

Food Safety Guidelines for Industry Transportation of Meat and Meat Products



Operators of food establishments, including individuals transporting or distributing meat products, are responsible for making sure meat and meat products being sold to the public are fit for human consumption.

It is essential that meat and meat products are transported in a manner that reduces the risk of cross-contamination and prevents the growth of disease causing organisms, which could make meat unsafe. Examples of meat include: carcasses, primal cuts, quarters, sides, dressed/eviscerated poultry, etc. Examples of meat products include: minced, ground, steaks, chops, sausages, bacon, ham, jerky, etc.

The [Food and Food Handling Establishments Regulation](#) requires that everyone who transports meat and meat products for commercial purposes must ensure the meat and meat products are kept at temperatures of 5°C or less.

This guideline provides advice on how to transport meat and meat products safely.

1. Food Protection

- Before loading all vehicles/carriers, check for:
 - structural defects or flaws
 - cleanliness
 - potential items that could cause contamination
- Use packaging materials that protect the meat and meat products in a way that they are safe from contamination during transportation. This includes the inside packaging that directly touches the meat and meat products, as well as the outer packaging (e.g., boxes, pallets, pallet wraps).
- Protect food during transport from sources of contamination (e.g., insects, chemicals, rodents, waste products, toxic materials).
- Do not transport commercial agricultural or restricted class pesticides or other hazardous materials with food.
- Avoid placing meat and meat products directly on the floor of the cargo area of the vehicle.

- To prevent cross-contamination pack meat and meat products in a way that separates them from other products. Use separate containers for raw and cooled (or ready-to-eat) products.
 - Restrain products, if shifting could cause cross-contamination.

2. Temperature Control

- Ensure meat and meat products have been properly chilled to 5°C (42°F) before loading.
- Arrange loads to make sure there is adequate airflow to maintain temperatures.
- Check the temperature of the meat holding area of the vehicle before loading to make sure it is 5°C (42°F) or lower.
- Minimize time spent loading and unloading to prevent unsafe fluctuations in product temperature
- If necessary to maintain temperature, 5°C or less, add freezer packs or ice to the container.
- Frozen foods must remain thoroughly frozen during transport. Prevent any thawing and refreezing.

3. Vehicles/Carriers/Equipment

- The meat holding area of the transport vehicle (e.g., insulated container, mechanical refrigeration) must be able to keep food at 5°C (42°F) or less.
- Clean and sanitize the meat holding area of vehicle after each use.
- Equipment and packaging used for transporting and handling meat and meat products are smooth, resistant to spoilage/corrosion, non-toxic, in good condition, and built to permit adequate cleaning (e.g., good quality pallets, totes, bins, packaging, slip sheets).

4. Environmental Factors

- Travelling on dirt or gravel roads, and exposure to wind, rain, and snow can increase the risk of contamination or product damage – especially if meat and meat products are unpackaged.
 - Make sure slip sheets or covers are secured. Consider double coverings.
 - Provide insulated containers with lids that are securely attached for smaller-sized products.
 - Keep containers closed.
 - Do not transport uncovered (exposed) carcasses.

5. Personnel Practices

- Practise good personal hygiene at all times. Wash hands, and exposed part of arms, thoroughly, in a hand-washing sink, before loading and unloading and as often as necessary to keep them clean.
 - Wipes and hand sanitizer may be substituted when a sink is not available during deliveries.
- Prevent direct or indirect contact of hair with product by using a suitable hair covering or restraint such as a hair net.
- Properly store outer protective clothing (e.g., white coats) and change as often as necessary.

Applicable Legislation

- [Food and Food Handling Establishments Regulation](#)
 - Section 12 – Personnel
 - Section 28 – Transportation

Questions?

For more food safety information contact the Food Safety and Inspection Branch:

- email: foodsafety@gov.mb.ca
- website: manitoba.ca/agriculture/foodsafety

This guideline is available in multiple formats upon request.
Aussi disponible en français.