businesscompanion
trading standards law explained

Deer carcase and offal disposal

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In this guide, the words 'must' or 'must not' are used where there is a legal requirement to do (or not do) something. The word 'should' is used where there is established legal guidance or best practice that is likely to help you avoid breaking the law.

Although the United Kingdom left the European Union (EU) in 2021, certain pieces of legislation (known as 'assimilated law') continue to apply until such time as they are replaced by new UK legislation, revoked or permitted to expire. This means that our guidance still contains references to legislation that originated from the EU.

This guidance is for Scotland

The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 cover the disposal of deer carcases, parts of deer and products of deer origin not intended for human consumption. The Regulations apply to both farmed and wild deer (subject to specific criteria).

Strict controls are in place to ensure animal by-products are disposed of safely to reduce the risk of the spread of disease.

Notifiable diseases

If you think that a notifiable disease, in particular TB, has caused ill health or death, you must report it to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) immediately by telephoning 0300 060 0704. Carcases should be available to be examined by post-mortem in these cases. Always consider the possibility of anthrax if death is sudden and unexplained (see 'Anthrax' for more information on the disease). Do not dispose of the animal until directed to do so by either an APHA official or an Animal Health inspector.

Disposal of deer carcases and offal

Farmed deer (kept within a ring fence)

The disposal of deer carcases, parts of deer carcases and products of deer origin are controlled by the Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 as category 2 material (unless diseased, in which case they become category 1).

The Regulations require that this material is collected and transported without undue delay to one of the following:

- Knacker's yard
- Hunt kennel
- Maggot farm
- Incinerator
- Renderer

More information on fallen stock and safe disposal of dead animals can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Burial or burning is generally banned and is only permitted in Scotland in the designated 'remote area', namely parts of the Highlands and Islands. Disposal in this way is subject to strict rules and record keeping.

Wild deer

The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 only apply to wild deer in certain circumstances - for example, if the deer is suspected of being infected with a disease communicable to animals or humans. In this case, the carcase must be treated as high risk (category 1 animal by-product) and disposed of accordingly.

In all other cases concerning wild deer hunted in their natural habitat, if good hunting practices are observed the Regulations do not apply and gralloch (entrails) and other body parts may be disposed of safely on-site. However, 'approved game-handling establishments' (AGHEs) must dispose of animal by-products generated on their premises in line with the Regulations.

Gralloch from any deer suspected of having a notifiable disease, in particular TB, cannot be buried. This material will have to be collected in a sealable container and carried back to the premises - for example, the larder - for inspection and disposal. If carcases are taken to a larder, additional controls may apply, depending on the amount of further dressing that takes place.

Wild deer that are suspected of being infected with a disease communicable to humans or animals must be disposed of as an animal by-product, by either:

- Rendering in an approved premises
  or
- Complete incineration in an approved incinerator

Transportation of deer carcases and/or parts

Animal by-products must be collected, identified and disposed of without undue delay, in order to prevent risks arising to public and animal health.

Animal by-products must be transported in sealed new packaging, or covered leakproof containers or vehicles.

Containers should be dedicated to the use of specific categories of animal by-products. If not, they must be cleaned and disinfected after each use in order to prevent cross-contamination.

Animal by-products must be identified in accordance with the Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013:

- Category 1 material must be labelled as 'For disposal only'
- Category 2 material must be labelled 'Not for animal consumption' (with limited exceptions)

You must ensure that all animal by-products are covered or contained whilst awaiting collection / disposal to prevent animals and birds gaining access.

Documentation required

Carcases

If the deer carcase is collected by an AGHE, or appropriately transported to an AGHE, a trained person must complete a declaration document, after undertaking an initial examination of the carcase.

A trained person declaration template is attached for your use. The information on the declaration includes such things as the name of the shooter and whether any abnormal behaviour was noted by the shooter prior to the kill. It also requires details of any environmental contamination of the carcase - for example, if shot whilst in a bog, there may be excess mud contamination present. The trained person must sign the declaration.

Animal by products

The person consigning the animal by-product must keep a record of each consignment and ensure that identifying documentation (a commercial document) accompanies the by-product during its transport. Such records must show as a minimum:

- Date of transport*
- Quantity and description of material*

- Category description of the material*
- Name and address of origin of material
- Name and address of transporter*
- Name and address of destination and approval / registration number (if applicable)*
- Signature of responsible person (generally the person producing the document)

As a consignor of animal by-product waste, you must keep a record showing the bullet points asterisked above. In most cases, the copy of the commercial document can serve as your record. However, it is advisable to have additional records in book form or electronically, as appropriate.

A commercial document template is attached for your use. Ideally, this needs to be carbon-copied so that the transporter and the premises of origin can keep a copy (see below).

If the document is produced by the consignor, it should be signed by the consignor. If the document is produced by the transporter, it should be signed by the transporter.

Each movement of animal by-products and derived products must be accompanied by the top copy of the commercial document, which has to be left at the destination premises. The premises of origin and the transporter each retain a copy also.

Commercial documents and all records relating to animal by-products must be retained for at least two years and produced on demand to an inspector.

Further information

For additional information see *The Wild Game Guide*, which is a Food Standards Scotland guide to the hygiene regulations for people who shoot wild game and supply in-fur or in-feather, or as small quantities of wild game meat.

Trading Standards

For more information on the work of Trading Standards services and the possible consequences of not abiding by the law, please see 'Trading Standards: powers, enforcement and penalties'.

In this update

No major changes.

Last reviewed / updated: April 2026

Key legislation

- Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 *laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption (Animal by-products Regulation)*
- Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

Please note

This information is intended for guidance; only the courts can give an authoritative interpretation of the law.

The guide's 'Key legislation' links go to the legislation.gov.uk website. The site usually updates the legislation to include any amendments made to it. However, this is not always the case. Information on all changes made to legislation can be found by following the above links and clicking on the 'More Resources' tab.

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