

# Selecting Safer Meat Sources in Alberta

When it comes to choosing meat to feed yourself and your family, it's important to consider where and how the meat is sourced. Understanding the risks and benefits associated with different types of meat operations can help you make safer choices.

Consuming illegal or uninspected meat poses a health risk to you and your family and has been linked to illnesses, such as *E. coli*.

Alberta has different types of federally and provincially licensed meat slaughter operations including:

- **Inspected operations:** These facilities undergo regular inspections by federal and provincial inspectors. Meat from these operations can be sold to the public.
- **Uninspected operations:** While licensed, these operations are not inspected. Meat from these operations is only for the person who purchased the slaughter animal and their household. The meat can't be sold, gifted, or donated to others. It must be labelled as uninspected and not for resale.

A directory of licensed slaughter operations can be found [here](#).

Illegal meat sources are meat slaughter operations operating without a license. They are not inspected, and the meat can't be traced if an outbreak occurs related to the meat. There are no assurances that the meat has been prepared safely or that the animals were in good health and treated humanely. These operations pose serious health risks to the public and the wellbeing of the animals being slaughtered.

If you have concerns about an operation, please contact Environmental Public Health at 1-833-476-4743.

## Overview of different types of licensed meat operations

Source	Quality Control	What to look for
<b>Inspected meat comes from federally and provincially inspected slaughter facilities such as abattoirs or commercial butcher shops.</b>	Inspectors ensure the carcass is fit for human consumption, animals are in good health and are handled humanely during the slaughter process.  Inspected meat is the safest option.	Meat from these operations will be labelled with the name of the facility. Inspected meat is what you find in grocery stores and restaurants.
<b>Uninspected meat comes from On-Farm Slaughter Operations (OFSOs) or Mobile Butchers (e.g., the animal is slaughtered on a farm by the license holder).</b>	The hygienic and humane slaughter of the animal is the responsibility of the license holder. Without inspection, the meat can't be sold, gifted, or donated to others.	The meat from these operations is labelled as "Uninspected – Not for Sale." It can't be sold in a grocery store or served to the public (e.g., restaurant).

## Operation's License

Consumers can request to see an operation's license. Below is an example of an On-Farm Slaughter Operation license.



## Food Safety

It's important to always handle meat safely when you take it home. This includes cleaning and sanitizing before and after handling raw meat and ensuring food is sufficiently cooked.

Check out [Safe meat handling: Customer tips for keeping meat products safe](#) for more tips.

For more information contact us at 1-833-476-4743 or [submit a request online](#) at [ahs.ca/eph](https://ahs.ca/eph).

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