



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

**2015 Wisconsin Act 243**  
[2015 Senate Bill 513]

**Regulation of Slaughtering and  
Meat Processing**

### **BACKGROUND**

Wisconsin law prohibits a person from operating a plant or premises where certain animals or poultry are slaughtered for human consumption or where certain meat or poultry products are processed, unless the person obtains a license from the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Wisconsin law also requires certain animals and poultry to be inspected before and after they are slaughtered.

### **2015 WISCONSIN ACT 243**

2015 Wisconsin Act 243 modifies Wisconsin law regarding license requirements, exemptions from license requirements, inspections, and license fees.

### **License Requirements**

Prior law generally required licensing of a plant or premises used for the slaughter, for human consumption, of cattle, sheep, swine, goats, farm-raised deer, horses, mules, other equines, and domesticated fowl. The Act removes horses, mules, and other equines, and adds alpacas, llamas, bison, ratites, rabbits, and other species that DATCP designates by rule, to the list of species that are covered.

Wisconsin law requires the operator of an establishment that is required to be licensed to comply with certain specified regulations of the federal Department of Agriculture. Effective April 1, 2018, the Act repeals the statutory references to specific federal regulations and instead requires operators to comply with federal requirements as provided in DATCP's administrative rules.

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

### **Exemptions From License Requirements**

Prior law provided an exemption from licensing requirements for a person operating an establishment if the establishment only processed products for sale directly to consumers at retail on the premises where the products were processed, only inspected meat was permitted on the premises, and annual sales to restaurants and institutions were limited to the lesser of 25% of the volume of meat sales or \$28,000.

The Act modifies the exemption to provide that the licensing requirements do not apply if annual sales to **hotels**, restaurants, and institutions are restricted to 25% of the gross annual value of meat or poultry product sales or **the adjusted dollar limitation published by the federal Department of Agriculture**, whichever is less.

The Act creates additional exemptions for establishments that meet certain federal Department of Agriculture requirements and establishments that slaughter or process captive game animals and captive game birds.

### **Inspections**

Wisconsin law requires certain animal species to be inspected before and after slaughter. The Act requires DATCP to provide voluntary inspection services upon request to licensed establishments for the slaughter of captive game animal and captive game bird species, which are not required to be inspected before and after slaughter. The Act also requires an establishment receiving such services to reimburse DATCP at a rate specified by the department by rule.

### **License Fees**

Wisconsin law requires certain establishments that slaughter livestock or poultry, or that process meat or poultry products, to pay an annual license fee of \$200. Wisconsin law requires establishments that only slaughter uninspected livestock or poultry or process uninspected meat or poultry products as a custom service to pay an annual license fee of \$80.

Effective April 1, 2018, the Act requires DATCP to set, by rule, annual license fee amounts, not to exceed \$200, for establishments based on the type of inspection required, and to establish a reduced annual license fee for establishments that only slaughter livestock or poultry or process meat or poultry products as a custom service.

*Effective date:* March 3, 2016, except that the changes to license fees and the provisions of the Act that repeal statutory references to specific federal regulations and instead require operators to comply with federal requirements as provided in DATCP's administrative rules become effective on April 1, 2018.

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