Iowa Poultry Slaughter, Processing, and Sales Guidelines for Small-scale Producers

This publication is designed to help small-scale poultry producers in Iowa navigate poultry slaughter and processing regulations and their associated marketing limitations. Producers can use the map on page 4 to locate a nearby poultry processing facility that operates under the desired type of inspection and can accommodate small batches of birds. Additional resources also are provided on page 4.

Please note that this information is subject to legislative and regulatory change, and that processing plants can come and go just like any other business. Use the contact information provided to get the most up-to-date information.
Official Inspected Slaughter versus Exempt Slaughter

The inspection status of a poultry slaughter establishment determines where the poultry products can be distributed and sold.

Summary of inspection types and limitations in the state of Iowa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>USDA/Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Official Inspected Poultry Plant</th>
<th>State of Iowa Official Inspected Poultry Plant</th>
<th>Producer/Grower 1,000 Bird Exemption</th>
<th>Producer/Grower 20,000 Bird Exemption</th>
<th>Producer/Grower or Other Person Exemption</th>
<th>Small Enterprise Exemption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slaughter limit</td>
<td>No limit</td>
<td>In state (intrastate commerce)</td>
<td>Yes—1,000 per calendar year</td>
<td>Yes—20,000 per calendar year</td>
<td>Yes—20,000 per calendar year</td>
<td>Yes—20,000 per calendar year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further processing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Can be sold</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Whole and cut up poultry only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell to home consumer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell at farmers’ market</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell to any HRI*</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not to all HRIs**</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell to distributor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell to retail store</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interstate sale</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* HRI = Hotels, restaurants, and institutions
** Product produced under the producer/grower or other person exemption may not be sold to institutions.

USDA/Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Official Inspected Poultry Plant: When a bird is slaughtered at a USDA/FSIS official inspected slaughter plant, it is inspected, bears the Federal Mark of Inspection, and can be sold across state lines (interstate commerce) as well as within the state (intrastate commerce). Regulatory Requirements include: Ante Mortem and Post Mortem Inspection of all birds by a Federal Meat Inspector, Daily Inspection, Carcass Chilling Standards, Approved Facilities, HACCP, SSOPs, Approved Labeling, Potable Water Certification, Waste Water Disposal Certificate, and Records.

Poultry slaughtered in an official inspected federal plant can be sold in interstate commerce to consumers, restaurants, institutions, or retail outlets.

State of Iowa Official Inspected Poultry Plant: When a bird is slaughtered in an Iowa official inspected facility, it is inspected, bears the State of Iowa Mark of Inspection, and can be sold only within the state (intrastate commerce). Regulatory Requirements include: Ante Mortem and Post Mortem Inspection of all birds by a State Meat Inspector, Daily Inspection, Carcass Chilling Standards, Approved Facilities, HACCP Plans, SSOPs, Approved Labeling, Potable Water Certification, Waste Water Disposal Certificate, and Records.

Poultry slaughtered in an official state plant can be sold to consumers, restaurants, institutions, or retail outlets within the state of Iowa.

Custom-Exempt: When a bird is slaughtered at a facility operating under custom exemption (often called a “custom plant”), the bird is not inspected, it is void of any marks of inspection, and is for the exclusive use in the household of such owner and members of the household, nonpaying guests, and employees. Regulatory Requirements include: Approved Facilities, SSOP, Approved Labeling, Potable Water Certification, Waste Water Disposal Certificate, and Records. These plants are inspected at least quarterly on a Risk Based System by state inspection staff to ensure regulatory requirements are met.

Poultry slaughtered in a Custom Exempt Poultry Slaughter plant CANNOT be sold.

Other Exemptions: If a licensed processor is operating under one of the other poultry exemptions, the poultry is not inspected, it is void of any marks of inspection, but may be sold into certain markets permitted by that specific exemption. Regulatory Requirements include: Approved Facilities, SSOP, Approved Labeling, Potable Water Certification, Waste Water Disposal Certificate, and Records.
There are three other exemptions that will allow for a licensed facility to handle no more than 20,000 birds per calendar year.
1. Producer/Grower Exemption
2. Producer/Grower or Other Person Exemption
3. Small Enterprise Exemption

The Producer/Grower exemption and the Producer/Grower or Other Person permits slaughter and processing, while the Small Enterprise Exemption permits only slaughter and cutting up. Sales of these exempt birds are limited by each exemption and are allowed only within the State of Iowa. Regulatory Requirements include: Approved Facilities, SSOP, Approved Labeling, Potable Water Certification, Waste Water Disposal Certificate, and Records. More information on these is available from the “USDA Guidance Document” listed under the Resources and Contacts section or by contacting the Iowa Meat and Poultry Inspections Bureau (contact information in the Resources and Contacts section).

1,000-Bird Exemption: A producer can slaughter up to 1,000 birds per year total of any domesticated poultry on-farm. The 1,000-bird limit is only for birds you have raised yourself and slaughter/sell on your own farm and are for sale ONLY to household consumers. If you choose the exemption, you must maintain complete and accurate records of birds processed in a calendar year, including customers’ names and dates. You cannot sell poultry processed under this exemption to restaurants, institutions, or retail outlets (including farmers’ markets).

Slaughter Options for Selling Live Birds
- A producer can sell live birds to an individual. The new owner/producer can process them for his/her personal use and they are not for sale after processing.
- The new owner/producer can have the birds processed at an exempt or official facility.
- The new owner/producer can arrange dropoff and the pickup at the processing plant, and new owner/producer (or a representative) MUST pay the processor directly.

Poultry Seller Licenses Information
Depending on how poultry is to be sold, there are four possible licenses a poultry seller may need from the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals, Food and Consumer Safety Bureau.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you want to...</th>
<th>License Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sell poultry directly to home consumers</td>
<td>No license needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell poultry at a farmers’ market</td>
<td>Farmers’ Market License or Mobile Food Unit License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell poultry at your retail store</td>
<td>Retail Food Establishment License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell and distribute poultry to retail stores and/or HRIs*</td>
<td>Warehouse License**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*HRI = Hotels, restaurants, and institutions
**A Warehouse License is NOT needed if you have a Retail Food Establishment License for the same premises.

The table assumes that you are selling inspected or exempt poultry that can legally be sold to the types of customers listed in the table. Check table or contact IDALS Meat and Poultry Inspection Bureau if you are unsure.

1. Farmers’ Market License or
2. Mobile Food Unit License: Needed to sell any product at any farmers’ market in Iowa.
3. Retail Food Establishment License: Needed if you have a retail stand/store at your farm, residence, or elsewhere. This license is NOT needed if you ONLY direct-market meat and/or poultry from a processing plant licensed by IDALS Meat and Poultry Bureau.
4. Warehouse License: Needed if you will be storing processed poultry at your residence for distribution to consumers, retailers, food service, or other non-household buyers. If you have a Retail Food Establishment License for the same premises, you do NOT also need a Warehouse License.

Note: If selling to a hotel, restaurant, institution (HRI) or retail store where the buyer picks up processed poultry from an approved processor directly, you do not need to have a Warehouse License, as you are not warehousing the product.

Contact Information
Iowa Department of Inspection and Appeals
Food and Consumer Safety Bureau
Lucas Bldg, 3rd Fl; 321 East 12th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Phone: (515) 281-6538
www.state.ia.us/government/ia
Resources and Contacts

USDA Guidance Document

A detailed USDA/FSIS guidance document explaining the requirements and limits of the specific poultry slaughter exemptions can be found at this Web site:


ATTRA

Additionally, the National Center for Appropriate Technology’s ATTRA Project has created a comprehensive guide to small-scale poultry processing, both on-farm and in small plants:


Iowa Poultry Processors

Ackley ............................................. Vern's Poultry Market ......................................................... (641) 857-3483
Cherokee ........................................... Cherokee Locker ................................................................. (712) 243-2158
Decorah ........................................... Wapsie Produce ............................................................. (563) 382-4271
Fort Atkinson .................................... Kruse Hatchery ............................................................. (563) 534-7396
Greene ............................................. Martzahn's Farm ......................................................... (641) 823-5362
Hospers ........................................... B & B Poultry ................................................................. (712) 752-8251
Kimballton ........................................ Hansen's Poultry ....................................................... (712) 773-3052
Missouri Valley .................................. Duncan's Poultry Processing ...................................... (712) 644-2322
Newell ............................................. Charlie's Chicken Coop ................................................. (712) 272-3606
Urbana ............................................ Urbana Poultry Processing ........................................ (319) 443-2335
West Bend ...................................... Knobloch Poultry Processing ................................... (515) 887-5440

Iowa Meat and Poultry Inspection Bureau

Poultry exemptions are written in technical form and may require interpretation. If you have any questions, please contact the Iowa Meat and Poultry Inspection Bureau, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

Telephone: (515) 281-3338
E-mail: meatAndPoultry@iowaagriculture.gov
Web site: www.iowaagriculture.gov/meatAndPoultryInspection.asp