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FOOD PROTECTION PROGRAM GUIDELINE

Idaho Food Code Guideline 2006-11

June 13, 2006

Subject: **SMALL SCALE POULTRY, RABBIT PROCESSING**

Applicable statutes and rules: Idaho Statute 37-122 and *Idaho Food Code* Section 3 (IDAPA 16.02.19.320)

Issue/Problem: Idaho code requires that all meat and meat products be obtained from regulated meat processing establishments and shall have been inspected for wholesomeness under an official regulatory program.

The USDA requires poultry inspection under 9CFR 381, but provides an exemption for producers of fewer than 20,000 birds. The FDA is designated responsible for rabbit processing, but gives jurisdiction to the state for intrastate processing and sales.

Currently, both chickens and rabbits are being sold in Farmers' Markets. On a case-by-case basis the farmer/processors are being told that these sales are not allowed in Idaho unless they have their animals processed in a USDA plant, and then obtain a food establishment permit (mobile) for their sales.

Discussion: In the past Idaho had a meat inspection program through the State Department of Agriculture. Now only the USDA inspects meat in Idaho, and there are NO chicken or rabbit processing facilities within Idaho. USDA-inspected plants will process chicken, rabbits, buffalo, elk, deer, alligators and ratites in other states, but this requires shipping the animals to a remote processing site. This is necessary for interstate sale of any of these meats.

The Department of Agriculture is promoting "direct sales" of farm products, and encouraging farmers to find markets for locally-grown, "certified organic" and "pastured" meat. From a public health point of view, the "pastured" poultry may be healthier than factory-raised and processed poultry.

Guidance:

Small-scale processors of chickens or rabbits may be permitted by District Health Departments, if they can meet the minimum criteria in the handouts entitled, "Idaho Poultry Processing Guidelines", and "Idaho Rabbit Processing Guidelines". The district does the following prior to approval:

1. Review of the proposal to determine if a veterinarian will certify the animals as healthy.
2. Review of the proposal to determine the number of animals to be processed annually, and whether they will be sold in Idaho (no interstate allowed), and if they will be sold retail or wholesale.
3. Wholesaling to restaurants or retail stores may be allowed if all criteria are met and the finished meat is labeled properly.
4. Retail sales may be permitted out of the processing facility or under a separate license from a mobile unit.
5. Review of the plan for the processing facility, and approval of the facility itself to determine that it meets all requirements for
 - Separation from living quarters;
 - Approved water supply and approved sewage disposal;
 - Indirect drain for processing sink;
 - Floor drain for pressure washing;
 - Equipment (sinks, refrigeration, work tables);
 - Floors, walls and ceilings,
 - Ventilation;
 - Approved solid waste disposal.

Custom processors that are permitted and inspected by USDA are not allowed to resell poultry to restaurants or markets or walk-in customers. If a producer grower takes poultry to a custom processor it must have been purchased by a customer while still alive and processed with the name of the purchaser on the carcass.

Other farm-raised animals are not addressed in these guidelines, but could be considered on a case-by-case basis for small-scale processing permitted by the health district, so long as NO interstate sales take place.

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IDAHO POULTRY PROCESSING GUIDELINES

The State of Idaho has food safety codes and rules which require that chickens and turkeys which are sold retail or wholesale be from a regulated food processing facility, and be sound and free of disease. Small processors are exempt from USDA inspection, but are still required to have approval and licensing from Idaho health authorities if they wish to market their slaughtered and processed poultry.

1. Processing facilities shall comply with the *Idaho Food Code* specifically sections which pertain to food processing establishments.
2. It is *recommended* that the facility contract with an Idaho licensed veterinarian. The veterinarian shall conduct ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections of the poultry during the time of processing, and slaughtering. Determination must be made that the birds are sound, wholesome and free of disease.
3. All poultry not passing ante-mortem or post-mortem inspections shall be denatured and carcasses, parts, organs, fluids and tissue shall be disposed of in a manner and at a location approved by the health agency.
4. The operator shall assure that all poultry slaughtered are free from medicated feed residues, antibiotic residue, pesticides and other residues. Organic certification may be used in lieu of monitoring for these substances.
5. Poultry processed in compliance with these guidelines can reasonably be considered wholesome and safe for human consumption. Labeling of the poultry shall bear
 - The name and location or phone number of the processor,
 - The statement Poultry (specify type) --"Inspected by Idaho Licensed Veterinarian for Wholesomeness" (if applicable), and
 - "Exempt from USDA Inspection per PL 492".

Exception: If a poultry farmer sells **live** poultry direct to a buyer no processing license is required. The buyer can have the birds processed at a USDA "Custom" processor. The name of the owner of the bird must be shown on a tag that is kept with the bird by the custom processor.

FOOD PROCESSING FACILITY SPECIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the plans and specifications required by the *Idaho Food Code* (see list on following page), the following information pertaining to food processing activities is needed to evaluate your proposed operation.

1. Type and ingredients of the food product(s) to be manufactured or processed.
2. Proposed label showing display panels with all mandatory label information.
3. Container information, including the type of construction and source of containers and lids or closures.
4. Production and processing operations:
 - a. Source, condition and handling of raw products and ingredients.
 - b. Produce preparation procedure - cleaning, peeling, chopping, blanching, blending, etc.
 - c. Packing procedure - mechanical, by hand.
 - d. Processing - thermal, pressure, freezing, etc.
 - e. Cooling.
 - f. Labeling procedure.
 - g. Quality control:
 - (1) Tests - bacteriological, chemical, water activity, pH, etc.
 - (2) Methodology for tests.
 - h. Coding.
 - i. Storage and distribution.
 - j. Record keeping - shipping receipts, processing, quality control, coding.
5. General maintenance procedure:
 - a. Cleaning operations:
 - (1) Facilities.
 - (2) Equipment and utensils - manual, clean-in-place.
 - b. Sanitation of equipment and utensils.
 - c. Storage and handling of cleaned portable equipment and utensils.
 - d. Animal and vermin control.
6. Projected quantity of food to be manufactured or processed - initial production and long-range goal.
 - a. Interstate commerce - quantity to be shipped out-of-state.
 - b. Estimated gross sales.
7. Square footage of facility, complete separation from private living quarters.
8. Water source, sewage disposal, and garbage removal facilities.

Minimum Requirements for Plan Approval -- Food Processing Facility Equipment and Structural

Idaho Rules Governing Food Safety and Sanitation Standards (*Idaho Food Code*) require review and plan approval prior to construction, alteration or remodeling of a food establishment. An application for a license and a fee must be submitted with the plans. A construction or pre-operational inspection is required, and a final approval inspection is required prior to opening the business.

1. Approved water source to all fixtures, hot and cold.
2. Approved sewage disposal facilities.
3. A clean facility that is completely separate from living quarters, rodent-proof and in good repair.
4. Floors: Smooth, non-absorbent, coved at walls in all food processing, utensil washing areas, walk-in refrigeration units, locker rooms and toilet rooms.
5. Floor drains are required if pressure-washing is utilized.
6. Walls, ceiling: Smooth, non-absorbent, easy to clean, light-colored.
7. Lighting: Shielded fixtures.
8. Ventilation: Adequate, approved ventilation to remove steam and grease.
9. Employee toilet room with handwash sink
10. Handwash sink in the food processing area.
11. Janitorial, service or mop sink with a minimum 2-inch drain.
12. A commercial three-compartment sink with double drain boards for utensils.
13. Food processing, washing sink with an indirect drain to the sewer line.
14. Equipment: approved by health district and capable of maintaining potentially hazardous foods at the required temperatures.
15. Refrigeration: Adequate capacity, commercial quality with condensate drained to floor sink, hub drain or evaporation unit.
16. Transportation facilities/equipment/vehicles approved by health district.

A certificate of zoning approval for the proposed establishment.

POULTRY LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Federal Poultry Products Inspections Act

Title 21, Food and Drugs, Chapter 10, Poultry and Poultry Products Inspection, Sec. 451-471

Code of Federal Regulations

Title 9, Animals and Animal Products, Chapter III, FSIS, USDA, Part 381 Poultry Products Inspection Regulations, Subpart C -- Exemptions

381.10 (6) -- The slaughtering of sound and healthy poultry or the processing of poultry products of such poultry in any State by any poultry producer or other person for distribution by him solely within such jurisdiction directly to household consumers, restaurants, hotels, and boardinghouses, for use in their own dining rooms, or in the preparation of meals for sales direct to consumers: Provided, that in lieu of complying with all the adulteration provisions of the Act, such poultry is slaughtered and otherwise processed and handled under such *sanitary standards, practices, and procedures as result in the preparation of poultry products that are sound, clean, and fit for human food when distributed by such processor, such poultry products when so distributed bear the processor's name and address and the statement, "Exempted--P.L. 90-492"...and such processor does not exceed the volume limitation prescribed (20,000 poultry).*

The provisions of the Act and the regulations do not apply to any poultry producer with respect to poultry, of his own raising on his own farm, which he slaughters if: Such processor slaughters not more than 1,000 poultry during the calendar year, and none of such poultry moves in "commerce" (interstate).

Idaho Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act

37-122 -- Food deemed adulterated. A food shall be deemed to be adulterated--(3) *if it consists in whole or in part of a diseased, contaminated, filthy, putrid, or decomposed substance, or if it is otherwise unfit for food; or (4) if it has been produced, prepared, packed, or held under insanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated with filth, or whereby it may have been rendered diseased, unwholesome, or injurious to health..."*

IDAHO RABBIT PROCESSING GUIDELINES

The following guidelines for rabbit processing were implemented in 1985 as an alternative to the USDA voluntary inspection program:

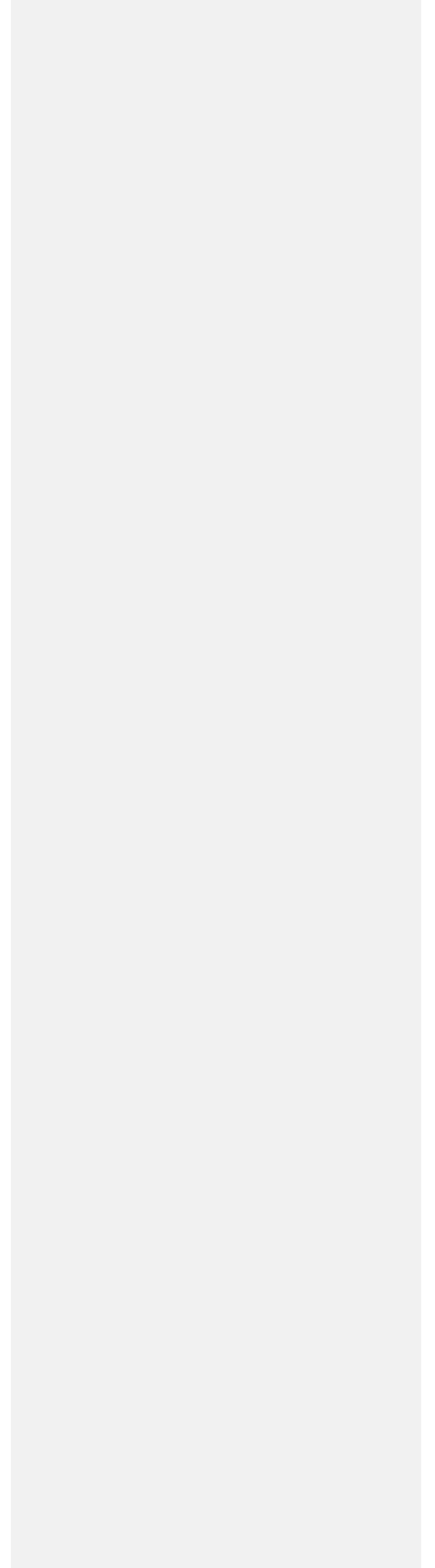
1. Processing facilities shall comply with the **Rules and Regulations Governing Food Sanitation Standards for Food Establishments** (*Idaho Food Code*) specifically sections which pertain to food processing establishments;
2. The establishment shall contract with a veterinarian of their choice for ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections, provided the veterinarian is licensed in Idaho to practice veterinary medicine;
3. The veterinarian shall be at the processing facility during the time of processing, and no slaughtering shall take place unless the veterinarian is present to perform ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections;
4. The veterinarian shall conduct ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections for the diseases or conditions which require condemnation by USDA regulation 9 CFR, Part 354, Section 354.130. Rabbits having such diseases or conditions shall not be acceptable for human food;
5. All rabbits not passing ante-mortem inspections shall be killed and denatured, and rabbits not passing post-mortem inspection shall be denatured;
6. All rabbit carcasses, parts, organs, fluids, and issue shall be disposed of in a manner and at a location approved by the health agency;
7. Rabbits from pathological laboratories shall not be brought into the processing facility premise;
8. The establishment shall assure that all rabbits slaughtered are free from medicated feed residues, medication, pesticides, and other residues;
9. The establishment shall maintain accurate records on the operation of the facility; and
10. Rabbits processed in compliance with these guidelines can reasonably be considered wholesome and safe for human consumption and shall carry a mark of inspection. The mark of inspection shall be facsimile of the form shown herewith, using the size best suited for the purpose intended:

RABBIT
INSPECTED BY
IDAHO LICENSED VETERINARIAN

FOR WHOLESOMENESS
ESTABLISHMENT NO.

Should these guidelines not address a specific aspect of rabbit processing, the *Idaho Food Code* and/or the Idaho Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act shall prevail.

Additional information about starting a rabbit processing business can be obtained from your local health department or this agency.



9 CFR, Section 354.130 Diseases or conditions evident which require condemnation.

- (a) Carcasses of rabbits affected with or showing lesions of any of the following named diseases or conditions shall be condemned: Tularemia, anthrax, hemorrhagic septicemia, pyemia, septicemia, leukemia, acute enteritis, peritonitis, sarcomatosis, metritis, necro-bacillosis (Smorl=s Disease), tuberculosis, emaciation, streptobacillary pseudotuberculosis, and advanced stages of snuffles. Rabbits from pathological laboratories shall be condemned.
- (b) Any organ or part of a rabbit carcass affected with a tumor shall be condemned and when there is evidence that the general condition of the rabbit has been affected by the size, position, or nature of the tumor, the whole carcass shall be condemned. In cases of malignant neoplasms involving any internal organ to a marked extent, or affecting the muscles, skeleton, or body lymph glands, even primarily, the whole carcass shall be condemned.
- (c) Carcasses of rabbits showing any disease such as generalized melanosis, pseudoleukemia, and the like, which systemically affect the rabbit, shall be condemned.
- (d) Any organ or part of a carcass which is badly bruised or which is affected by an abscess, or a suppurating sore, shall be condemned. Parts or carcasses which are contaminated by pus shall be condemned.
- (e) Carcasses of rabbits contaminated by volatile oils, paints, poisons, gases, or other substances which affect the wholesomeness of the carcass shall be condemned.
- (f) All carcasses of rabbits so infected that consumption of the meat or meat food products thereof may give rise to meat poisoning shall be condemned. This includes all carcasses showing signs of any of the following diseases: Acute inflammation of the lungs, pleura, pericardium, peritoneum or meninges; septicemia or pyemia, whether traumatic, or without evident cause; gangrenous or severe hemorrhagic enteritis or gastritis; polyarthritis and acute nephritis. Immediately after the slaughter of any rabbit so infected, the infected premises and implements used shall be thoroughly sanitized. The part or parts of any carcass coming into contact with the carcass or any part of the carcass of any rabbit covered by this section other than those affected with acute inflammation of the lungs, pleura, pericardium, peritoneum or meninges, shall be condemned.
- (g) Carcasses showing any degree of icterus with a parenchymatous degeneration of organs, the result of infection or intoxication, and those which, as a result of a pathological condition, show an intense yellow or greenish-yellow discoloration without evidence of infection or intoxication shall be condemned.
- (h) Carcasses of rabbits affected with mange or scab in advanced stages, or showing emaciation or extension of the inflammation to the flesh, shall be condemned. When the diseased condition is slight, the carcass may be passed for food after removal and condemnation of the affected parts.
- (i) In the disposal of carcasses and parts of carcasses showing evidence of infestation with parasites not transmissible to man, the following general rules shall govern: If the lesions are localized in such manner and are of such character that the parasites and the lesions caused by them may be radically removed, the nonaffected portion of the carcass, or part of the carcass, may be certified for food after the removal and condemnation of the affected portions. Where a part of a carcass shows numerous

lesions caused by parasites, or the character of the infestation is such that complete extirpation of the parasites and lesions is difficult and uncertainly accomplished, or if the parasitic infestation or invasion renders the organ or part in any way unfit for food, the affected organ or part shall be condemned. Where parasites are found to be distributed in a carcass in such a manner or to be of such a character that their removal and the removal of the lesions caused by them are impracticable, no part of the carcass shall be certified for food and the entire carcass shall be condemned. Carcasses infested with a hydatid cyst or cysts (*Echinococcus granulosus*), transmissible to dogs and from dogs to man, shall in all cases be condemned regardless of the degree of infestation.

(j) Carcasses of rabbits showing such degree of emaciation or anemic condition as would render the meat unwholesome, and carcasses which show a slimy degeneration of the fat or a serous infiltration of the muscles shall be condemned.

354.131 Decomposition.

Carcasses of rabbits deleteriously affected by post-mortem changes shall be disposed of as follows:

- (a) Carcasses which have reached a state of putrefaction or stinking fermentation shall be condemned.
- (b) (Reserved)
- (c) Carcasses affected by types of post-mortem change which are superficial in nature may be certified for food after removal and condemnation of affected parts.

354.132 Disposal of condemned carcasses and parts.

All condemned carcasses, or parts of carcasses, shall be disposed of by one of the following methods, under the supervision of an inspector of the Inspection Service: (Facilities and materials for carrying out the requirements in this section shall be furnished by the official establishment.)

- (a) Steam treatment (which shall be accomplished by processing the condemned product in a pressure tank under at least 40 pounds of steam pressure) or thorough cooking in a kettle or vat for a sufficient time to effectively destroy the product for human food purposes and preclude dissemination of disease through consumption by animals. Tanks and equipment used for this purpose or for rendering or preparing inedible products shall be in rooms or compartments separate from those used for the preparation of edible products. There shall be no direct connection, by means of pipes or otherwise, between tanks containing inedible products and those containing edible products.
- (b) Incineration or complete destruction by burning.
- (c) Chemical denaturing, which shall be accomplished by the liberal application to all carcasses and parts thereof, of:
 - (1) Crude carbolic acid,
 - (2) Kerosene, fuel, oil, or used crank case oil,
 - (3) Any phenolic disinfectant conforming to commercial standards CS 70-41 or CS 71-41 which shall be used in at least 2 percent emulsion or solution.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick L. Guzzle", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick L. Guzzle, Manager
Food Protection Program

