

# **THE MEAT PLANT APPROVALS PROCESS**

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# APPROVAL OF MEAT ESTABLISHMENTS

## RELEVANT REGULATIONS

**Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 (H 2)**

**Article 4 Registration and approval of establishments**

**Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 (H 3)**

**Article 3 Approval of establishments**

**‘The competent authority may grant conditional approval if it appears from the on-site visit that the establishment meets all the infrastructure and equipment requirements. It shall grant full approval only if it appears from a new on-site visit carried out within three months of the granting of conditional approval that the establishment meets the other requirements referred to in (a). If clear progress has been made but the establishment still does not meet all of these requirements, the competent authority may prolong conditional approval.**

**However, conditional approval shall not exceed a total of six months.’**

# APPROVAL OF UK ABATTOIRS AND CUTTING PLANTS

The Regulations allow plants that previously supplied the EU market to continue trading until they receive their first approval visit.

For plants, including catering butchers, previously restricted to trading on the national market there is a transitional measure allowing them to continue to trade in the same way, as long as they are approved by the end of 2009.

# APPROVAL OF UK ABATTOIRS AND CUTTING PLANTS

Approvals are carried out by:

- Veterinary Meat Hygiene Advisers (VMHAs) in GB
- Veterinary Officers of DARD in Northern Ireland

# APPROVAL OF UK ABATTOIRS AND CUTTING PLANTS

**Full approval:** establishment is fully compliant.

**Conditional approval:** establishment is not fully compliant but food safety risks are being adequately managed and the operator is taking steps to implement permanent solutions.

**Refusal:** where there is serious non-compliance, whether structural or food safety management.

# APPROVAL OF UK ABATTOIRS AND CUTTING PLANTS

## For currently licensed premises

1ST VISIT → OUTCOME (Full or Conditional Approval, or Refusal of Approval)

(within 3 months of Conditional Approval)



2ND VISIT → OUTCOME (Full or Conditional Approval, or Refusal of Approval)

(within 3 months of extended Conditional Approval)



3RD VISIT → OUTCOME (Full Approval or Refusal of Approval)

# APPROVAL OF CATERING BUTCHERS

	No. establishments	Assessed
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Wales</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>~140</b>	<b>?</b>

# APPROVAL OF CATERING BUTCHERS

To complete the approval of the remaining establishments:

- External consultants ( CMi ) will carry out pre-approval appraisal visits to remaining catering butchers.
- MHS Lead Veterinarians will carry out approvals at the remaining stand-alone cutting plants.

# MHS APPROVAL OF CUTTING PLANTS

- Lead Veterinarians will recommend approval to the FSA's Meat Hygiene and Veterinary Division.
- Industry are NOT charged for approval visits.
- Routine FBO audit will be suspended during the approval phase.

**WHICH CUTTING PLANTS NEED TO BE APPROVED ?**

**ALL PLANTS CUTTING MEAT THAT ARE  
NOT SPECIFICALLY EXEMPT !**

## **Regulation.853/2004, Article 1 Scope**

3. This Regulation shall **not apply** in relation to:

- (a) primary production for private domestic use;
- (b) the domestic preparation, handling or storage of food for private domestic consumption;
- (c) the **direct supply**, by the producer, of small quantities of **primary products** to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer;
- (d) the **direct supply**, by the producer, of small quantities of **meat from poultry and lagomorphs** slaughtered on the farm to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying such meat to the final consumer as fresh meat;
- (e) **hunters** who supply **small quantities** of **wild game or wild game meat** directly to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer.

## **Regulation 853/2004, Article 1 Scope**

5. (a) **Unless expressly indicated to the contrary, this Regulation shall not apply to retail.**
5. (b) **However, this Regulation shall apply to retail when operations are carried out with a view to the supply of food of animal origin to another establishment, unless:**
- (i) the operations consist only of storage or transport, in which case the specific temperature requirements laid down in Annex III shall nevertheless apply; or
  - (ii) the supply of food of animal origin from the retail establishment is to other retail establishments only and, in accordance with national law, is a **marginal, localised and restricted activity.**

## **Recital 13 of Regulation 853/2004**

Interprets **‘marginal’** as ‘a small part of the establishment’s business’, but subsequent EU Commission guidance provides that it may also be interpreted as ‘a small amount of food of animal origin in absolute terms’.

Following consultation, the UK is interpreting the terms **‘marginal’**, **‘localised’** and **‘restricted’** in relation to meat as follows:

- **‘Marginal’**: supply of food of animal origin:

up to a quarter of the business in terms of food; or

in relation to: fresh or processed meat, (but not wild game meat)

up to 2 tonnes a week, subject to the establishment having a genuine retail outlet supplying the final consumer with part of its production of meat;

and

- **‘Localised’**: supply of food of animal origin;

within the supplying establishment’s own county plus the greater of either the neighbouring county or counties or 50 km/30 miles from the boundary of the supplying establishment’s county;

and

- **‘Restricted’**: supply of food of animal origin;

is limited to certain types of products or establishments. In the meat sector, the restrictions are in relation to the amounts of meat supplied and the requirement for a ‘genuine’ retail outlet (see ‘marginal’ above).

## **SUMMARY**

- **There must be a ‘genuine retail outlet’ (this can include mail order and internet sales).**
- **Up to 2 tonnes of meat permitted.**
- **Up to a quarter of the business in terms of food (e.g. 3 tonnes meat and 9 tonnes of other food)**

# ESTIMATING CUTTING PLANT THROUGHPUT

- Not as easy as it may first appear !
- Incoming goods' records are not always readily available 😊

# ESTIMATING CUTTING PLANT THROUGHPUT

## FACTORS TO BEAR IN MIND

- Physical size of plant
- Plant facilities – size of cutting rooms, chillers, freezers
- Type & amount of meat present – exposed / carcase, boxed, in ‘Dolavs’, trays, cardboard ‘Jumbos’ etc.
- Presence & amount of ABPs
- No. of staff
- Complexity of cutting operation i.e. amount of meat each butcher can cut.
- No. of vehicles

# THE SMITHFIELD PERSPECTIVE

- Smithfield Market remains the only 'intervention market' for fresh meat in the UK – serving as a buffer for short-term fluctuations in supply & demand.
- The Market operates via 43 different businesses each of which has been designated as an FBO.

## THE SMITHFIELD PERSPECTIVE

- WEEKLY THROUGHPUT ~ 3,000 tonnes  
(1,000 tonnes exposed carcass red meat  
→ 75% cut into 'wholesale cuts' requiring  
further butchery – off-site)
- 1,200 tonnes boxed poultry meat  
(90% → directly to catering trade)
- 800 tonnes boxed red meat  
(99% → directly to catering trade)

## THE SMITHFIELD PERSPECTIVE

- 80% of the 3,000 tonnes → 2,400 tonnes is distributed, cut, cooked & eaten within Greater London.
- This level of throughput does not reconcile with the declared throughput of those plants that we are already aware of.....

.....so where does this meat go ?

# THE SMITHFIELD PERSPECTIVE

## The 'white van question' ?

- Approximately 1,000 van collections take place from the Market each week.
- 10-15 'white vans' are checked each week for compliance with H1 - a large proportion of these vehicles are only registered with the DVLA at domestic addresses.
- This complicates the traceability of food & renders true accountability for food handling almost impossible.

# THE SMITHFIELD PERSPECTIVE

## The 'white van question' ? (cont.)

- At Smithfield, we are proposing to check if these 'white vans' are registered as FBOs with their LAs.
- This cooperation between the London LAs and the MHS would be in line with the FSA's Policy on the registration of food businesses & clarify the supply chains that exist in Greater London.

## **THE UNAPPROVED PLANT INITIATIVE**

Anecdotal and direct evidence reveals that there are plants operating that the authorities are not aware of – many of these require approval.

The Enfield example.

# COMMON DEFICIENCIES

- Intake / despatch facilities
- Doors (strip plastic curtains)
- Hand/arm-operated taps
- Floor drainage
- Control of waste water
- Cleaning equipment / chemical storage
- Dry goods store
- Spice store

# COMMON DEFICIENCIES (cont.)

- Knife sterilisers
- Boot washes
- Refrigeration unit grilles
- Animal By-products storage & handling
- Staff facilities
- PRPs (water testing, pest prevention etc.)
- SOPs
- FSMS based on HACCP principles