

What We Do

The **Meat and Poultry Inspection Branch** licenses and inspects the following meat and poultry establishments that are exempt from federal (USDA) inspection:

- **Retail Processors** who prepare meat and poultry products by curing, smoking, drying, or rendering or who cook pork products for retail sales only, except products of fallow deer, which can be transported and sold in commerce.
- **Custom Livestock Slaughter Plants** that slaughter cattle, sheep, swine, goats and fallow deer raised or bought live by owners. The meat from cattle, sheep, swine and goats is used by the animal's owner, members of the owner's household, nonpaying guests and employees. It cannot be sold. Fallow deer meat can be transported and sold in commerce.
- **Poultry Plants** that slaughter species that don't require (non-amenable) federal inspection: rabbits; small game birds such as quail, pheasant, and partridge.
- **Retail Poultry Plants** that sell live poultry and slaughter them for the customers.
- **Poultry Plants** that slaughter or process fewer than 20,000 poultry of all amenable species (chickens, ducks, geese, guineas, squab and ratites) or fewer than 5,000 turkeys a year.

The Branch trains, licenses and evaluates: **Poultry Meat Inspectors** (PMI) who inspect poultry and rabbits in licensed poultry plants, **Livestock Meat Inspectors** (LMI) who inspect livestock in licensed custom livestock slaughterhouses and **Processing Inspectors** (PI) who inspect meat and poultry products in licensed retail meat processing establishments. PMIs, LMIs and PIs also enforce sanitation standards, pest control, humane handling and slaughter, inedible/condemned material control, marking and labeling and record-keeping requirements in licensed plants.

The Meat and Poultry Inspection Branch also licenses and inspects the following:

- **Renderers** who recycle animal carcasses, packinghouse waste and inedible kitchen grease into animal feed ingredients and inedible industrial fats, oils, and other products.
- **Collection Centers** used for temporary storage of animal carcasses, packinghouse waste and inedible kitchen grease before transport to a licensed rendering plant.
- **Dead Haulers** who transport carcasses of dead livestock and horses.
- **Pet Food Slaughterers** who slaughter animals for use as pet food.
- **Pet Food Processors** who prepare fresh or frozen raw meat products for pet food.
- **Importers** of fresh or frozen raw meat, meat by-products, horsemeat, poultry meat or poultry meat by-products for pet food or horsemeat for human food.

The Branch registers **Transporters of Inedible Kitchen Grease**.

The Branch provides **Import Inspection** of slaughtered non-amenable poultry species shipped to California from other countries and reviews for approval or disapproval inspection systems of other states and foreign countries desiring to ship slaughtered non-amenable poultry species to California..

The Branch reviews sanitation and records at **Custom Exempt Establishments** (locker plants that cut, wrap and process meat from farm killed livestock; custom livestock slaughterhouses; poultry plants).

The Branch conducts **Compliance Investigations** into alleged violations of sections of the Food and Agricultural Code pertaining to the above activities.