

## An Introduction to Inspection



The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) Meat and Poultry Inspection Program (MPI) is responsible for inspecting meat and poultry for safety, wholesomeness and proper labeling. The purpose of this introduction document is to broaden your knowledge of the MPI inspection program and the requirements in applying for and receiving a Louisiana Grant of Inspection.

Red meat inspection became law under the Federal Meat Inspection Act of 1906, which requires inspection of red meat products sold in interstate and foreign commerce. The Act established sanitation requirements for facilities and requires a review of all finished product labels for truthfulness and accuracy. In 1968, the Poultry Products Inspection Act extended the same provisions to poultry inspection. LDAF adopted these acts into state law. Under the Meat and Poultry Products Inspection Acts, LDAF inspects all amenable meat and poultry products sold in intrastate commerce. Inspection program personnel (IPP) are present at all times in all slaughter establishments during production operations and at least part of each production day in establishments that further process meat and poultry products. State inspection assures the consumer that meat and poultry products are clean, safe, and wholesome for human consumption at the time of purchase. In meat and poultry establishments, this involves ante-mortem inspection of the live animal; post-mortem inspection of the carcass and internal organs; and inspection of the facilities, equipment, personnel, transportation and records.

In 1996, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued the Pathogen Reduction Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) final rule. As the name implies, there are two components to the 1996 rule: the reduction of pathogens and the development and implementation of a HACCP system. Today, all state and federally inspected meat and poultry establishments are operating under a HACCP system. All new establishments must have developed a HACCP food safety system that is reviewed by IPP prior to receiving a grant of inspection. The individual that develops an establishment's HACCP plan, conducts a reassessment and modification to the HACCP plan, shall have successfully completed a course of instruction in the application of the seven HACCP principles to meat or poultry product processing. HACCP allows an establishment to identify food safety hazards reasonably likely to occur in the production process and identify the preventative measure the establishment can apply to control those hazards. IPP verify an establishment has developed and fully implementing and documenting HACCP system performing as designed.

The HACCP final rule also requires the development and implementation of Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (Sanitation SOPs). This program is intended to prevent contamination or adulteration of exposed product or a direct food contact surface. The program focus is on pre-operational and operational activities. Every establishment must develop, implement, and maintain effective Sanitation SOPs.

LDAF MPI has developed generic HACCP and Sanitation SOP plans to aid prospective applicants in developing these required components. You may access this information through a District Supervisor or the Baton Rouge Headquarters Office.

In a red meat or poultry slaughter establishment, the inspection process starts with receiving the live animal. Ante-mortem inspection involves a visual and physical evaluation of the live animal prior to slaughter to identify any conditions that may indicate disease or illness. Humane handling of an animal is a primary concern of MPI while the animal is on the inspected premises. Humane handling practices are strict guidelines that are in place and are strongly enforced to prevent the mishandling of animals. MPI IPP are responsible for conducting a thorough examination of all slaughtered animals. Post-mortem inspection allows inspection personnel to further evaluate the health of a carcass and parts. The inspection system continues throughout the further processing operation until the finished packaged product is shipped. IPP are responsible for verifying that an establishment is maintaining sanitary conditions, implementing and maintaining all food safety related procedures, and labeling regulations.

As you begin the process of applying for a state Grant of Inspection, MPI personnel at District Office (DO) locations throughout the state and Headquarters in Baton Rouge are available to assist you with the application process or to answer any questions regarding HACCP or Sanitation SOP regulatory requirements.

The combination of both MPI along with the commitment and dedication of you, the establishment owner/operator, will uphold consumer expectations and confidence to purchase a safe meat or poultry product. Food safety begins with the establishment, follows with regulatory verification, and ends with the consumer. We look forward to assisting you with the application process and working together to produce a safe, wholesome meat or poultry product.

*Baton Rouge Headquarters Office*  
Meat and Poultry Inspection Program