

Behind the Legend

ISSUE NO. 7 Quarterly newsletter for Ontario's provincially licensed meat plant operators June 2012

The **meat inspection legend** is the stamp that goes on meat products when they have met all regulatory requirements and are deemed safe for Ontario consumers.



IN THIS ISSUE

Meat Plant Guideline Updates	2
Weighing in on Veal	2
Why Two Types of Testing ?	3
Understanding Progressive Compliance	3
OIMP Workshops	4
Food Safety Training	4

INSERT:

- Upcoming Workshop on Farm Animal Handling at the Processing Plant

Clean Up With Carcass Washing

Improve food safety and reduce risks of food-borne illnesses with these easy methods

Even with the most careful, sanitary slaughter and dressing procedures, bacteria on the hide, skin or guts of food animals can end up on the carcass following slaughter. Here are some effective and easy ways you can take to reduce the risk:

Carcass trimming eliminates visible contamination and is effective in reducing bacteria if it is followed by carcass wash with warm water.

Carcass washing helps remove bone dust and other material from trimmed carcasses. Water should be warm (32 to 49°C) for best results.

Hot water rinses after trimming are effective if the water is really hot (66-82°C). The higher the temperature, the greater the effect. Two thorough passes over the entire carcass are suggested. Of course, you have to exercise caution when using this method.

Organic acid rinses (e.g. lactic, acetic and citric) are effective at decontaminating beef carcasses after trimming. Lactic acid is the most user friendly due to its pleasant odour and it is less irritating to the workers' skin compared to acetic or citric acid.

Example of a step-by-step process for red meat

After trimming all visible contamination:

Step 1: Thoroughly wash the carcass with warm water from top to bottom and towards the floor (each side of beef carcasses at least 2 minutes; other red meat carcasses at least one minute). Keep the hose nozzle no more than one foot away from the surface. Avoid spraying water directly on the floor to prevent splashing bacteria back onto the carcass and other carcasses.

Step 2: Allow excess water to drip from the carcass for five minutes.

Continued on page 2

Carcass Wash

Continued from cover page

Step 3: Thoroughly rinse the carcass with an antimicrobial solution approved by Health Canada (e.g. an approved organic acid). Rinse beef carcasses for at least one minute, other red meat carcasses for at least 30 seconds.

Your inspector can help

OMAFRA meat inspection staff can help you put in place a plan that works for you and reduces the risk of bacteria. They can provide you with approved options, review your plan and discuss it with Health Canada, if needed.

These steps do not replace good manufacturing practices and sanitary dressing procedures, but can help reduce carcass contamination. ■

Weighing in on Veal

Consumers expect accurate weights and grading of veal at the abattoir.

All abattoirs are required to supply a farmer with carcass weights. The way in which your plant does this is at your discretion. Please refer to section 5, [Ontario Regulation 55](#) (Weighing of Carcasses) of the *Beef Cattle Marketing Act* for the complete regulation.

Provincially licensed abattoirs are also required to ensure their weigh scales are working and accurate. [Section 26\(4\)](#) of Ontario Regulation 31/05 (Meat) of the Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001 specifically addresses this.

More information is available on e-laws at www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/index.html ■

Meat Plant Guidelines Updates

Meat Plant Guidelines are clear, plain-language explanations of the regulatory requirements under the Meat Regulation (Ontario Regulation 31/05). Updates are released on a quarterly basis. They are not changes to the Meat Regulation.

The Meat Inspection Policy Review Committee (which includes ministry staff and industry representatives) reviews the Meat Plant Guidelines to ensure they respond to industry needs and maintain food safety. Updates to the following meat plant guidelines are effective immediately:

No	Title	What has changed
C9.04.04.01	Adequacy of lighting	Minor changes to rationale and requirement that light does not distort the colour and/or appearance of food animals, parts of carcasses, meat products or ingredients added.
C9.04.04.02	Light bulbs and fixtures	Minor revisions to rationale and first element to make them less prescriptive and suggest a written glass policy be in place.
C9.04.08.02	Telephone/workstation/office	Minor changes to rationale plus elimination of the requirement for plants slaughtering more than 2 days a week to have a telephone for the exclusive use of the inspector. Telephones must be accessible to inspectors if reception is not available on government-issued cell phones.
S9.04.13.02	Equipment for handling suspect food animals	Minor revisions to rationale, reworded to provide clarity.
C9.05.01.01	Potable water system	Expansion of rationale.
C9.05.02.01	Non-potable water system	Long element divided into 2 elements. Minor changes to rationale.
C9.06.01.01	Provision for inspectors to perform functions and duties	Minor revisions to rationale
Table of Contents	Light bulbs and fixtures	Title changed from "Protective covers/shatterproof lighting" to "Light bulbs and fixtures".

Updated [Meat Plant Guidelines](#) are posted on OMAFRA's website: www.omafra.gov.on.ca/English/food/inspection/meatinsp/manual/index.htm. To request printed copies or CD versions of the complete set contact ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca or 1-877-424-1300. ■

Why are there two types of residue testing programs?

The meat inspection program uses “monitoring” and “surveillance” testing to determine whether chemical residues are present in food animals.

Monitoring is the type of testing done on an ongoing basis. Inspectors randomly select animals for testing based on a statistically designed sampling plan. For example, the plan indicates which meat plants and animal groups are sampled each week for a specific monitoring test. Carcasses are not held.

This testing provides data on a variety of contaminants, such as antibiotics, pesticides or sulpha drugs in animals that appear normal when presented for slaughter. This information is used to design inspection programs that target areas of highest food safety risk.

Surveillance testing is focused on animals that are considered high risk because they do not appear normal on ante or post mortem inspection or are considered “suspect” (for example the inspector observes injection marks). Carcasses and parts intended for human consumption are held until test results are available.

Depending on the results, the carcass and its parts are either approved for human consumption or condemned.

When a chemical residue above the Health Canada Maximum Residue Limits tolerance level is detected, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency is notified for additional follow-up action.

For more information, please contact Residue Control Officer Mike Eastment at mike.eastment@ontario.ca or 519-826-4247. ■

Understanding “Progressive Compliance”

Helping you correct deficiencies and meet food safety standards

Your responsibility, as a meat plant operator, is to produce safe food. The Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001 and its regulations provide standards for the safe, humane slaughter of healthy food animals and the processing of safe meat products. Ministry staff conduct inspections and work directly with operators to ensure the standards are being met. When they aren’t being met, staff follow ‘progressive compliance’ steps aimed at achieving compliance with observed deficiencies.

Here are the steps Ministry staff take to move compliance forward:

- Talk to the operator about the observed deficiencies or audit deficiencies and make sure the operator understands what is needed to achieve compliance.
 - Discuss the potential ways to achieve compliance and get the deficiency back on track.
 - Reach an understanding of what needs to be completed, develop a compliance action plan, and record the information in a computer

database (Food Safety Decision Support System) with an “Action By” deadline for completion.

- If there is a bigger food safety risk (e.g. if cleaning has not been properly completed) inspection services may have to be withdrawn, which could include stopping slaughter.
- If progress towards compliance is not satisfactory, an oral warning, written warning or a compliance order may be made.
- In some cases it is necessary to suspend the licence to operate (slaughter or process as a Free Standing Meat Plant – FSMP).
- If suspended or issued an order, operators can request a hearing in front of a Director to provide their side of the story. The Director will then decide whether the licence can be returned or remain suspended.

For more information about the progressive compliance protocol, contact your area manager (contact numbers are provided on page 4). ■

Workshops Offered By Ontario Independent Meat Processors

Allergen Control — 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., July 18, 2012, Four Points Sheraton, Mississauga

For hypersensitive individuals, certain foods and their derivatives can cause allergic reactions. The only way for allergic individuals to protect themselves is strict avoidance of the allergen. This workshop will outline the elements of an Allergen Control Program to control the use of ingredients identified as allergens in an establishment, as well as to prevent or identify the presence of undeclared allergen ingredients in finished food products.

Fermentation and Dry Curing — 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., August 15, 2012, Four Points Sheraton, Mississauga

Learn how to develop a food safety regimen for fermented and dry cured products. Understand regulatory requirements that are in place to address food safety risks, and how to overcome barriers related to compliance issues. Hear about the latest developments in starter culture technology.

For information visit [OIMP's website](http://www.oimp.ca/industry/workshops.aspx) at www.oimp.ca/industry/workshops.aspx or contact 519-763-4558, news@oimp.ca

Food Safety Training designed for Meat Plants

Last fall, staff from two areas in the ministry, Meat Inspection and Food Safety Programs, worked collaboratively to develop training opportunities to meet your needs. Training content was designed to address compliance issues recorded by the Meat Inspection Program, and included relevant materials and examples.

Workshops on the following topics were developed:
Personnel, Product Handling, Receiving & Shipping,

Sanitation, Pest Control, Preventative Maintenance & Calibration, and Environment.

Planning for the 2012-2013 workshop schedule is currently underway. For information on upcoming workshops visit our website at www.ontario.ca/HACCP or call 1-866-641-3663. ■

Meat Inspection Program Management Team

GENERAL MANAGER:	Lee Orphan
REGIONAL MANAGERS	
Nick Van Lankveld, West/North	519-826-4281
Joe Koza, East	519-826-3250
OPERATIONS MANAGER	
Lynn Philp (Acting)	519-826-4364

AREA MANAGERS	
Brighton — Robin Drew	613-475-5446
GTA — Ivona Jarosz	416-235-6690
Guelph — Alan Yee	519-826-4368
Kemptville — Vickie Sauvé	613-679-2825
Midhurst — Travis McMunn	705-725-7292
Peel — Eloise Jones	416-235-4086
Ridgetown — Jeff Richards	519-674-1534

For any inquiries regarding meat inspection, please contact your area manager. All area managers can be paged at: 1-800-263-1420. Please ask for your area manager by name.

Scarborough — Laurie Adrien	416-235-4591
Stratford — Mark Mitchell	519-271-8278
Verner — Doug McLean	705-594-2314
Vineland — Kim Landers	905-562-1710
Woodstock — Ed Bailey	519-537-5646
York — Ryan Pinto	416-235-6585

There are currently 137 provincially licensed abattoirs and 391 provincially licensed freestanding meat plants in Ontario.

For more information:
Telephone: 1-877-424-1300
Email: ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca
ontario.ca/MeatInspection
www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/index.html