



Local Governments

Key Partners

in Local Meat Production

Meat, eggs and dairy products are an important part of most people's diets. More and more BC consumers want these to be locally produced. This is good news for local governments because local food production supports our communities. It keeps food dollars in the local economy and creates jobs.



Livestock farming is a key contributor to local food production. Farming and food processing go hand in hand - in order to be sustainable and contribute to rural economies at a maximum, local meat production needs local slaughterhouses.

The Regulatory Environment

In BC, the Meat Inspection Regulation requires slaughterhouse operators to be licensed if they offer slaughter services for livestock owners or produce meat for sale for human consumption. In most parts of the province, this licensing requirement is relatively new. Livestock producers, meat processors and their customers are still adapting to the changes.

Slaughterhouses must also comply with regulations relating to environmental protection, waste disposal, animal health and welfare, labour, workplace safety, the Agricultural Land Commission and Marketing Boards, as well as municipal zoning and other bylaws. This rigorous government oversight makes licensed plants good neighbours in their communities.

A Role for Local Government

Slaughterhouses require considerable capital investment, and operating costs are very high. Increasing costs of waste disposal, shortages of skilled labour, the current economic climate and uncertainties in the livestock industry are additional challenges. The face of BC's meat processing industry is changing. To remain economically viable, the industry must develop community and regional solutions. Local governments can support this important industry in their community by:

- ensuring that local government **bylaws, official community plans, etc.** support the full range of activities required for local meat production, including the breeding and raising of meat animals, slaughter, processing, distribution and the sale of the meat. For example, in many areas agricultural zoning only allows the operation of a slaughterhouse if the majority of animals to be processed are raised on the same property. This limits community based approaches that can serve the needs of all livestock producers in one area.



