STATE OF MONTANA
GREG GIANFORTE, GOVERNOR

MT DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK
PO BOX 202001
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-2001
(406) 444-7323/FAX (406) 444-1929
livemail@mt.gov

ANIMAL HEALTH & FOOD SAFETY DIVISION (406) 444-2976
BRANDS ENFORCEMENT DIVISION (406) 444-2045
CENTRALIZED SERVICES DIVISION (406) 444-4994
EXECUTIVE OFFICE (406) 444-9321

Dear Prospective Applicant,

Official state inspection will enable you to sell your product in commerce for resale within the state of Montana. The Montana Department of Livestock Meat, Milk, and Egg Inspection Bureau (the Department) operates as an "at least equal to" program with the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA FSIS).

Authority and Jurisdiction: Do I need a grant of inspection?

Federal law such as those found in the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and Title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) along with state laws found in Title 81 of Montana Code Annotated and Title 32 of the Administrative Rules of Montana determine the legal authority and jurisdiction of meat and poultry products within Montana. In general, all meat and poultry slaughter, and the wholesale of products containing 2% or more cooked meat and/or poultry or 3% or more raw meat or poultry are either regulated through our Department or the USDA. Exemptions such as closed-faced sandwiches can be found in the Investigations Operations Manual Chapter 9 page 25.

If your business model only includes retail sales, to end consumers you do not need inspection. Title 9 C.F.R. 303.1 exempts retail sales from inspection. All meat and poultry used in products under retail must come from an inspected source. Retail sales are the jurisdiction of the county, for more information on retail licensing and requirements contact your local county sanitarian for assistance with the approval process. The contact information can be found at County or Tribal Health Departments.

If your business plans to slaughter and process poultry, there are several exemptions to inspection that may apply. A Guidance for Determining Whether a Poultry Slaughter or Processing Operation is Exempt from Inspection Requirements Poultry Products Inspection Act is available on the USDA website. More information can also be found on the Montana Local Food Choice act 1,000 bird exemption on our website SB199 Guidance Document.

If you are interested in selling your products across state lines, our bureau participates in the Cooperative Interstate Shipping Program (CIS). If you are interested in participating in this program, please reach out to MMEIOffice@mt.gov for more information. An item of note about the CIS program is that there is a delay of 90 days after obtaining your initial grant of inspection before you can enter this program. USDA inspection allows the shipping of products across state lines immediately upon getting a grant of inspection.

If you need any further guidance on what types of inspection you might need please reach out to either myself or the Department of Health and Human Services.

Facility And Other Requirements:

The USDA FSIS website and the FSIS Guidance on Applying for USDA FSIS Inspection document provide helpful information on requirements such as those for the facility, documents, records, and other requirements established in the C.F.R. Some basics you will need to know before you begin the process of applying for an official Grant of Inspection are:

1. HACCP plans and training are required. HACCP is an acronym for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point. Requirements for your HACCP plans are outlined in Title 9 C.F.R 417. Documentation of completion of a training course is required as HACCP plans are to be developed by someone trained. The HACCP course taken must have an emphasis on meat/poultry processing.

    a. There are several courses available online to complete this training.
        i. Some options can be explored on the USDA FSIS HACCP Validation webpage under the HACCP Coordinators and Resources tabs. This website is also helpful in gaining the knowledge and understanding that will be needed for developing your HACCP plans.
    b. Montana State University offers a HACCP Training and Certification course. For more information visit their website HACCP Training and Basic Meat Microbiology - Montana State University - Animal and Range | Montana State University.

2. You will need a written Sanitation Standard Operating Procedure (SSOP). SSOPs are generally documented steps outlining procedures that must be followed while identifying person(s) responsible, to ensure adequate cleaning of product contact and non-product contact surfaces. These cleaning procedures must be detailed enough to prevent the adulteration of product. SSOP requirements are outlined in Title 9 C.F.R. 416.11 through 416.16.

3. You must have a suitable facility for slaughtering and processing products where walls, floors, and ceilings are cleanable, impervious to moisture and prevents in the entrance of insects and vermin. It must meet the sanitary requirements as outlined in Title 9 C.F.R. 416.2 through 416.5.

All products produced under official state inspection are required to be labeled properly. Labels are approved by the Department's Labeling Specialist to ensure that requirements are met such as ingredient statements, no false or misleading information or claims, declaring allergens, net weights, etc. USDA Basics of Labeling can be found on their website at the Basics of Labeling | Food Safety and Inspection Service. For more information and questions on labeling requirements please feel free to reach out to the Label Specialist, Kaylee Hiel by phone at 406-603-0012 or by email at Kaylee.Hiel@mt.gov.

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Licenses with the Montana Department of Livestock Meat, Milk, and Egg Inspection bureau cost $25.00 and are renewed annually on December 31st. State inspection is provided at no charge, except for any hours of inspection over an eight-hour shift, on weekends, holidays, or for slaughter/processing of voluntary species (i.e. elk) which are charged according to Title 9 C.F.R 307.5, 307.6, and 352.5. These are subject to budget limitations imposed by the Montana Legislature and availability of staff in your area.

The general process for an official grant of inspection follows these guidelines:

- Written request for inspection sent to MMEIOffice@mt.gov or above-mentioned mailing address.
- Basic requirement letter sent to potential plant. (This letter).
- When you believe the facility meets the basic requirements, reach out to the supervisor.
- Application is emailed to the applicant and returned to MMEIOffice@mt.gov or by mail.
- Review of facility by the supervisor.
- HACCP training, HACCP plans, and SSOP created and completed.
- Address any paperwork and other identified non-compliances with the supervisor.
- Final Review and Food Safety Assessment completed by the Department.
- Establishment number is assigned.
- Grant of Inspection is issued.

Once you have reviewed this letter and the related documents and links and believe that you met the basic requirements complete the enclosed Application for Inspection Form MI-101 and return it via email to MMEIOffice@mt.gov or via mail to the mailing address below:

The Montana Department of Livestock
Meat, Milk, and Egg Inspection Bureau
P.O. Box 202001
Helena, MT 59620-2001

Throughout the process inspection staff will assist you with more specialized help.

Sincerely,

Olivia Johnson

Olivia Johnson
Montana Department of Livestock

Meat, Milk, and Egg Inspection Bureau
406-444-5202
Olivia.Johnson@mt.gov