

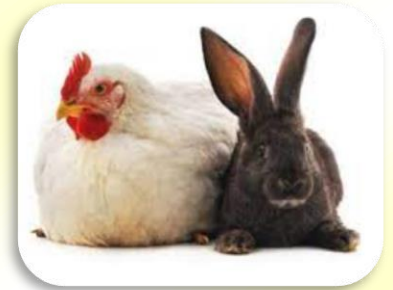
Poultry and Rabbit Raiser Exemption Act

Frequently Asked Questions



How do I receive a poultry and rabbit exemption from processing and licensing?

Persons desiring such exemptions must submit a written request to the Illinois Department of Agriculture. The exemption will become effective upon written notice from the Department and will remain in effect for a period of two years, unless revoked.



Is there a limit on the number of animals I may process under the exemption?

Yes, poultry and rabbit raisers may not slaughter, eviscerate, or further process more than 5,000 of each species during the calendar year (January 1st to December 31st). Such raisers must also maintain adequate records to assure that they do not exceed the annual limit. Records must be kept for one year following the termination of each exemption.

I have a poultry exemption and some of my neighbors also raise chickens. May I slaughter their chickens under my exemption?

No, your exemption is only for poultry raised on your farm or premises. You can not slaughter for anyone else under your exemption. If you do, and are caught doing so, your exemption will be terminated, you will be issued a violation, and you could be fined from \$500 to \$5,000 for processing without a license and selling uninspected meat products. You must have either a Type 1 or Type 2 license from the IDOA to slaughter for other people.

My neighbor has a better facility for processing poultry. May I use his facilities?

No, poultry and poultry products must be slaughtered or otherwise prepared on the premises for which the exemption is given.

May I sell my products to restaurants or grocery stores?

No, only inspected products can be sold to these places, and the products must be inspected by either the Illinois Department of Agriculture or the United States Department of Agriculture and must be fully labelled. Exempted products may only be sold to the end consumer.

May I sell my exempted product directly to the end consumer at a farmer's market?

No, exempted poultry products must be sold or delivered directly to the consumer from the premises for which the exemption is given. Sales at farmer's markets are not allowed for exempted product.

A co-worker wants to buy my exempted product. May I deliver my product to him at work?

No, exempted poultry products must be sold or delivered directly to the consumer from the premises for which the exemption is given. The co-worker will have to purchase and pick up the product from your exempted premises.

My church is having a chicken dinner to which the public is invited. We are asking for a \$6.00 donation. May I donate some of my exempted product to the church?

No, only inspected product can be used for fundraisers.

May I sell further processed poultry products such as wings, legs, and thighs?

No, all products are to be sold whole. The exemption does not allow for further processing or cut up of product.

Are there any labeling requirements for my exempted poultry product?

Yes, all labeling and advertisement of exempted product must not mislead the consumer to presume official inspection has been made under the Meat and Poultry Inspection Act. Product labeling should include the farm name, address, and the statement "Not Inspected".

Although my poultry and poultry products are exempt from inspection, may an IDOA inspector still arrive at my facility?

Yes, department personnel may inspect your facility periodically to ensure that all slaughter and preparation is performed in a sanitary facility in a sanitary manner. However, they will not arrive to officially inspect product.

What facility and sanitation requirements will the inspector be looking for?

The exempted facility must adhere to the following guidelines as defined in 650/5 (b) page 13 of the Illinois Meat and Poultry Inspection Regulations:

1. Area must be clean and free from unsanitary conditions.
2. Area must be free of unused items which have no use in the actual slaughter of animals.
3. Suitable containers must be used for blood, feathers, and skin collection and a suitable area for storage or a suitable means for disposal must be provided.
4. Running water should be supplied for rinsing.
5. All processing is to be done inside and evisceration should be done in a separate room other than that which is used for bleeding, defeathering, and/or skinning to avoid product contamination.
6. Suitable container must be provided for the separation of edible offal and viscera, and a suitable area for storage or a suitable means for disposal of inedible products must be provided.
7. Acceptable product handling procedures will be provided by the raiser and will contain:
 - a. A statement as to where and how evisceration will take place
 - b. How the product will be washed after evisceration and whether with hot or cold water
 - c. How the product will be chilled
 - d. How the product will be packaged
 - e. How the product will be presented to the buyer (i.e., fresh or frozen)

Questions?

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