

Casualty slaughter for farmers & hauliers

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This guidance is for England

Casualty animals must not be transported unless they are fit for the intended journey. In the case of doubt, veterinary advice should be sought. There is no obligation for a slaughterhouse to accept casualty animals and arrangements with the slaughterhouse management and official veterinarian must be made before sending in any such animal.

A live animal (if fit to be transported) known or suspected to be injured, or showing signs of abnormality, must be accompanied to a slaughterhouse by a food chain information declaration, completed by the owner or person in charge of the animal.

Where an otherwise healthy animal, fit for human consumption, has had an accident rendering it unfit for transport, it may be possible to slaughter outside of a licensed slaughterhouse and move the carcase directly to a licensed slaughterhouse. To do this you will need an ante-mortem veterinary inspection and declaration.

Transporting of casualty animals

Under the Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 you must not transport an animal unless it is fit for the intended journey and suitable provision has been made for its care during the journey and on arrival at its destination.

In particular, an animal is not considered fit for its intended journey if it is ill, injured, infirm or fatigued. However, where its condition is only 'slight' the animal may be transported, providing the intended journey is not likely to cause unnecessary suffering.

No animal may be loaded by dragging or pushing by any means, or lifted by a mechanical device, except under direct veterinary supervision for transport to the nearest available place for veterinary treatment.

If in any doubt about fitness to travel, always consult a veterinary surgeon.

Note: there is no obligation for a slaughterhouse to accept casualty animals; always check with the slaughterhouse prior to transporting any animal.

Documentation required

The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and EU Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 *on the hygiene of foodstuffs* require the following documentation to be held.

Food chain information declaration

All cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry and horses moving to a slaughterhouse must be accompanied by a completed food chain information (FCI) declaration. A live casualty animal (if fit to be transported) known or suspected to be injured or showing signs of abnormality must be accompanied to a slaughterhouse by an FCI declaration, completed by the owner or person in charge of the animal. This declaration identifies the animal and any veterinary medicinal products or other treatments administered to it within the last six months, including dates of administration and withdrawal periods. The disease status of the holding must also be declared.

You must confirm your intention to send a live casualty animal to a slaughterhouse prior to transporting it; this is to ensure that the slaughterhouse operator will accept the animal and that an official veterinarian (OV) will be available to carry out a post-mortem examination. The food chain information declaration must be handed to the OV on arrival at the slaughterhouse.

Live casualty sheep / goats must also be accompanied by a fully completed movement document for sheep and goats (either a paper copy ARAMS-1 form or electronic copy using the ARAMS system that can be printed by the haulier if requested to do so by an inspector). Live casualty pigs must also be accompanied by a haulier summary for pigs (using the eAML2 system). A valid cattle / horse passport must accompany cattle / horses. All livestock species must be correctly identified in accordance with the relevant legislation. This is the responsibility of the keeper.

See '[Food chain information](#)' for more information. The slaughterhouse operator may also be able to help.

Emergency slaughter declaration

Animals slaughtered outside a licensed slaughterhouse will only be eligible for human consumption if they were otherwise healthy animals that have suffered an accident and are unable to be transported live to a slaughterhouse for welfare reasons. Such animals must be examined by a veterinary surgeon ante-mortem and must then be accompanied by an emergency slaughter declaration completed by the animal owner (or their agent) and the veterinary surgeon that examined the animal subject to emergency slaughter.

A template [emergency slaughter declaration](#) is attached.

You must confirm your intention to send an animal subject to emergency slaughter with the slaughterhouse operator to ensure that it will be accepted and that an OV will be available to carry out post-mortem examination. The emergency slaughter declaration must be handed to the OV upon arrival at the slaughterhouse. An emergency slaughter declaration provides no guarantee that the OV will not identify any deficiencies that would make the meat unfit for human consumption.

Removal of the stomach and intestines, but no other dressing, may take place at the point of slaughter in the presence of the veterinarian. Any viscera removed must accompany the slaughtered animal to the slaughterhouse and be identified as belonging to that animal.

The slaughtered animal must be transported to the slaughterhouse hygienically and without undue delay. If it is likely that more than two hours will elapse between slaughter and arrival at the slaughterhouse, the body must be transported in a refrigerated vehicle or climatic conditions must be appropriate.

Bovine animals over 48 months old* that have undergone emergency slaughter must have a brain stem sample (BSS) taken for BSE testing purposes in accordance with the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (England) Regulations 2018. Care should be taken to ensure that severe damage to the brain stem is avoided, as failure to obtain a suitable BSS will render the animal ineligible for the food chain.

[*If born in an EU Member State except Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania; aged over 24 months if born in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania or any non-EU country.]

Cattle born before 1 August 1996

Cattle born in the UK before 1 August 1996 do not have passports, only certificates of registration, and they may not be slaughtered for human consumption. All cattle of this age have been restricted under the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (England) Regulations 2018 to the premises where they were located due to the consequent TSE risk.

Keepers of these cattle have been issued with restriction notices detailing the affected animals. Keepers wishing to move such animals must submit a [movement licence application form](#), completed by both parties involved in the movement, to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) One Health Customer Service Centre in Worcester. Further information can be found in the [cattle without passports](#) section of the GOV.UK website.

Penalties

Failure to comply with trading standards law can lead to enforcement action and to sanctions, which may include a fine and/or imprisonment. For more information please see '[Trading standards: powers, enforcement & penalties](#)'.

Key legislation

[EU Regulation \(EC\) No 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs](#)

[EU Regulation \(EC\) No 853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin](#)

[Welfare of Animals \(Transport\) \(England\) Order 2006](#)

[Cattle Identification Regulations 2007](#)

[Sheep and Goats \(Records, Identification and Movement\) \(England\) Order 2009](#)

[Pigs \(Records, Identification and Movement\) Order 2011](#)

[Food Safety and Hygiene \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

[EU Regulation \(EU\) 2015/262 laying down rules pursuant to Directives 90/427/EEC and 2009/156/EC as regards the methods for the identification of equidae \(Equine Passport Regulation\)](#)

[Equine Identification \(England\) Regulations 2018](#)

[Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies \(England\) Regulations 2018](#)

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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 may only show the original version of the legislation, although some amending legislation is linked to separately where it is directly related to the content of a guide. Information on amendments to UK legislation can be found on each link's 'More Resources' tab; amendments to EU legislation are usually incorporated into the text.



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Though not marked as relevant for Northern Ireland, the advice and guidance that applies to England can be taken to reflect the 'spirit' of the law in NI, but should not be relied upon without professional advice.

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