

Guidance for Sale & Storage of Prepackaged Meat and Poultry Products

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Meat Inspection Service

References:

1. Vermont Meat and Poultry Inspection Laws: [Title 6 Chapter 204 of Vermont Statutes](#)
2. Title 9 of the Federal Code of Regulation: [Subchapter III](#)
3. Code of Vermont Rules [20-023-001 Part 300](#)

Licensing Requirements for retailers and meat handlers:

[Title 6 Chapter 204 § 3306](#) provides that all retail vendors, wholesale distributors, and public warehouses engaged in the business of buying, selling, preparing, packaging, storing, transporting, or otherwise handling meat or poultry products must hold a valid license issued by the Agency. The [application for a retail license](#) and [the application for meat handler operations](#) can be found on the Agency's License and Registration page on its website.

Licenses for Handling Prepackaged Meat & Poultry:

1. **Retail Vendor:** A retail license is required for sales direct to the end consumer. There are several ways to sell meat and poultry which require the retail prepackaged meat license. Direct delivery to customers, CSA's, Farmers Markets, self-service farm stands, and convenience stores all require a prepackaged retail license.
2. **Wholesale Distributor Meat Handler:** Sales of prepackaged meat and poultry to hotels, restaurants, institutions, or other retailers for re-sale requires a meat handler operations license for wholesale distribution.
3. **Public Warehouse Meat Handler:** Any person who acts as a temporary custodian of meat and poultry products for a fee requires a meat handler operations license as a public warehouse.

The following are some regulatory requirements for a prepackage licensure:

- 1) No processing or repacking of meat and poultry is allowed. Only fully packaged and labeled products are allowed to be offered for sale.
- 2) The area where prepackaged meat and poultry is stored and offered for sale must be separate and have a separate entrance from living quarters per [CVR 20-023-001](#) 305.2(D) and 9 CFR 305.2(C).

- 3) Meat and poultry products should be stored in a manner that prevent them from becoming adulterated as defined in [6 V.S.A 3302 \(1\)](#) . This includes, but is not limited to:
- Buildings and equipment used for storage of meat and poultry products, such as walk-in or reach-in refrigerators or freezers, must be cleaned at a frequency necessary to preclude accumulation of condensation, dirt, debris, organic material, and residues such as mold to prevent contamination.
 - Meat and poultry products held in a walk-in cooler or freezer must be stored at least 4 inches off the floor.
 - Refrigerator temperatures must be maintained at 40°F or less. Freezer temperatures must be maintained at 15°F or less. Product temperature must be maintained during transportation and at farmer's markets.
 - Hazardous materials (e.g. petroleum-based products and chemical based cleaners.) are not allowed in the area where meat or poultry is stored.
 - The grounds and buildings shall be maintained in a clean manner and shall be free of debris, trash and conditions conducive to attracting insects, rodents, or other vermin. Buildings shall be kept in good repair and be free of broken walls & windows, holes, cracks, and crevices that could permit entrance of insects, rodents, and other vermin.
- 4) All meat and poultry handlers, including retail vendors, are required to maintain records documenting all transactions relating to their business, such as bills of sale, invoices, shipping and receiving records and cash register receipts as required by [9 CFR 320.1](#) & [9 CFR 381.175](#).
- 5) Only USDA or State of Vermont inspected and passed meat and poultry may be offered for sale. Uninspected meat and poultry (e.g., On-farm slaughtered exempt poultry, custom exempt processed meat) and personal use products may not be stored in retail refrigerators or freezers.
- 6) Meat and poultry must be sold by weight as required by [9 V.S.A. § 2691](#).
- 7) Retail vendors offering for sale raw whole major muscle cuts of meat or poultry with a retail area that is accessible to consumers, must make nutritional information available for consumers. If individual packages of product do not have nutritional information present on their labeling, the following informational posters can be used:
- a) [Beef and Veal](#)
 - b) [Pork and Lamb](#)
 - c) [Chicken and Turkey](#)