

Impact of Changes to the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA) - OCA Position Paper

August, 2004

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care is implementing changes to the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA) effective September 1, 2004. The regulatory changes will prohibit un-inspected meat from entering a food premise unless it is obtained through hunting for personal consumption, and identified as such. Animals which are slaughtered on-farm and therefore un-inspected by a veterinarian/meat inspector will no longer be allowed into processing plants, even if for personal consumption.

Previously livestock producers could slaughter animals on farm for their own use and then have that meat custom-cut, wrapped, and frozen at a food premise, providing it was identified and stored separately from inspected products. As of September 1st this year, livestock producers will have the following options available to them:

- Bring their live animal to one of 195 provincially licensed abattoirs for custom slaughter, dressing, cutting, and wrapping. In that case, both the animal and the carcass receive inspection, and the meat can be legally sold.
- An OMAF-appointed veterinarian can conduct an ante mortem inspection at the owner's expense prior to on-farm slaughter. Then, the carcass can be brought to a provincially licensed plant for post-mortem inspection, dressing, cutting, and wrapping. In this case, the meat cannot be sold and must be consumed by the producer's immediate family only.
- The meat can be dressed, cut, and wrapped on-farm following on-farm slaughter. In this case, the meat cannot be sold and must be consumed by the producer's immediate family only.

Impact

The new regulation will have a very serious and negative impact on many beef producers, especially those who farm in remote areas of Ontario where abattoirs are at significant distance or where there are cut and wrap facilities only. Beef producers in Ontario have relied on the ability to have their own on-farm slaughtered cattle processed at a processing facility for their own personal consumption. In many on-farm slaughter situations, cattle may have sustained a physical injury which in no way compromises the safety and quality of the end product, however does limit transportation for humane reasons.

OCA Position

The Ontario Cattlemen's Association is specifically concerned that the new regulation appears to create a double standard in allowing wild game for processing in the same facilities that bovine carcasses will no longer be permitted. Additionally, within the recently released Farm to Fork report, Justice Haines maintains that on-farm slaughter should be exempt from inspection. OCA has requested that the Health Protection and Promotion Act include a provision that an exemption be extended to the processing of un-inspected bovine carcasses. In regards to longer-term solutions, OCA has requested consideration of additional options including on-farm slaughter inspection services and mobile slaughter facilities.