 24 FTE (full time employee) positions.

Meat section is organized into three main units: administration, inspection, and audit units.

Administrative Unit

The Program Administration Unit provides program oversight, licensing, strategic planning, performance management, and records management. This unit is responsible for assuring administrative requirements of FSIS are met.

The office manager and compliance tech issue licenses and renewals annually using the USAHerds data software system. All slaughter headcount records and meat and poultry products poundage are also entered into USAHerds and compiled for quarterly statistical reporting. Headcount data is also compiled and reported to Montana Agricultural Statistics quarterly.

Program staff must obtain and maintain clearance to the secure federal Public Health Information System (PHIS) for recording inspection duties. The clearance process as well as issuing of all USDA issued equipment is handled by the administrative unit assuring all inspectors can receive proper clearance. The office manager and compliance tech serve the roles of Grant Curator, Role Management Analyst, and User Administrator for Montana in PHIS maintaining inspection staff assignments and establishment information.

The administrative unit is responsible for invoicing establishments for fees incurred for any overtime, holiday, or weekend inspection service as well as charges for inspection services for any species “non-amenable” to the Federal Meat Inspection Act (i.e. bison are amenable in Montana, elk, llama, etc.) as required by regulation are billed monthly. Fees are tracked and reported to FSIS.

Administrative Unit Staff

Bureau Chief, Helena – Alicia Love, Helena HQ

Office Manager, Helena - Darcy Alm, Helena, HQ

Compliance Tech, Helena – Olivia Johnson, Cascade—Helena HQ



425 licensed facilities. License numbers in each supervisory district:

District 01 – Northwest & Western Montana

State Inspected Plants: 9
Custom Exempt Facilities: 9
Meat Depot Storage Units: 47

District 02 – Southwest & Central Montana

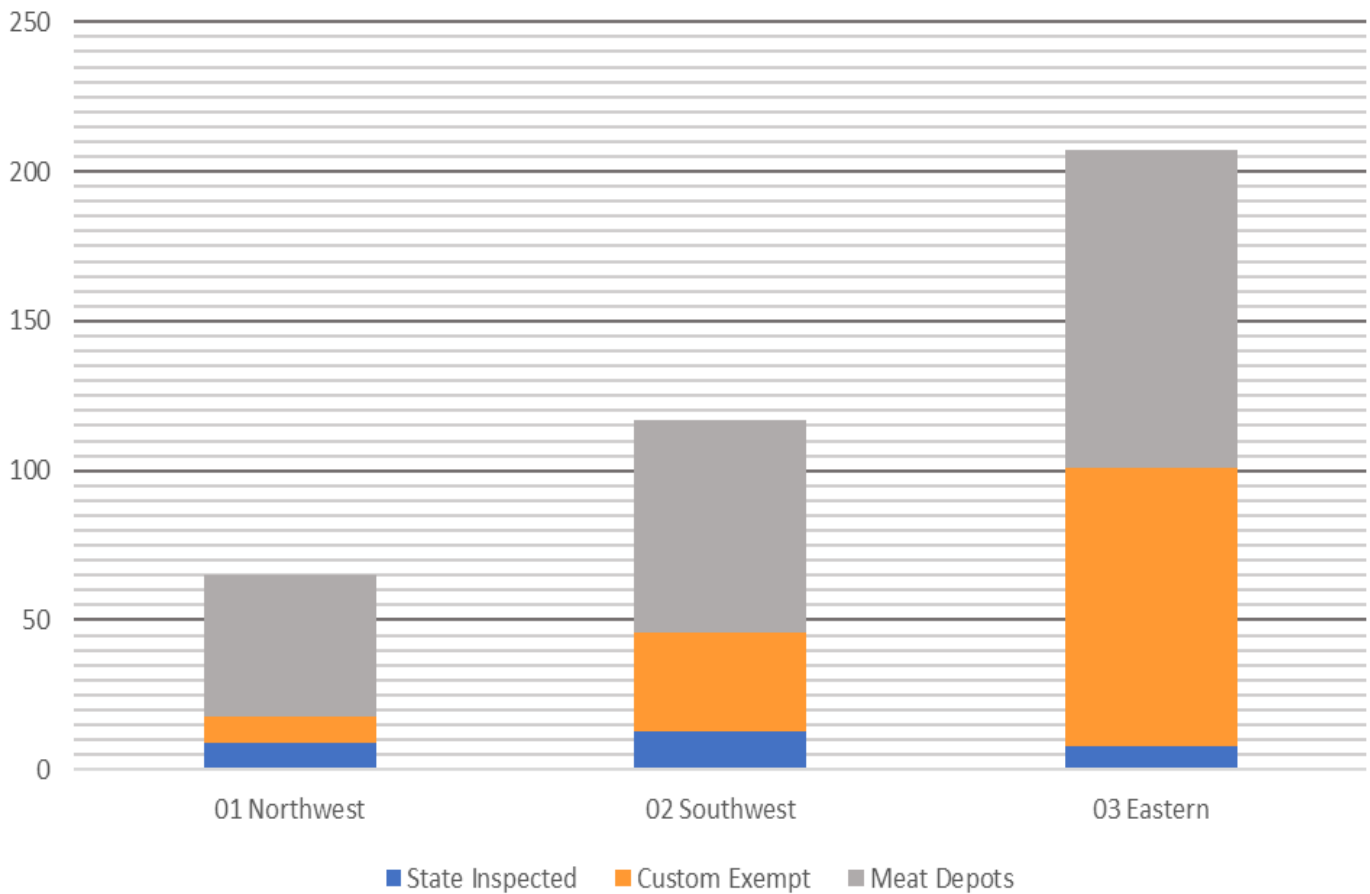
State Inspected Plants: 13
Custom Exempt Facilities: 33
Meat Depot Storage Units: 71

District 03 – Eastern & Northcentral Montana

State Inspected Plants: 8
Custom Exempt Facilities: 93
Meat Depot Storage Units: 106

USDA Inspected - 36

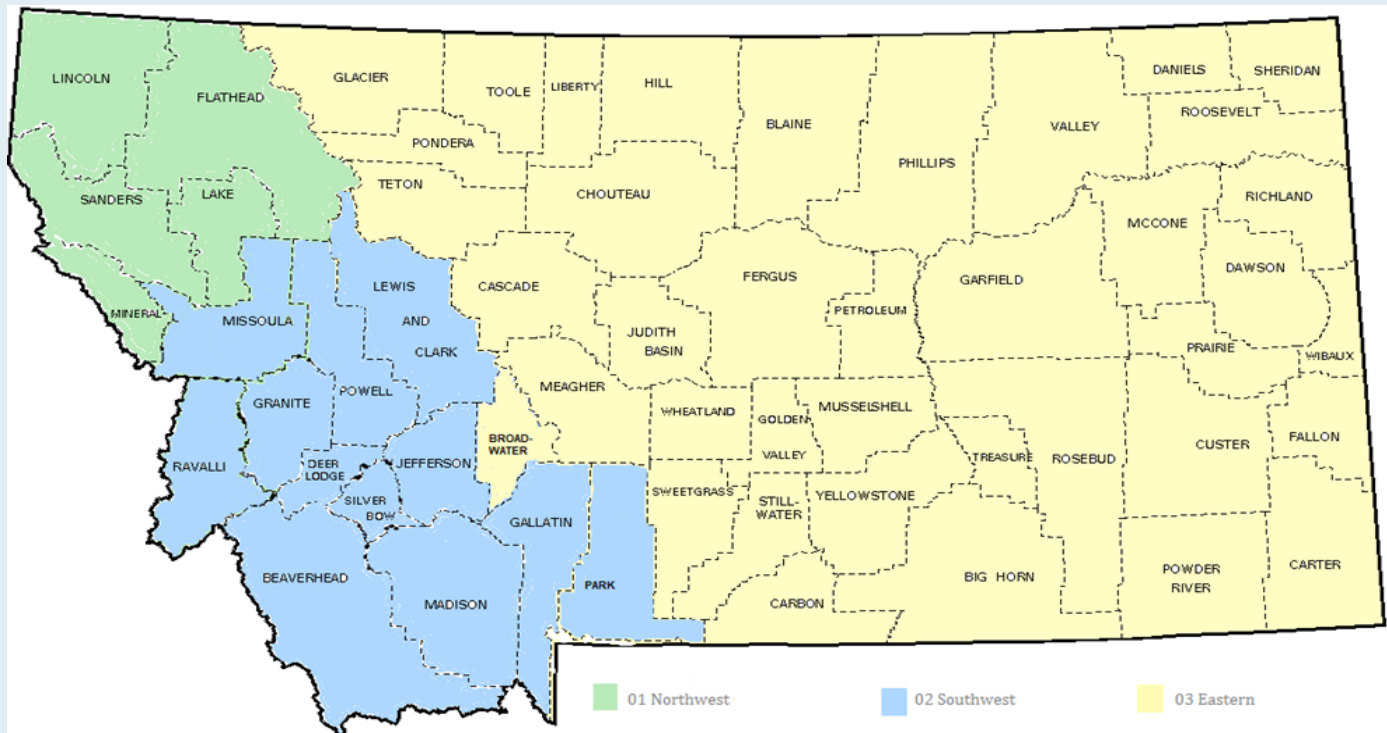
Licensed Facilities By Supervisory Circuit



Inspection Unit

District Supervisors

The image below represents the three supervisory districts in Montana: Northwest, Southwest and Eastern.



The three district supervisors are responsible for local meat inspection staff in their district to provide establishments inspection services. They assure that field inspectors are completing their job duties as assigned, approve time and schedules, and complete job performance appraisals as required. Supervisors provide both slaughter and processing relief inspection as necessary.

Inspector supervisors use their knowledge of hazard analysis and HACCP plans to assure both inspection staff and plant personnel are following regulations. Supervisors travel within their districts to conduct onsite plant reviews throughout the year, assist staff at plants, provide inspection coverage when necessary.

District Supervisors

District 01 Northwest district supervisor – Stephen Fucci, Columbia Falls

District 02 Southwest district supervisor – Nick Wormgoor, Belgrade

District 03 Eastern district supervisor – Samantha Novak, White Sulpher Springs

Inspectors also check for correct labeling of products, including review of ingredients and net weights; assure the mark of inspection is used properly; look for any safety hazards or sanitation concerns in the production area; and conduct meetings with plant management regarding various subjects and regulations.

Montana MPI inspection staff are required to keep up on FSIS Notices and Directives issued by USDA as guidance on the application of regulation. Staff must determine which regulation is applicable to an establishment.

Montana Meat and Poultry Inspection staff also oversee custom exempt facilities. These facilities are permitted to slaughter and process product for use by the owner, members of his household, and non-paying guests. Products from custom operations may not be resold and must be marked "not for sale". Like officially inspected establishments, custom exempt facilities are required to meet and follow all sanitation guidelines. Although not subject to animal by animal inspection, onsite inspections of custom exempt facilities and records are conducted no less than twice per year. Meat and/or poultry meat depot storage sites are reviewed once per year.



Inspection Unit Staff

State Meat & Poultry Inspectors

Region 1: Lake, Flathead	Bethany Lefner, Polson
Region 2: Northcentral	Tammy Mortag, Great Falls
Region 3: Ravalli	Jennifer Alm Meinzen, Lolo
Region 4: Silverbow, Powell, Granite, Deer Lodge	Austin Hoopes, Butte
Region 5: Blaine, Phillips	Kathi Molyneaux, Chinook
Region 6: Gallatin, Park	Alice Bruce, Butte
Region 8: Beaverhead, Madison	John Elmore, Dillon
Region 9: Lewis & Clark	
Region 10: Lincoln, NW Flathead	Lance Parsley, Kalispell
Region 11: Northeastern	Rom Hedges, Antelope
Region 12: Meagher, Broadwater	Don Holwegner, Bozeman
Region 13: Southeastern	Minh Walker, Roundup
Region 14: Mineral, Sanders	Vacant
Region 15: Missoula	Caleb Bagnell, Missoula
Northwest Relief:	Vacant
Southwest Relief:	Justin Ahl, Helena
Eastern Relief:	Steve Buchanan, Big Timber

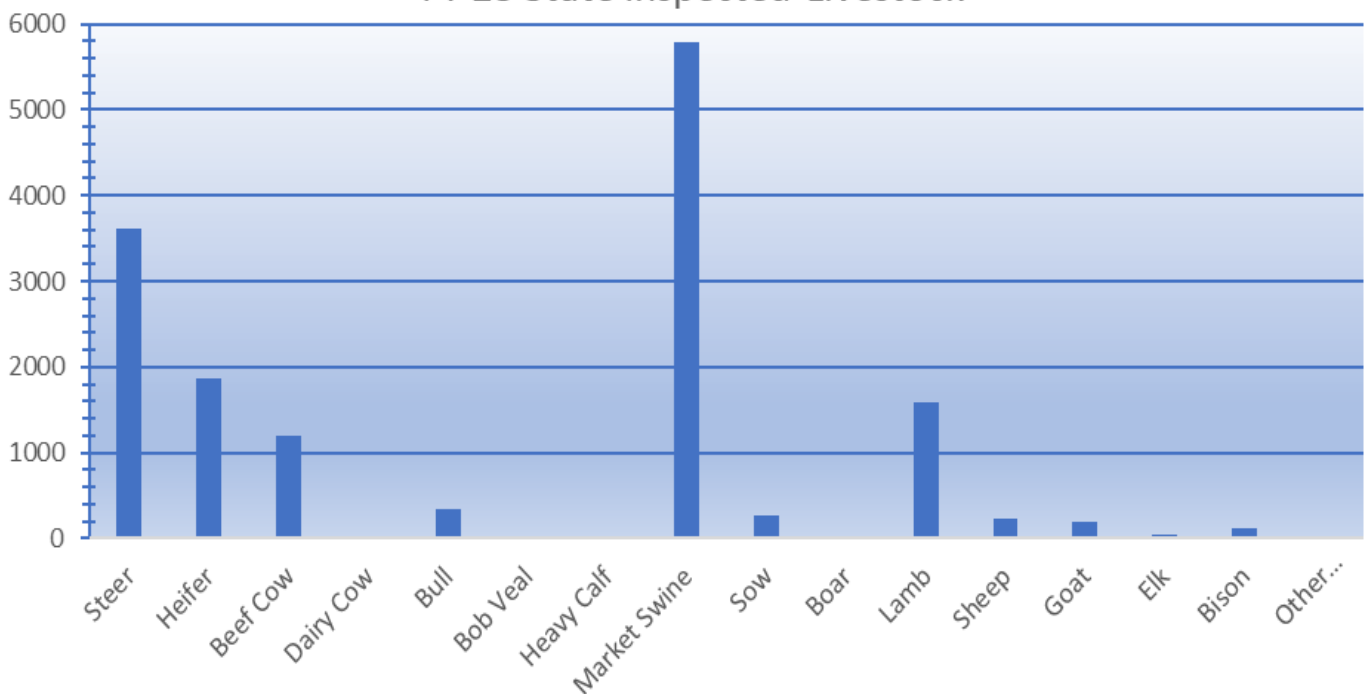


FY23 State Inspected Slaughter

State Inspected – Livestock slaughter headcounts

	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	TO-TALS
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	
Steer	331	410	379	361	311	303	299	231	278	212	244	248	3607
Heifer	134	113	163	160	129	136	202	197	170	164	143	158	1869
Beef Cow	60	72	104	106	89	111	88	77	132	123	116	119	1197
Dairy Cow	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bull	36	33	32	20	22	18	21	15	21	34	43	52	347
Bob Veal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Heavy Calf	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Market Swine	536	1037	580	510	407	311	355	419	432	404	446	342	5779
Sow	16	36	4	13	4	3	20	14	29	14	59	53	265
Boar	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	3	1	6	12	28
Lamb	126	154	137	150	108	132	240	90	125	113	89	131	1595
Sheep	1	33	34	21	6	28	15	28	12	29	12	17	236
Goat	32	15	35	20	4	0	6	40	11	9	4	22	198
Elk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	23	15	0	0	49
Bison	13	4	9	5	6	7	7	11	15	10	16	9	112
Other Voluntary	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	2	8	0	3	18

FY 23 State Inspected Livestock



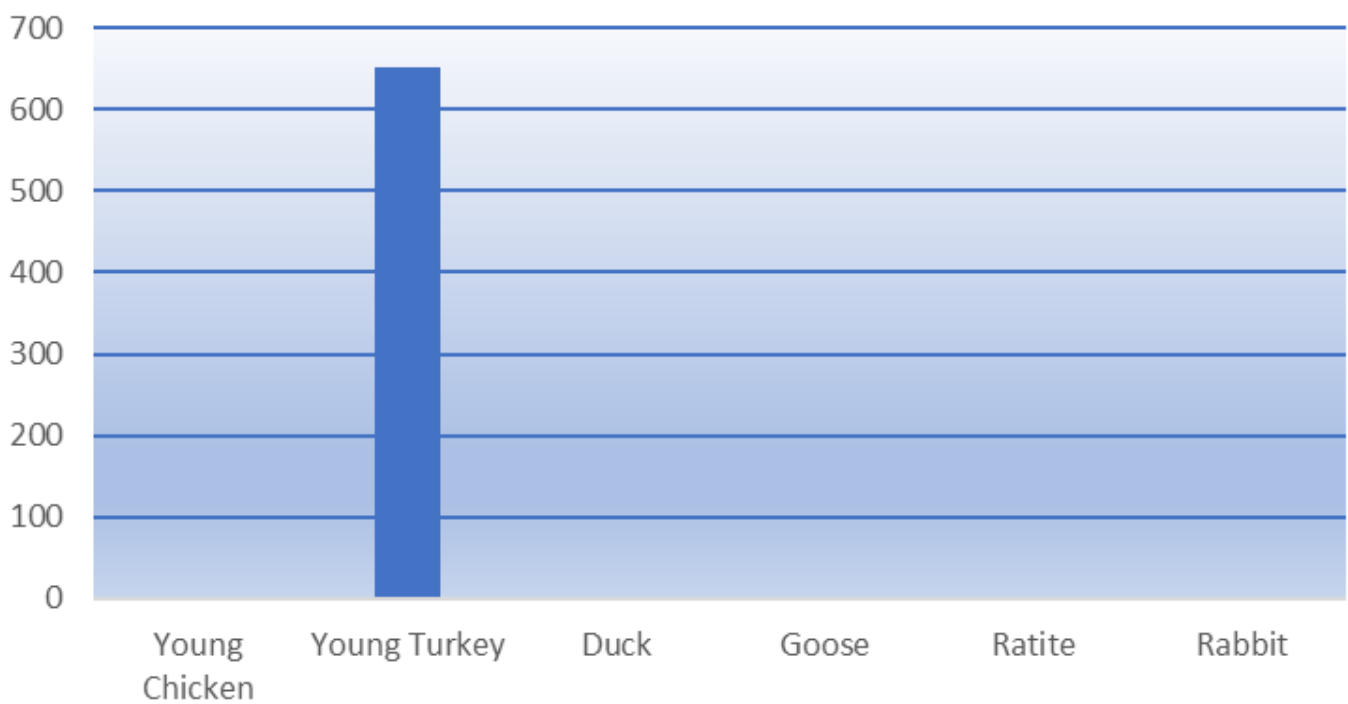
FY23 State Inspected Slaughter continued

State Inspected – Poultry Slaughter

	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	FY23	TO-TALS
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June		
Young Chicken	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Young Turkey	0	0	0	652	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	652
Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ratite	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rabbit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



FY 23 State Inspected Poultry

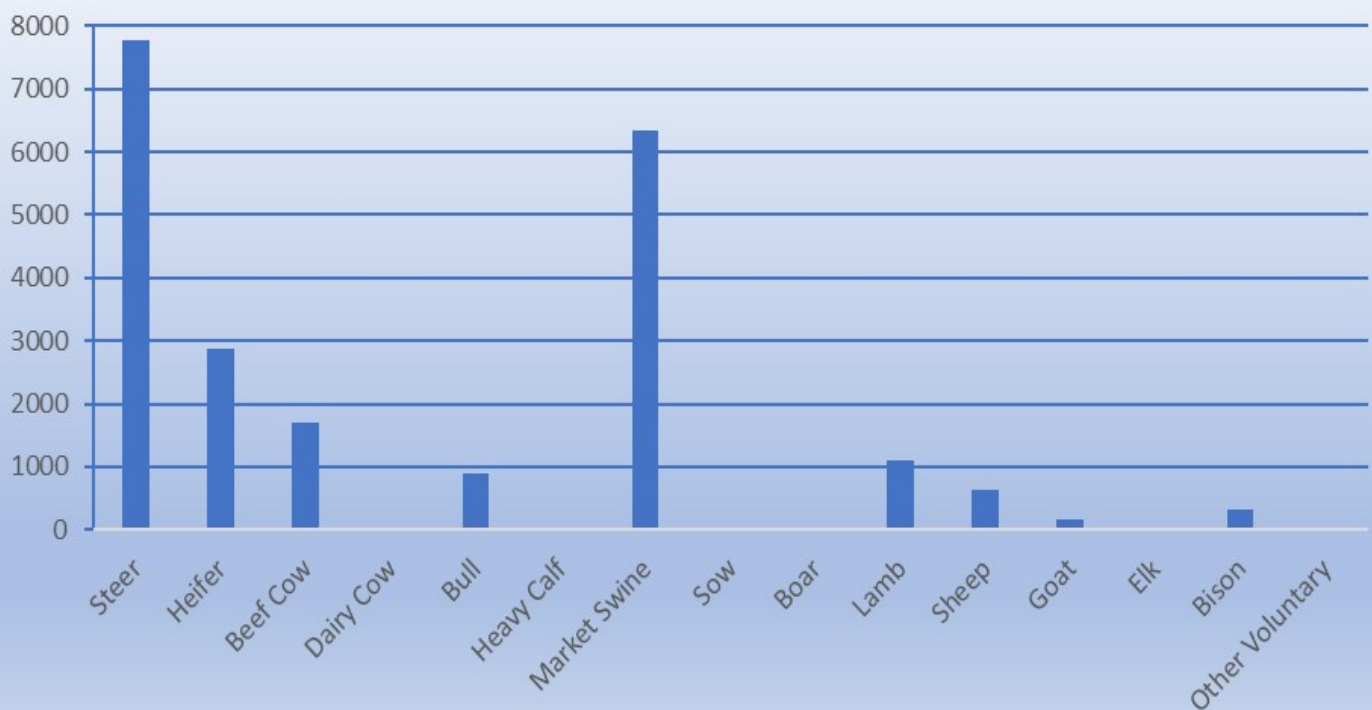


FY23 Custom Exempt Slaughter

Custom Exempt – Livestock slaughtered headcounts

	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>TO-TALS</i>
Steer	372	61	408	1451	79	1150	0	284	399	553	769	2247	7773
Heifer	107	26	73	406	4	450	0	82	116	154	399	1054	2871
Beef Cow	67	4	92	254	9	194	0	25	67	106	198	697	1713
Dairy Cow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bull	53	2	34	146	6	122	0	36	42	45	103	309	898
Heavy Calf	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Market Swine	374	7	652	1451	41	977	0	31	342	422	793	1240	6330
Sow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lamb	34	1	132	139	0	268	0	3	82	29	142	267	1097
Sheep	66	0	31	218	12	69	0	0	13	18	17	193	637
Goat	7	0	22	35	0	31	0	1	8	1	23	38	166
Elk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bison	0	0	40	32	0	45	0	3	82	26	7	82	317
Other Voluntary	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	1	8

FY23 Custom Exempt Livestock



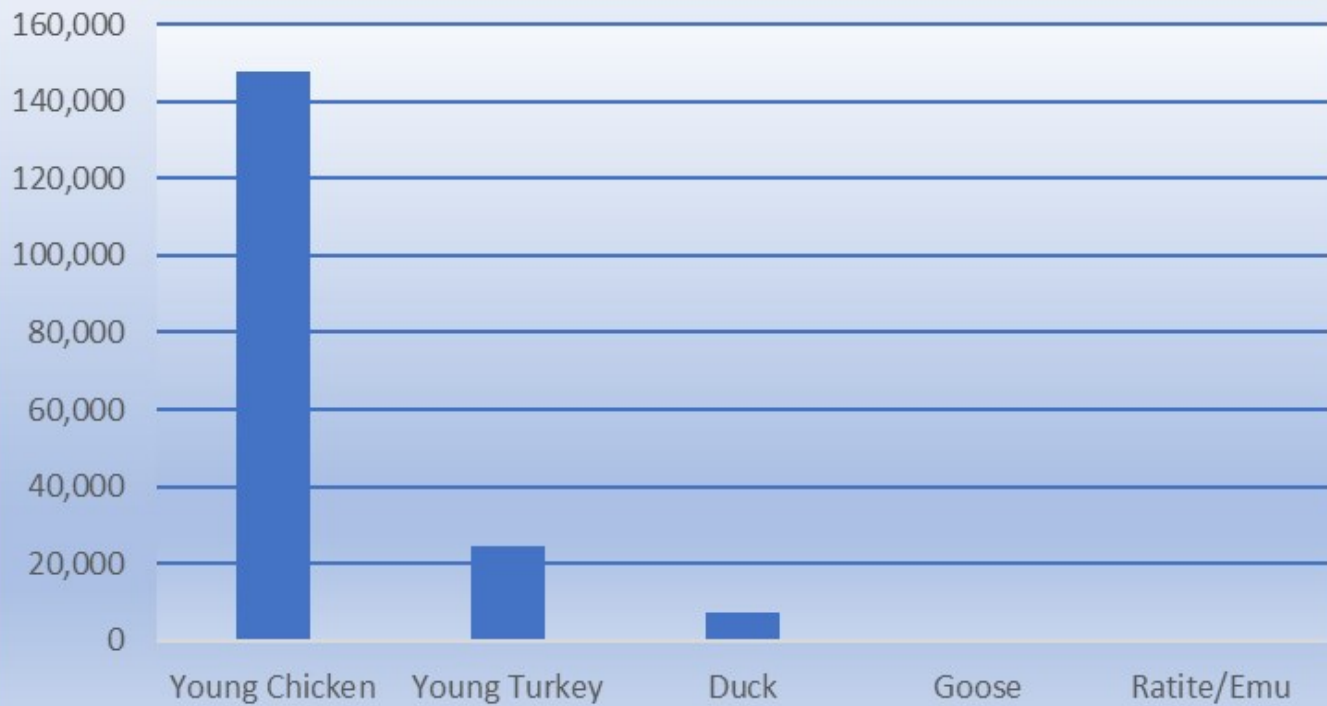
FY23 Custom Exempt Slaughter continued

Custom Exempt – Poultry slaughtered headcounts

	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>TO-TALS</i>
Young Chicken	5847	15505	0	720	5403	8552	6750	10017	25919	6747	399	1027	2844
Young Turkey	3437	0	0	1655	2182	2540	500	2677	400	672	198	667	1683
Duck	580	0	0	0	0	91	0	1200	1847	428	0	0	0
Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	103	302	891
Ratite/Emu	0	0	195	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



FY23 Custom Exempt Poultry



FY23 Inspected Product Pounds Produced

Products produced under inspection services are tracked by the HACCP categories outlined in CFR 417.2. They include:

- *Raw Ground* – raw product that is put through a grinding process; like ground beef and ground pork
- *Raw Not Ground* – product that is not ground and intact; like carcass halves & quarters, cuts (bone-in or boned), primals & sub-primals (steaks, chops)
- *Not Heat Treated Shelf Stable* – product is acidified/fermented processed without heat/cooking
- *Heat Treated Shelf Stable* – product is processed with heat and/or drying until shelf stable, like jerky and snack sticks
- *Fully Cooked Not Shelf Stable* – products that are brought up to required cooking temperatures but not shelf stable, like some hams and sausages

Heat Treated Not Fully Cooked Not Shelf Stable – products are processed with heat but not fully cooked

MEAT	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	FY23 Total Pounds Processed
03B Raw Ground	557,500	371,863	383,427	518,608	1,831,398
03C Raw Not Ground	547,651	310,088	489,938	639,501	1,987,178
03E Not Heat Treated - Shelf Stable	422	864	640	331	2,257
03F Heat Treated - Shelf Stable	31,244	22,658	29,328	22,493	105,723
03G Fully Cooked - Not Shelf Stable	114,573	87,985	98,660	113,318	414,536
03H Heat Treated - Not Fully Cooked Not SS	40,093	39,567	26,583	30,552	136,795
03J Slaughter with no further processing	866,318	505,303	619,412	406,176	2,397,209

POULTRY	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	FY23 Total Pounds Processed
03B Raw Ground	500	185,804	0	300	186,604
03C Raw Not Ground	160	360	400	80	1,000
03E Not Heat Treated - Shelf Stable	24	42	0	0	66
03F Heat Treated - Shelf Stable	0	0	0	0	0
03G Fully Cooked - Not Shelf Stable	21,610	5,737	22,090	22,344	71,781
03H Heat Treated - Not Fully Cooked Not SS	120	0	0	0	120
03J Slaughter with no further processing	0	0	0	0	0



Audit Unit

The Audit Unit consists of an Enforcement, Investigations and Analysis Officer (EIAO), a label specialist, and two compliance investigators. Compliance functions include those regulations that govern outside the in-plant inspection process.

The EIAO is part of the staff required to meet the “at least equal to” obligations for state meat inspection programs. A program EIAO must attend a FSIS 12-day virtual EIAO training course, in addition to the two-week Inspection Methods course. The EIAO has several job duties including conducting food safety assessments (FSAs), providing outreach to the state’s meat and poultry processors, and participating in recall activities. In addition, the EIAO will oversee the training for inspection staff and supervises the other audit unit staff.

Food Safety Assessments

The main responsibility of the EIAO is to conduct a Food Safety Assessment (FSA). FSAs are comprehensive reviews of an establishment’s food safety systems including the hazard analysis, HACCP plan, sanitation, microbiological testing, plant production practices, and any other practices and procedures that impact food safety. FSIS recommends routine FSAs are completed at all inspected establishments at a frequency no less than once every four years. Other situations may require a “for cause” FSA to be completed immediately, like repeated non compliances or product adulteration.

During an FSA, the EIAO may spend several days in an official establishment reviewing written documentation as well as observing all aspects of slaughter and product production. In establishments that produce ready-to-eat products, the EIAO also collects environmental samples testing for *Listeria Monocytogenes*.

The EIAO may take enforcement actions based on the findings of the FSA. FSAs are entered into the Public Health Information System as part of the permanent record for each establishment.



Microbiological Testing

Montana’s inspection program conducts product sampling for detecting pathogens in meat and poultry products. Establishment sampling is directed to each inspector monthly and must be monitored to assure required frequencies are met. Any product sample found positive for a pathogen is addressed as required. These efforts may include increased sampling, a Food Safety Assessment, or a revision to the plant’s Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system.

In FY23 the Montana program worked with the Montana Public Health Laboratory to test for a variety of pathogens such as *E. coli O157:H7*, six major non-O157 shiga toxin producing *E. coli* (STECs), and *Listeria Monocytogenes* and *salmonella*. Montana also voluntarily tested raw bison meat intended for sale.

Inspection staff conduct residue sampling for both the National Residue Program and local kidney swab testing (KIS) for residue testing of show animals or any animal that may be suspected of recent injection. There may also be food chemistry testing requirements for certain products.

In FY23 meat inspectors will collect approximately 215 raw beef samples and 125 ready-to-eat product samples for testing. Montana’s sampling program is a critical component for assuring that products produced under inspection are safe for consumers. Staff records each sample by lot, date of collection, and verifies products are held from commerce until the sample results are confirmed negative.

Labeling

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (59g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
Total Fat 8g 10%	
Saturated Fat 1g 5%	
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg 0%	
Sodium 160mg 7%	
Total Carbohydrate 37g 13%	
Dietary Fiber 4g 14%	
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars 20%	
Protein 9g	
Vitamin D 2mcg 10%	
Calcium 260mg 20%	
Iron 8mg 45%	
Potassium 240mg 6%	

The labeling specialist ensures that meat and poultry products are properly labeled prior to entering commerce. This includes reviewing product formulation to determine that they meet the standards of composition, contain only approved ingredients in approved amounts, and contain no adulterant or deleterious ingredients.

Proper labeling contains important consumer information such as product identification, safe handling instructions, ingredients, and allergens. Labels of products produced under inspection must all bear the mark of inspection. Label approval is an ongoing procedure as new establishments are brought under inspection and current establishments add products, update product formulas, change ingredients, and label

designs. Labels are reviewed and renewed 3 years from the approval date to confirm continued compliance with regulations.

The label specialist visits state inspected establishments annually and audits labels to assure products are being marketed to consumers with correct information. Audits are conducted at all state inspected establishments to assure ingredient statements are correct.

This position provides label training to both inspectors and establishment personnel.

Compliance

Montana Meat and Poultry Inspection has two compliance investigators who travel around the state ensuring retail establishments that deal in meat and poultry products are following both state and federal laws. Compliance staff may also investigate consumer complaints, ensure adulterated and misbranded product are removed from commerce, and investigate the sales of meat or poultry outside the regulatory framework.

Compliance investigators travel statewide to assure local meat supply is unadulterated and labeled properly. They provide outreach and education to the public. Compliance staff work in partnership with the USDA compliance officer based out of the Port of Sweet Grass.



These positions may also provide relief inspection in establishments.

Audit Unit Staff

Enforcement, Investigations and Analysis Officer (EIAO), Helena – Jay Nelson Helena HQ

Label Specialist, Helena – Kaylee Hiel, Helena HQ

Compliance Investigators -

James Peterson, Bozeman
Ben Schmidt, Columbia Falls

“MEAT OUR STAFF”

ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT STAFF

Alicia Love, Bureau Chief: Alicia grew up in Gilbert, Arizona and moved to Montana in March 2016. She has a Bachelor of Science degree from Arizona State University and a Masters of Public Health from Grand Canyon University. She joined the Department in March 2021 after working for Montana DPHHS. She enjoys hiking, camping, bird watching, and spending time with her husband and children.

Darcy Alm, Office Manager: See milk and egg section, page. 31

Olivia Johnson, Administrative Assistant: Olivia grew up in a small town outside of Colorado Springs, Colorado where she discovered her passion for working with animals through various roles in the veterinary field. She moved to Montana in 2022 and recently joined the Meat, Milk, and Egg Inspection Bureau. In her spare time, she enjoys reading and taking her dog on adventures to explore Montana’s wide variety outdoor activities.

AUDIT UNIT STAFF

Jay Nelson, EIAO & Food Safety Officer: Recently joined Montana Meat, Milk & Egg Inspection Bureau in April 2023 after working in the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture as a Meat Safety Inspector. Jay and his wife are loving the spectacular beauty of Montana as they explore Big Sky Country one hike at a time and look forward to wetting their fishing lines in the amazing streams and rivers of Montana.

Kaylee Hiel, Label Specialist: Kaylee was raised in Helena and resides there now with her son and dogs. She joined the Department of Livestock in 2019 with the Animal Health Bureau, and transferred to Meat, Milk, and Egg Inspection in 2023. She enjoys traveling, baking, hiking, kayaking, fishing, and soaking up the sunshine.

Ben W. Schmidt, Compliance Investigator: Ben grew up in Butte, Montana and now lives in the Flathead valley. He graduated from Montana Tech and received a B.S. in Business Management/I.T. He came to the meat, milk, and egg bureau in 2013. His passions include being on the water and in the woods with family and friends.

James Peterson, Compliance Investigator: James grew up in Eastern Montana and graduated from MSU. He began with the Department as a Meat and Poultry Inspector in 2013. He currently lives in Belgrade with his wife, Stephanie, where they enjoy hiking, camping, and traveling.

INPECTION UNIT STAFF

Tammy Mortag, Meat Inspector: Tammy was originally born in an Amish community in Pennsylvania but moved to Great Falls with her family in 1985 where she has remained. Tammy farms and ranches and with her husband, Todd, they have raised 5 children. She comes to the department in 2022 with 30 years of medical experience (trauma team, oncology, radiation, lab, and microbiology) and many years of training from the school of hard knocks. Tammy has also been an auctioneer, ballroom dance instructor, welder (including overseas), mechanic, and painter. She and her dad enjoy working on cars and are currently restoring a 1940 Chevrolet Sedan.

Wormgoor Nick, District 2 Meat Inspection Supervisor: Nick grew up in Eastern Montana, graduated from MSU with a Biology degree, and has since live in Butte and Belgrade. He began his career in the meat inspection program in 2011. His wife and 3 young kids all enjoy hunting, fishing, backpacking, photography, hiking into alpine lakes, and bagging peaks.

Austin Hoopes, Meat Inspector: Austin was born and raised in Butte, Montana; he lived in Helena for about 3 years but now resides in Butte with his wife Brooke and son Jackson. He started at the department of livestock in 2019 and

Beth Lefner, Meat Inspector: Beth started with the department in December 2022. She is originally from Texas and likes to hike and play video games in her off time.

Samantha Novak, Eastern District Supervisor: Samantha grew up in the Little Blackfoot Valley and now lives on a ranch outside of White Sulphur Springs with her boyfriend, Roy and many critters. She started with the Department of Livestock, Animal Health Bureau as a Compliance Tech in 2016 and transferred to Meat, Milk and Egg Inspection Bureau in 2019. In her spare time, she enjoys helping out on the ranch working cows, running hay equipment and riding horses.

Steve Fucci, Northwest District Supervisor: Steve is a native of Long Island N.Y. At the age of 14 he started working on local farm through High School. He's been a journey men butcher for 38 years. 32 of those years he was a meat manager. He also bartended for 38 years. His hobbies are weightlifting, snowboarding, hunting, fishing, cooking, boating and wood working.

Lance Parrsley, Meat Inspector: Lance is based out of the Kalispell area. He joined the department in 2019, and after a short separation, rejoined in 2022.

Alice Bruce, Meat Inspector: Alice is base out of the Butte area, servicing the Gallatin Valley and has joined the department in early 2023.

Caleb Bagnell, Meat Inspector: Caleb grew up in Frenchtown Montana where he participated in 4-H agriculture programs and raised livestock. He graduated from Montana State University with a B.S. degree in Biology. He currently resides in Missoula. He's worked for the State as a Meat Inspector for over three years, advancing and pursuing his interest in public health and food safety. Caleb is an avid reader and enjoys hunting, fishing, and boating.

Jennifer Meinzen, Meat Inspector: Jennifer grew up in Lolo, MT where she currently resides. She came to the Department of Livestock, Meat and Poultry Bureau, in October of 2016. Jennifer enjoys horse back riding, hiking, spending time with her family at their cabin in Sula and her brother's cabin on Placid Lake. Her greatest joy in life, is watching her three sons achieve their goals.

Justin Ahl, Relief Meat Inspector: Justin is based out of the Helena area and joined the department in 2022.

Minh Walker, Meat Inspector: Originally from the East Coast, Minh has lived in Montana since 1993. Graduated MSU-Bozeman in 2000 with a BA in History. After spending several decades working overseas and around the US, Minh finally decided to settle in Roundup, MT to spend more time at home and enjoy the Montana outdoors. Minh joined the Bureau in 2023.

Rom Hedges, Meat Inspector: Rom is based out of the Antelope, MT area and has been with the department since 2006.

John Elmore, Meat Inspector: John is based out of the Dillon area and has been with the department since 2019.

Kathi Molyneaux, Meat Inspector: Kathi grew up on a ranch South of Chinook in the Bears Paw Mountains. She went to a one room country school for her elementary years. She came to the Department in 2015 after retiring from the Department of Health and Human Services. She lives on a farm in the valley, and they hay and raise beef. She has two children and eight grandchildren. In her spare time she enjoys following the grandchildren in all their events, outdoor activities gardening and tending to her lawn in the summertime.

Steve Buchanan, Relief Meat Inspector: Steve is a relief inspector based out of the Big Timber area and has been with the department since 2016.

MILK & EGG SECTION

OVERVIEW

The Milk and Egg section's primary function is to ensure milk, milk products, and eggs that are produced, sold or manufactured in Montana meet the appropriate safety requirements and grade quality. The prevention of food-borne illnesses and diseases transmitted by milk and eggs to the consuming public is a critical priority. This function is accomplished through on-site inspections done in cooperation with other State and Federal agencies, sampling, laboratory testing, and licensing. The program supervises the enforcement of associated regulations regarding milk and egg safety.

AUTHORIZATION

This program's statutory functions are provided for under Montana Code Annotated, Title 81, Chapters 20, 21, and 22. Chapter 20 provides for poultry and egg inspection and licensing, Chapter 21 provides for dairy products regulation and licensing, and Chapter 22 provides for regulation, inspection, and licensing requirements of manufactured dairy products. In addition, the Administrative Rules of Montana, Title 32, provides the Department supplementary regulation standards. Chapters 8, 9, 10, and 12 provide milk and egg rules and procedures.

Furthermore, the Department has adopted the following:

- Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) which includes Grade A Condensed and Dry Milk Products and Condensed and Dry Whey
- Methods of Making Sanitation Ratings
- Single Service Container Standards
- Evaluation of Milk Laboratories
- USDA Egg Grading Manual
- USDA Milk for Manufacturing Purposes and its Production and Processing (guidance document)



ADMINISTRATIVE RULE UPDATES

The milk program made amendments to two administrative rules (ARM) in fiscal year 2023, one added a fee for the licensing and inspection of milk tanker trucks and trailers, and the second was in response to supply chain struggles for outlying communities.

ARM 32.2.405 was amended to add a fee for licensing milk tank trucks and trailers. Milk trucks and trailers used to haul milk from dairies to plants are regularly inspected by sanitarians, but have not previously been licensed. The PMO, which has been adopted by reference, requires a permit for these vehicles. The fees were set at \$5.00 per unit or \$25.00 per company.

ARM 32.8.202 TIME FROM PROCESSING THAT FLUID MILK MAY BE SOLD FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION, commonly known as the "12 day rule", was amended to allow certain institutions, specifically schools, hospitals and similar entities to serve 1/2 pint milk cartons beyond the 12 days after pasteurization. This change gives those institutions which are required to provide milk as part of their meal programs, more leeway to serve quality milk a few days longer and will help alleviate supply chain issues in outlying areas.

MILK PROGRAM

The Milk section licenses and monitors Montana’s dairy producers, dairy processing plants, and bulk milk tankers and haulers that transport, sample and grade fluid milk for quality and safety. The also, along with the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (MVDL) milk lab, license laboratories and the people who sample, test, and distribute dairy products before they reach the consumer.

National Conference of Interstate Milk Shippers - NCIMS

Montana is a member of the National Conference of Interstate Milk Shippers (NCIMS). Participation is voluntary by member states and members must meet minimum compliance requirements. Members in good standing with the Conference may engage in interstate sales of dairy products unhindered by individual state’s regulations. Compliance is verified by monitoring conducted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Currently, all 50 states, US Territories, and several foreign countries participate in the NCIMS program. NCIMS members meet every two years and are a combination of Federal and State milk regulatory officials as well as dairy industry representatives. The following inspection and sampling requirements are performed to meet NCIMS standards:

GRADE A PLANTS (7 total)

Test or inspection	Number of tests, samples, or inspections	Frequency	Total number of tests or inspections performed
Milk samples of each product type	4 samples	Every 6 months	Varies depending on # of products
Plant inspection	1 inspection	Quarterly	28 yearly
Pasteurizer equipment tests	1 inspection	Quarterly	28 yearly
Vitamin analysis of each product type	1 sample	Annually	45 yearly est.
Water and coolant	1 sample	Every 6 months	20 yearly est.
Single service containiers	4 samples	Every 6 months	Varies depending on # of molds



MANUFACTURING PLANTS* (GRADE B PLANTS - 12 total)

Samples or Inspection	Number or tests, samples, or inspections	Frequency	Total number of samples or inspections performed
Each product type sampled	4 samples	every 6 months	Varies depending on # of products
Plant inspection	1 inspection	every 6 months	24 yearly
Water sample	1 sample	every 6 months	24 yearly

*Grade B plants are not held to NCIMS standards, though the inspection schedule is similar.

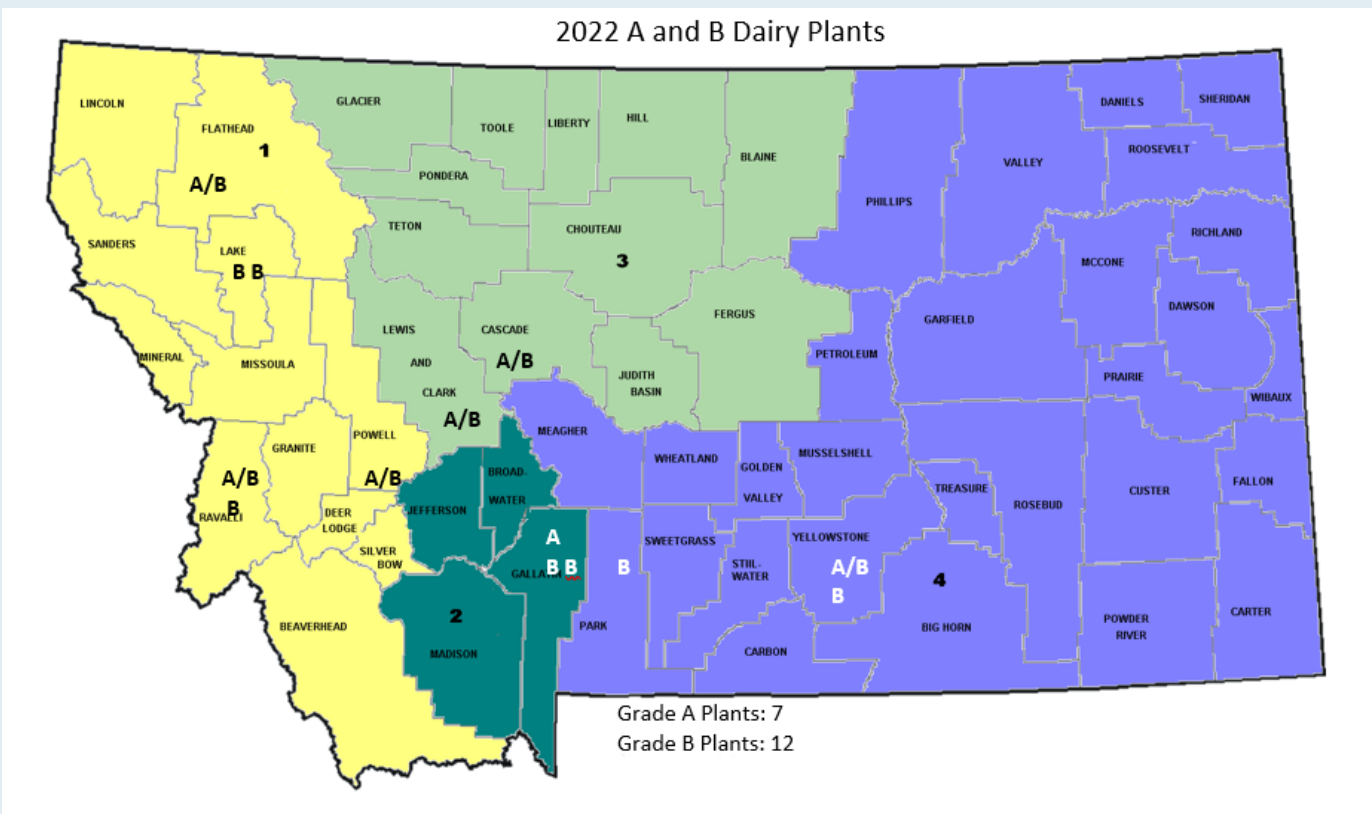


Figure 3: MT Dairy plant locations provided by MLIV staff. (The numbers displayed in Flathead, Choteau, Madison, and Big Horn counties designate the district number assigned by the bureau.)

GRADE A PRODUCERS (42 total: 39 cow dairies, 2 sheep dairy, 1 goat dairy)

Samples or Inspection	Number of tests, samples, or inspections	Frequency	Total number of samples or inspections performed
Dairy Inspection	1 inspection	Every 6 months	84 yearly
Follow-up inspection for violations	As needed	As needed	Varies
Milk sample	4 samples	Every 6 months	336 yearly
Pesticide milk sample	1 sample	Annually	42 yearly
Well water sample	1 sample	Every 3 years	16 yearly (staggered)
Brucellosis Ring Test—cow only	1 sample*	Quarterly*	172 yearly*

*The four (4) dairies located in the Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) for brucellosis are tested at least twice each quarter.

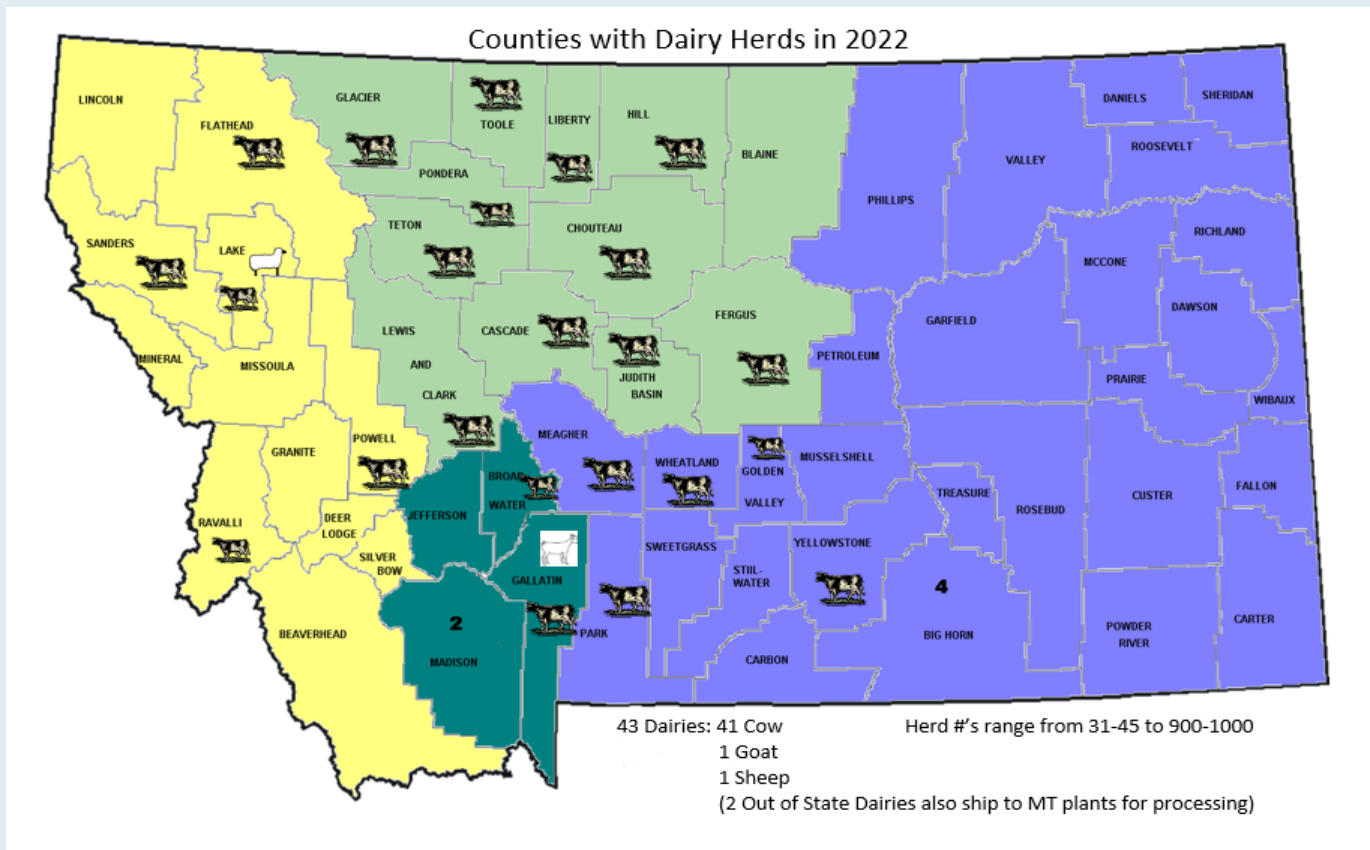


Figure 4: Producer counties and species provided by MLIV staff. (The numbers displayed in Madison and Big Horn counties designate the district number assigned by the bureau.)

GRADE A (Fluid Milk) GRADE B (Manufacturing Milk) Differences

PRODUCTS:

Grade A products are fluid milk products. This includes not only different varieties of milk (whole, skim, buttermilk, cream, flavored, etc.) but also yogurt, sour cream, and cottage cheese.

Grade B products are manufactured from milk such as butter, cheeses, condensed or evaporated milks, and ice cream products.

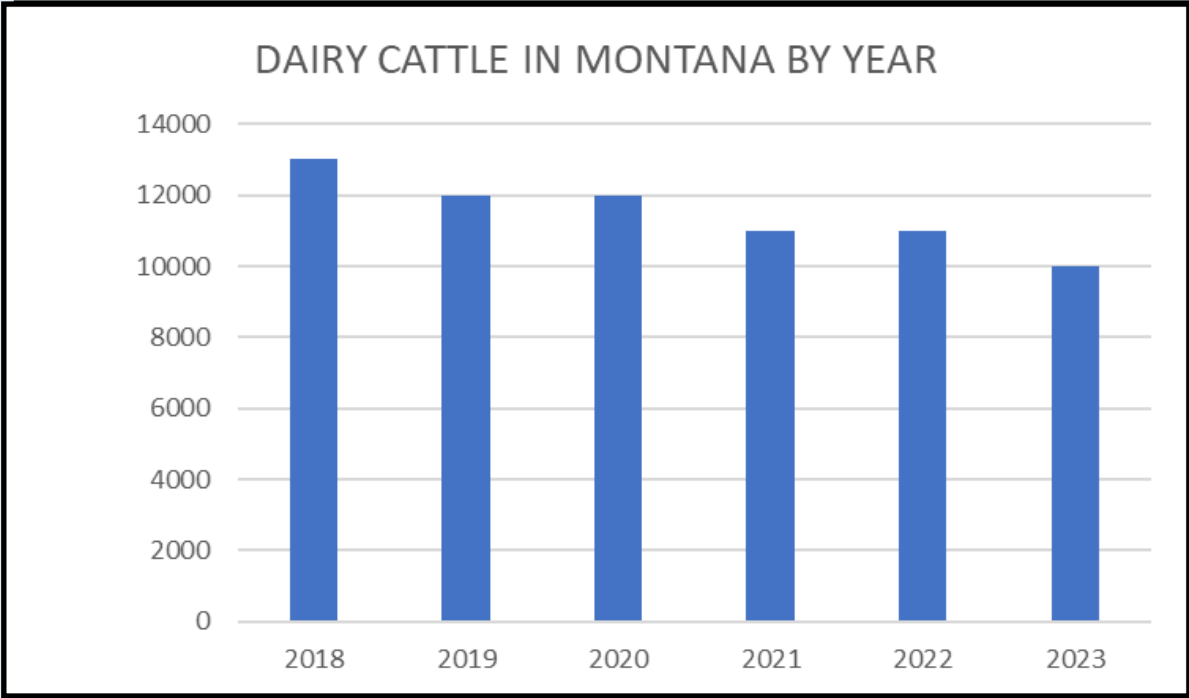
Grade A products must strictly be made from milk produced at Grade A licensed producers. Grade B products are also often made from Grade A milk or a combination of Grade A and Grade B milk.

PRODUCERS:

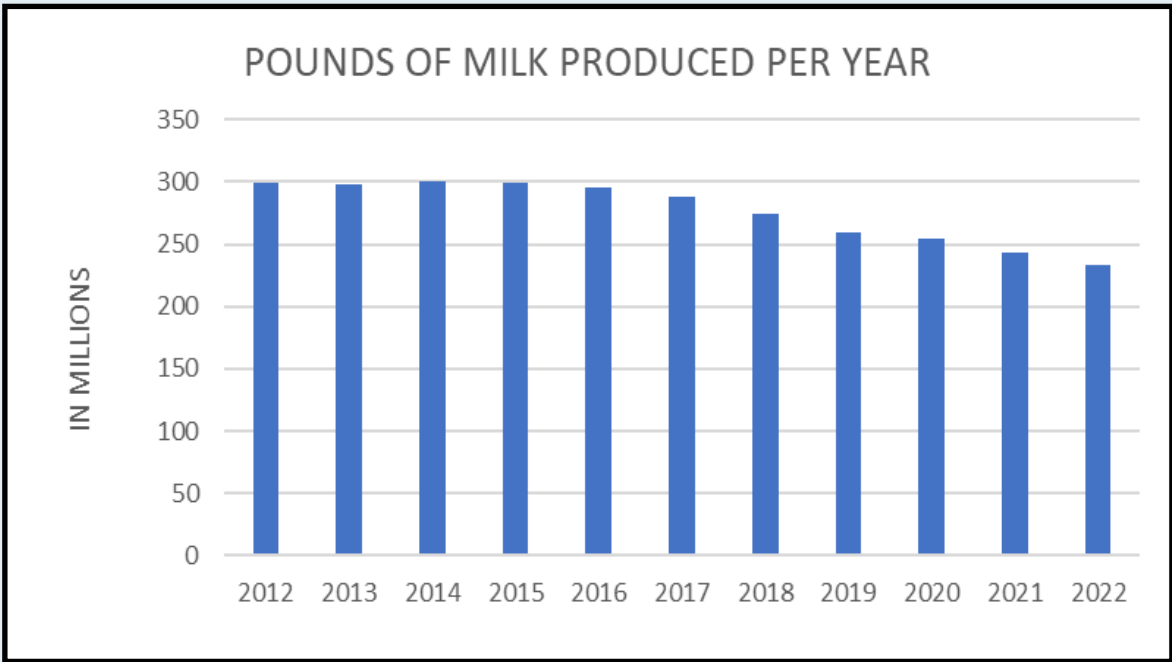
Grade A (Fluid Milk) producers must meet stringent standards for health and sanitation if their milk is to be consumed as a fluid or other Grade A product. Grade A producer facilities are tested and inspected frequently to PMO standards to ensure their production meets all requirements.

Grade B (milk for manufacturing) producers have less stringent quality standards for the milk they produce and their facilities and can only be utilized to make Grade B products. There are currently no Grade B producers licensed in Montana and milk for manufacturing dairy products is provided from Grade A licensed dairies.





*Data provided by USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service



*Data provided by USDA national Agriculture Statistics Service

DRUG RESIDUE VIOLATIONS

One producer loads tested positive for drug residue during the 2023 fiscal year which resulted in 44,000 pounds of milk disposed of (land applied) to prevent human/animal consumption.

Milk is sampled by a licensed sampler/hauler at each dairy as they collect the milk for transport to a dairy plant for processing. One of the tests run on each sample is for drug residue from antibiotics used to treat animal health conditions. Producers are very careful not to include a drug treated cow in the regular milking, but errors do happen, which may cause adulterated milk.

As required by the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO), the violator of the positive drug residue test has the monetary responsibility for all adulterated milk caused by the violator's positive drug residue. This policy requires the violating producer to reimburse all non-violating producers for their milk, hauling costs and disposal expenses.

The violating producer's Grade A license is suspended, and no milk sales are allowed until an investigation as to the cause of the violation is completed by a dairy sanitarian. Once an official sample of their milk demonstrates the milk safe and is free of drug residue, their license is reinstated, and milk shipments may resume.

Follow-up investigations and sampling are completed as soon as possible after the violation, to minimize the time of the dairy license suspension. Multiple residue violations within 12 months may result in a permanent license revocation.

MILK HAULER AND SAMPLER LICENSES ISSUED (90 total)

Type of license	Test or inspection frequency	Renewal basis
Milk and Cream Grader/Weigher/Sampler & Hauler (test)	1 initially	once/year
Milk & Cream Tester (test)	1 initially	once/year
Dairy Plant Samplers (test)	1 initially	once/year
Bulk Milk Tank Trucks (inspection)	1 initially	once/year
Milk Distributor (inspection)	1 initially	once/year



ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE DAIRY PROGRAM:

- To maintain at least two survey officers for compliance with NCIMS
- Inspect, license and conduct testing of products from Single Service Container Plants (makers of milk jugs and cartons). Review raw material applications for safety
- Monitor dairy sell-by dates in plants or retail locations
- Monitor retail sales for dairy products offered for sale
- Maintain annual license program for producers, dairy plants, milk graders, milk weighers, milk haulers, milk samplers and dairy distributors
- Conduct construction plan reviews for new/remodeling of dairy processing or production facilities
- Perform water and coolant system construction reviews, collect and sample these systems for safety
- Inspect trucks and tankers used to haul raw milk and other milk products between farms and plants

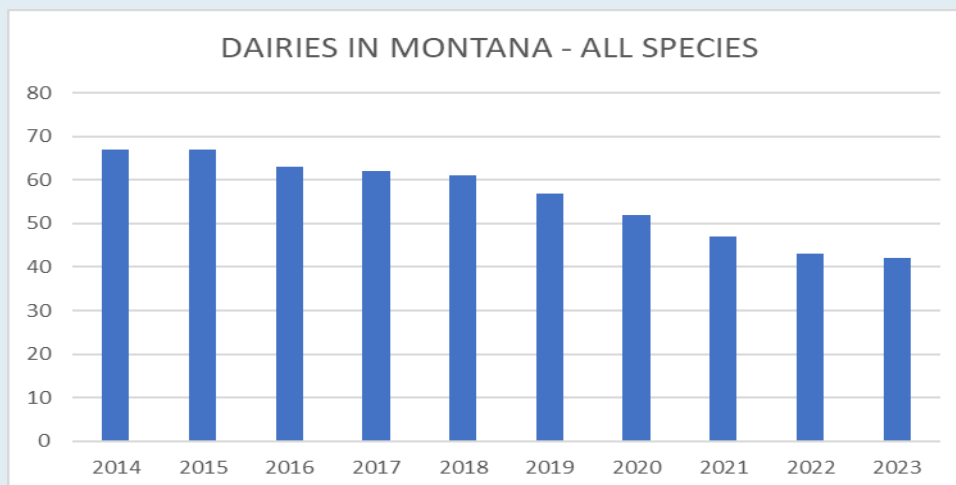
DAIRY INSPECTORS

- Our three Sanitarian inspectors must have a minimum of a Bachelor of Science degree and maintain current Montana Sanitarian Registration
- State Survey Rating Officers and Sampling Surveillance Officers for Interstate Milk Shipping (IMS) must maintain FDA certification for rating dairy farms, dairy processing plants, single service manufacturing, and bulk milk haulers

DAIRY FARM NUMBERS

FY 2023 saw the loss of two Montana dairies. Though they were smaller operations, their loss will still be felt by their communities. Dairies in Meagher and Gallatin counties closed their doors, disbursing around 200 dairy cows in state, out of state, and to slaughter.

On the other side, we added a new sheep dairy and creamery to the program and we look forward to a great relationship with the Charlo, MT facility.



EGG INSPECTON PROGRAM

Shell Egg Program

The Shell Egg program is a cooperative agreement between the USDA and the State, conducted in conjunction with the State egg grading inspections. Grading of eggs is checked quarterly at locations with flocks of 3,000 or more hens as well as at the Montana Egg Plant, LLC in Great Falls. The purpose of the inspection service is to verify that eggs are graded, stored, and packaged and labeled properly and ensures that only quality eggs are being marketed to consumers while inedible product is properly disposed. Montana has a growing number of egg producers with flocks greater than 3,000 hens, including many cage-free, organic, and non-GMO egg producers. Each sanitarian or grader must be certified by USDA for Shell Egg Surveillance.



Shell Egg Surveillance

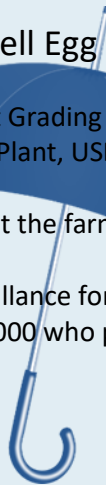
Shell Egg Surveillance is an unannounced inspection conducted by a USDA surveillance licensed grader on egg producers with caged flocks over 3,000 hens who choose to pack and market their own eggs. They are visited on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance with USDA rules. Samples of eggs are selected and graded to B standards according to the inventory on hand, checking at least one sample for each size packed. Refrigerator temperatures, invoices, disposition of inedible product, identification of restricted eggs, and carton labeling are also verified.

The Shell Egg Umbrella

Resident Grading done at the
Montana Egg Plant, USDA Shield applied

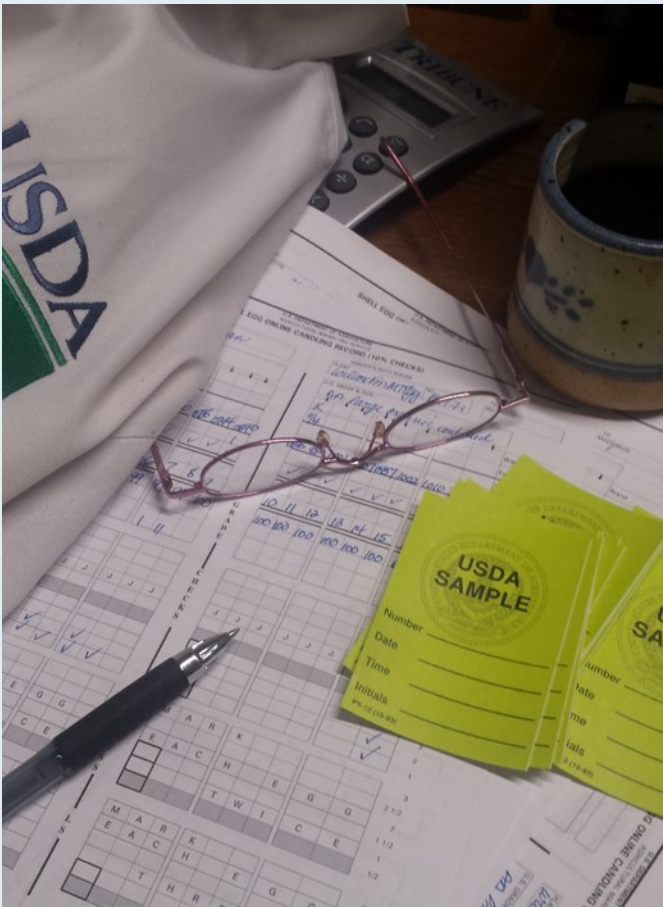
Fee Grading done at the farm, USDA Shield applied

Shell Egg Surveillance for producers with flocks
over 3,000 who pack their own eggs.



USDA Shield Egg Grading

Since 2011, the Department has operated under an agreement with USDA to conduct egg grading services in the State under USDA authority. The agreement allows State employees, certified as USDA egg graders, to apply the USDA grade shield. This certifies that eggs are processed, packaged, stored, and invoiced to meet USDA Standards in in-state plants and qualify the eggs for interstate and international markets.



Resident USDA egg grading is performed at the Montana Egg, LLC plant located in Great Falls for those producers who choose to sell their eggs through that facility. Fee Grading producers can also request USDA egg grading at their private facility for a fee. Though there has been little fee grading completed in the last few years due to more producers moved to the Montana Egg, LLC plant, the program remains available to producers.

The ability to provide USDA grading services in Montana has opened national markets for eggs produced in the State, plus periodic exports to Canada. This program is fully funded with industry user fees.



The United Egg Producers (UEP) Audits

The United Egg Producers (UEP) animal welfare audits are a voluntary certification, conducted annually on producers with flocks of 3,000 or more caged hens. The purpose of the audit is to verify humane conditions used to raise caged hens used for egg production. The conditions must meet specific criteria set up by UEP and the audits are usually conducted by a USDA certified State sanitarian. User fees for this service fund this program. Providing an in-state auditor gives egg producers economical access to this certification. Five inspections were done in the fall of 2022 with all producers passing.



Additional Requirements of the Egg Program

- Act as a Liaison for egg producers with >3,000 hens for FDA *Salmonella Enteritidis* monitoring/elimination program
- License small independent producers with <3,000 hens as egg graders so they may provide their eggs for retail resale
- License Egg Dealers (businesses who bring eggs into Montana for retail sale)

- LICENSED EGG GRADER (59 total)

License (requirements)		Inspection frequency	Inspections/year
Grader/Candler (inspection & test)	1 initially	as needed for <3,000 hens	Varies
	1 initially	quarterly for >3,000 hens	14 producers x 4 = 56 yearly

- LICENSED EGG DEALER (51 total)

Egg Dealer (license)	1 initially	as needed	Varies
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FUNDING AND STAFF

OVERVIEW

The Milk and Egg Program performs its mission through three full-time Sanitarians stationed in Western , Central, and Southwest Montana. The Sanitarians are certified with USDA to conduct shell egg grading and/or shielded egg grading. The program also has one full-time and one part-time USDA certified Resident Graders stationed at the Montana Egg Plant in Great Falls for USDA Resident and Fee grading of shell egg products. These positions are fully funded by user fees. In addition, administrative staff is shared with the meat inspection section who are stationed in Helena, along with Bureau Chief, Alicia Love.

The Milk Inspection Program is fully funded by dairy producer fees. The Shell Egg program conducts inspections for the USDA program and is fully funded by a contract with USDA-AMS for the Department to perform the quarterly inspections of shell egg producers. All funds are categorized as State Special Revenue.



MEET OUR STAFF

Rosemary Hickey, Registered Sanitarian, State Rating Officer, District 1: Rosemary began her career with the Milk and Egg Bureau in 1997. She grew up in Butte and holds BS degrees in Microbiology and Medical Technology from the University of Montana. She worked in research labs prior to employment with the MDOL. She has two children: her favorite son, Emiliano, a recent graduate of MSU and her favorite daughter, Taleah, a freshman at MSU. Rosemary enjoys reading, walking, dancing, cultural events and mostly, being a mom.

Job Greenall, Sanitarian in Training, District 2:

Alex Dachs, Registered Sanitarian, District 3 and USDA Egg Grader: Alex grew up in the Flathead Valley of Montana and now resides in Great Falls. He graduated from MSU and received a B.S. in Cell Biology and Neuroscience. He worked previously as a Sanitarian and then as a Planner for Cascade County. He loves being outdoors golfing, skiing, hiking, hunting, fishing, relaxing on the lakes and rivers, enjoying the beautiful landscapes and observing the wildlife of Montana.

Elaine Hartman, USDA Shell Egg Grader: Elaine Hartman grew up in the Flathead Valley, her parents operated a dairy farm. She graduated from Montana State University with a major in Agriculture and minor specialty in Chemistry. She has three grown children, and one grandchild, and enjoys gardening, skiing and knitting in her spare time.

"When my mom took me to visit my aunts, they always knew where to find me, in the chicken house looking for pullet eggs. They would smile if they knew I work with eggs every day."

Terry Cavin, USDA Shell Egg Grader: Terry grew up on a farm in southwest Iowa and moved to Montana in 1978. He started with the USDA Soil Conservation Service in 1980 and worked in Hamilton, Plains, and Great Falls before transferring to the Department of Defense and Missile Engineering in 2002. He retired in 2012 and shortly thereafter joined the Department of Livestock at the Montana Egg, LLC plant in Great Falls.

Darcy Alm, Office Manager: Darcy is native to Helena and lives on the family ranch where she grew up. She earned an AAS in Equine Management from Central Wyoming College but worked in lending for 14 years. She came to the Department of Livestock in 2013 in the Animal Health Bureau and moved to the Milk and Egg Bureau in 2015. Her off duty interests include horseback riding, snowmobiling, and obstacle course races. She lives outside of Helena with her husband, Chris, and their two busy boys.

LOOKING FORWARD

As we move into 2024 and beyond, the Milk and Egg programs are dedicated to helping our producers provide Montana with the freshest and healthiest milk and egg products available as well as bringing new producers, cheesemakers, and other artisans into the market. Testing and licensing new egg candlers/ graders is a year-round task that ensures our retail outlets have farm fresh eggs available for purchase and we frequently receive calls from goat, sheep and dairy cow owners interested in establishing dairies

Loss of dairy farms is likely to be a continued challenge for the state, but the sector for artisan cheeses and other premium products remains strong and is likely to grow. We are also excited about egg production which is also likely to increase in the coming years. We truly value the friendships and honor the dedication of our Montana milk and egg producers past, present, and future.



Figure 15: Happy eggs come from Montana Egg LLC, Great Falls, MT, MLIV Staff Photo