

# GAME MEAT & LIVESTOCK DONATION GUIDE

## SPECIAL GUIDANCE FOR HUNGER RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS

There are **FOUR** main points to check and verify when receiving wild game meat as a donation:

### 1. The Hunter

- a. The hunter who killed the wild game must be licensed through Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) or be a Washington State certified Law Enforcement Officer.
- b. The donated meat must have been immediately “field dressed” to remove the viscera- skin may or may not be intact for donations.
- c. The harvested meat must immediately be labeled to properly identify the date killed, the kind of animal and the area from where it was harvested along with any tags or permits whenever applicable.

### 2. The Processor

- a. The processor who receives the harvested game meat must be licensed via USDA and/or the Snohomish County Health Department.
- b. The processor’s establishment name and address must be added to the existing label.

### 3. Transportation and Storage

- a. Meat must be transported at or below 41°F and should be frozen whenever possible.

### 4. Labeling

- a. All donated wild game meat must be labeled to say, **“Uninspected, wild game meat, thoroughly cook to 165°F (74°C) internal temperature”**.
- b. A written statement must accompany this label that includes:
  - i. Name & address of the hunter or officer.
  - ii. The license, permit, or tag number & kind of animal provided.
  - iii. The date, county and area where the animal was killed.
  - iv. The hunter’s signature.

WAC 246-215 allows for the acceptance of Wild Game Meat, Muscle Meat of a Domestic Livestock Animal and Fresh Fish donations. Specific labeling requirements and conditions are required and may have recently changed. Review both pages of this guide to learn about how these alternative meat sources can be safely accepted and offered by Donated Food Distributing Organizations (DFDO).

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**Domesticated livestock** is defined as beef, pork, sheep and goat. Donations are those that would be suitable for sale in a retail food outlet. This means that the livestock meets the same standards as any meat sold or donated from a store, and those standards are listed clearly below.

1. Slaughtered in a USDA-inspected facility.
2. Stored and handled to prevent temperature abuse\* and contamination during transport (between slaughter and processing facilities as well as transport to the DFDO).
3. Processed by a food establishment or butcher permitted by the Snohomish County Health Department.
4. Labeled with the following statement: **“This product was prepared from inspected and passed meat. Some food products may contain bacteria that could cause illness if the product is mishandled or cooked improperly.”**

**Fresh fish** is another potential source of meat that can be donated to those in need here in Washington. You may choose to freeze the donated fish once it has been received fresh but remember to never vacuum seal fish (or any raw meats or time/temperature control for safety, or “TCS” foods) at your facility. Verify that the following requirements have been met prior to receiving fresh fish for donation:

- ✓ Received from a recreational or commercial fisher licensed by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- ✓ Received whole OR minimally processed: head removed, viscera removed, or both.
- ✓ Stored and handled to prevent temperature abuse\* and contamination during transport.

In addition to the above requirements for fresh fish donations, remember these receiving guidelines for seafood, which apply to all products that are donated or sold to the public:

- Fish smells fresh and mild, no “fishy” or ammonia-like odors are present.
- Eyes are clear and shiny
- Whole fish should have red gills and firm flesh. Filets should have red blood lines and the flesh should spring back when pushed with no discoloration or drying around edges.
- Like any TCS food, fresh fish should be 41°F or less when donated and have been held at proper temperatures since leaving the water and being gutted, skinned, or fileted.

**\*As always, donations of meat or any TCS foods cannot be accepted from private homes. These donations should come straight from licensed processors who can verify that the meat donated has been held at proper temperatures throughout its lifetime as a fresh meat for human consumption.**