



Southern Gulf Island Livestock Processing

A SUMMARY GUIDE TO FARMGATE & FARMGATE PLUS LICENSES
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A Stronger Local Supply Chain

In the Southern Gulf Islands (SGI); consisting of the Islands of Galiano, Mayne, Pender and Saturna, small-scale livestock producers face several challenges in processing their products for personal use, as well as for local and retail consumers. Overcoming these hurdles requires a greater understanding of the steps involved in livestock processing and the navigation of the regulatory requirements in British Columbia.

A common issue in the SGI region is that the current availability of processing facilities doesn't meet the demand from our livestock producers. Transportation challenges have also significantly impacted the movement of livestock to processing facilities and markets (1). Finding solutions to improve efficiency, whether through infrastructure improvements or alternative livestock processing methods, could help mitigate these challenges.

Collaborating with relevant agencies, and food groups such as the Gulf Island Food Co-op (GIFC), Galiano Community Food Program, the [Small Scale Meat Producers Association](#) and the region's producers, will create valuable resources, networking opportunities, and grower support. Exploring options for creating or incentivizing the establishment of processing facilities and services could help alleviate the hardships being experienced by SGI livestock producers.

FARMGATE AND FARMGATE PLUS LICENSES (2)

The **Farmgate** license program is a practical and accessible option for small-scale livestock producers looking to manage their own slaughtering processes. Its allowance of up to 5 animal units* (5,000 lbs. or 2268 kg, live weight) annually provides flexibility while ensuring operations remain within manageable bounds.

The licenses' availability province-wide is a significant advantage, promoting local agricultural practices and facilitating easier access for interested parties. Moreover, the provision to sell meat products directly at the farm and within specific farmers markets encourages direct producer-consumer interactions, fostering community engagement and trust in locally sourced products.

The **Farmgate Plus** license is suitable for small-scale livestock production operations, allowing for the processing of up to 25 animal units annually (25,000 lbs. or 11,350 kg. live weight). Intended for those interested in slaughtering their own animals or providing limited custom slaughter for neighboring livestock producers, helping reduce the likelihood of mishandling or improper storage that could compromise product quality.

Holders of this license gain additional privileges beyond basic licensing. Specifically, they can sell meat products directly to consumers, retail outlets, restaurants, and at farmers markets throughout the province. This expands their market reach and potential revenue streams.

Overall, the Farmgate and Farmgate Plus license program appears to strike a balance between enabling small-scale production and maintaining regulatory standards. By facilitating small-scale slaughter operations and direct sales channels, this initiative supports a stronger local food supply chain and offers a valuable opportunity to foster stronger connections between producers and consumers, promoting transparency and trust in the Southern Gulf Islands' food system.

<u>License Details for Comparison</u>	<u>Farm Gate</u>	<u>Farm Gate +</u>
<u>Activities Permitted:</u> Slaughter (own animals)	✓	
<u>Activities Permitted:</u> Slaughter (own animals and/or limited custom slaughter for other livestock producers)		✓
<u>Sales Permitted:</u> Direct to consumer at Farmgate and/or Farmer's Markets	✓	
<u>Sales Permitted:</u> Direct to consumer and/or retail		✓
<u>Sales Region:</u> Farmgate and/or Farmer's Markets (within 50km of where the meat was produced)	✓	
<u>Sales Region:</u> British Columbia		✓
<u># of Allowed Animal Units*</u> 1 – 5 (max. 5,000 lbs. or 2268 kg.)	✓	
<u># of Allowed Animal Units*</u> 1 – 25 (max. 25,000 lbs. or 11,350 kg.)		✓
<u>Additional Requirements</u>	✓	✓

*Animal Unit is a combined, live animal weight of 1,000 lbs. or 455 kg.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Ensuring Safe Food Delivery: The Role of Food Safety, Humane Slaughter Plans and Premises Identification

The delivery of safe food to consumers necessitates meticulous attention at every stage, from farm to plate. Key to this process is the implementation of comprehensive Food Safety and Humane Slaughter Plans at Farmgate and Farmgate Plus slaughter establishments.

1. SlaughterRight Training Course (3):

- The SlaughterRight training course is a comprehensive program that assists participants in developing both Food Safety and Humane Slaughter Plans tailored to their specific Farmgate or Farmgate Plus slaughter site.
- It provides guidance and resources to ensure compliance with regulatory standards and industry best practices. (i.e. water inspection processes, disposal requirements, etc.)

2. Food Safety Plan:

- The Food Safety Plan is designed to guide growers in the pre-slaughter, slaughter, and post-slaughter handling of meat products, with the aim of mitigating potential sources of food contamination.
- It outlines protocols and procedures to ensure the safety and quality of meat products delivered to consumers.

3. Humane Slaughter Plan:

- The Humane Slaughter Plan emphasizes the importance of providing the required level of care for all animals slaughtered.
- It serves as a framework for growers to ensure ethical and humane treatment of animals throughout the slaughter process.

4. Premises Identification (4):

- A way of linking livestock to specific geographic locations. The ID program informs planning and improves the ability to identify and effectively contain disease outbreaks or facilitate natural disaster response and recovery.
- Types of premises registered with the program are wide-ranging, from small-scale farms with a few animals to large commingling sites such as feedlots, and abattoirs.
- There is no fee to participate.

5. Plan Updates:

- Food Safety and Humane Slaughter Plans must be regularly updated to reflect any changes in operation, such as the introduction of new species or operational activities.

Effective implementation of Food Safety, Humane Slaughter Plans and Premises Identification is essential for ensuring the delivery of safe and high-quality meat products to consumers. The continuous review and adaptation of these plans are crucial for maintaining compliance with regulations and industry standards, ultimately safeguarding public health and animal welfare.

Although there is no cost for a transitory Farmgate or Farmgate Plus license, the additional permits, and licenses necessary to conduct business (5), as well as insurance coverage costs, would need to be calculated on a case-by-case basis.

CUT AND WRAP, LABELING

Cut and Wrap: Need for a Food Premises Permit

To conduct cut-and-wrap activities, a Food Premises permit along with the appropriate Slaughter license will need to be acquired. These permits ensure that any processing facilities meet provincial standards for food safety and hygiene; working closely with the Island Health Authority to ensure the facilities comply with regulations and to obtain the necessary approvals.

This applies to both Farmgate and Farmgate Plus license holders.

Labeling Requirements for Farmgate and Farmgate Plus Meat Products

1. Slaughter Establishment Information:

- Name and address of the slaughter establishment.
- Premises ID of the farm where the meat was slaughtered.

2. Description of Package Contents:

- Detailed description of the contents of the package.

3. Net Weight or Volume:

- Indication of the net weight or volume of the contents of the package.

4. Farmgate Product Labels:

- Must include "Not Government Inspected."

- For sale only in the regional district of [name of regional district in which the farmgate slaughter establishment is located], or at a temporary food market within 50 km of the slaughter establishment.
- Additional statement: "Not for resale."

5. **Farmgate Plus Product Labels:**

- Must include "Not Government Inspected."

6. **Custom Slaughter (Farmgate Plus):**

- Meat derived from animals other than those raised by the license holder may be sold under the producer's brand or farm name.
- Labelling requirements as mentioned above must be met.

For examples of Farmgate and Farmgate Plus labels, refer to the [Code of Practice for Farmgate and Farmgate Plus Establishments](#)

ABATTOIR MOBILE SERVICE

An abattoir mobile service, also known as a mobile slaughter unit, has its own set of advantages and disadvantages in furthering livestock processing in the SGI. Though it should be noted that any licensed mobile slaughter unit in the province will have met all mandated health and safety requirements necessary.

Pros:

1. **Convenience:** It brings the slaughterhouse closer to the source of the livestock, reducing transportation stress on animals and saving time and money for farmers.
2. **Animal Welfare:** Reduced travel time means less stress for the animals, potentially resulting in better meat quality and improved animal welfare.
3. **Control Over Production:** Farmers have more control over the entire process, from raising animals to processing, ensuring quality and consistency.
4. **Flexibility:** It can serve small-scale farmers who may not have the resources to transport animals to distant slaughterhouses, promoting local agriculture and small businesses.
5. **Environmental benefits:** Reduced transportation distances lead to a lowered carbon footprint which is typically associated with livestock processing.

Cons:

1. **Cost:** Setting up and maintaining a mobile abattoir can be expensive. The initial investment in equipment licensing and training, as well as ongoing operational costs, may be prohibitive for our Island communities.
2. **Regulatory Challenges:** Mobile abattoirs must comply with regulations and standards set by health and safety authorities, which can be complex and stringent. Meeting these requirements adds to the operational complexity and cost.
3. **Logistical challenges:** Coordinating schedules, managing logistics, and ensuring proper waste disposal can be challenging for mobile operations.
4. **Limited Capacity:** Mobile abattoirs may have limited capacity compared to larger, fixed facilities. This could lead to scheduling constraints and longer wait times for farmers.
5. **Quality control:** Maintaining consistent quality standards may be more challenging in a mobile setting compared to a fixed facility with dedicated equipment and staff.
6. **Community Concerns:** Some community members may have concerns about the presence of a mobile abattoir service in their area, such as noise, odors, and potential environmental impacts. Navigating community relations can be a challenge.

Mobile abattoirs present a compelling avenue for enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of livestock processing in our region. However, it's essential to acknowledge and address the array of challenges that accompany this innovation, spanning logistical, regulatory, and operational realms. To navigate these complexities effectively, active involvement from a committed, regional community partner, such as the Southern Gulf Island Community Resource Centre, the Food Resilience Alliance, or Gulf Island Food Co-op, is indispensable.

To ensure the success of this endeavor, a strategy encompassing project coordination, comprehensive advertising, and robust engagement with livestock producers must be implemented. Through concerted efforts and a shared commitment to supporting our region's livestock producers, we can aspire to cultivate an environment conducive to their prosperity and sustainability. This initiative underscores the dedication to fostering a supportive environment for the Southern Gulf Islands' livestock industry, ultimately contributing to the resilience and vitality of our agricultural community.

RESOURCES

1. [Staying Afloat: An exploration of livestock production and transportation on Galiano Island](#)
2. [Farmgate and Farmgate Plus licenses](#)
3. [SlaughterRight Training](#)
4. [Premises Identification](#)
5. [BC Ministry of Agriculture - Food Safety](#)

DOCUMENTS

[BC Food Safety Act](#)

[Food Premises Regulation](#)

[Meat Inspection Regulation](#)

[SlaughterRight Manual](#)