



Specialized Meat Processors Notice of Requirement to Obtain Variance

Michigan's food law requires licensed food establishments that conduct specialized meat processing for retail sales to obtain a variance, which includes a food safety plan (HACCP). All specialized meat processors will need to complete their food safety plan and have their variance approved by March 1, 2015. Newly licensed processors must obtain the variance upon licensing.

Who needs to develop a plan and get a variance approved?

- Meat processors who meet all of the following:
 - Conduct specialized meat processing, such as curing, smoking or otherwise using additives for preservation or vacuum packaging specialized meat products.
 - Are licensed by MDARD and regulated under the Food Code (i.e. food service and retail operations) and sell meat products retail. This includes food service establishments inspected by Local Health Departments
 - Are not inspected by USDA for those retail meat processing and sales operations.
- Custom exempt venison processors who make sausage for their customers using other meat products and ingredients supplied by the processor.

What does the application and approval process consist of?

- Attending a training course is recommended to help to better understand legal requirements and minimize the time needed to complete an application.
- Complete the specialized meat processing variance application package. The application is available at: www.michigan.gov/meatprocessing.
- Submit the completed application for review by one of MDARD's food processing Specialists for retail establishments, or the Local Health Department for food service establishments. This process will take about 30 business days.

Where will training be held for meat processors?

- Training has been provided by Michigan State University. Registration for trainings is available at <http://www.events.anr.msu.edu/event.cfm?folder=RetailVariance2012>. See our web page for future training announcements.
- Attendees will receive all needed application materials on a jump drive during the session along with on-site assistance in starting the application.

Visit our meat processing web page at: <http://www.michigan.gov/meatprocessing>.
Please call with questions at 800-232-3939.

8/14/12