

# **INDEPENDENT FARMERS' DIRECTORY OF SLAUGHTER FACILITIES IN NORTH CAROLINA**

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# DIRECT MARKETING YOUR OWN MEATS

Today, the demand for locally produced meats is on an upward trend and is creating opportunity for local farmers. There is a growing awareness among consumers about the link between their own health, environmental issues, sustainability of farms, animal welfare and the way that the meats they eat are produced. These issues are most prominent in the reasons some people have opted to be vegetarians. In fact, many if not all of the farmers who are already supplying this market have stories about vegetarians who are not opposed to eating their meats.

Farmers who have little or no experience in direct marketing should pay close attention to the needs of their customers – satisfying their needs will be a significant key to success. Another key to success is finding the right markets. These markets can be found by identifying people who are concerned about their health, the environment, animal welfare issues, as well as people who support local community efforts and some churches. In fact, a recent *NY Times* bestseller, *The Maker's Diet*, is being promoted within some churches as the way for Christians to eat. This diet includes meats, eggs, and dairy products produced on pasture due to their superior fatty acid profile. The improvement in these fatty acids is a result of being produced on green forage and bugs and worms that eat green forage.

It is important that farmers who intend to sell their own meat price their products appropriately. Farmers currently supplying this market cannot keep up with demand and their prices are generally higher than the prices found in most grocery stores. How do you determine your price? First, identify all your costs, including your time at a reasonable wage, that go into producing and distributing your product. Second, add in an appropriate amount for profit. Third, take into account the current demand for your product. If demand is high, you might be able to ask, and get, a little higher price for it.

Farmers who develop a good customer base should not worry about someone else taking their customers as long as they provide a quality product and service. Also, remember the local market is probably much larger than you may imagine. In fact, the amount of money spent on food in the Triangle counties of Wake, Durham, and Orange was \$3.8 billion in fiscal year 2002-2003 according to the NC Department of Revenue, Sales Tax Division.

## **What You Need to Do to Market Your Own Meat Products**

Many farmers over the years have had their own beef cattle slaughtered for their own use. When this meat came back from the processing plant, the packages were labeled **Not For Resale**. The reason these packages were labeled this way is because the farmer did not have a *Meat Handler's License*, had not developed their own farm label, and did not intend to sell their meat to other people. Seeing this label over the years has led many farmers to think they could not sell their own meat – this is not true.

Farmers must also realize that the market has changed since they or their parents sold locally to the public years ago. Farmers used to be able to sell quarters and sides. Today, most urban

consumers do not have freezer space for that much meat. To overcome this problem, some farmers have found that offering varying sizes of packages of assorted cuts is much more appealing and will make a customer out of someone who cannot accommodate a quarter of a cow. It is important to sell a variety of cuts in each package and to plan which cuts go in each. Selling assorted cuts in packages allows the farmer to sell all his meat and not be left with a freezer full of hamburger and roasts after all of the steaks are gone. It will also help sales if the package is packed with a number of recipes that give directions about how to prepare the meats that are included.

But first, in order to sell your meats you must obtain a *Meat Handler's License*. This is a free license. In North Carolina, these can be obtained by calling the *Meat and Poultry Inspection Service* in the Veterinary Division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumers Services. The phone number for the Meat and Poultry Inspection Service is 919/733-4136. Tell the person you talk to that you want to get a Meat Handler's License and they will contact one of their Compliance Officers who will then contact you to set up an appointment.

The Compliance Officer will visit your farm and talk to you about your plans. The officer will then want to see where you will store the meat you intend to sell. The freezer used to store the meat must be dedicated to product you intend to sell, only. You or your family cannot use the freezer to store food you use for personal consumption. The space this freezer is located in has to be clean and cannot be used to store chemicals. The freezer must also have a display mounted in a place where the inside temperature can be easily determined without opening the freezer. The farmer must also provide an approved means to transport meat that will ensure that the meat stays completely frozen. There are likely other issues that the Compliance Officer will address during his or her visit, but they should be of no greater significance than the ones covered here.

Another consideration is where you will get your meat processed. If you intend to sell your meat outside of North Carolina, you must have your meat processed at a plant that provides USDA inspection. If you only intend to sell your meat in North Carolina, NCDA inspected plants are sufficient.

Once you have your License, you need to meet with the inspectors at the plant you intend to use to determine the requirements for your label. Talking with the inspector and the management at the plant will provide you with the information you will need to develop a label for your product and determine the best places to buy these labels. Once you have your labels, you must give them to the management of the plant. The plant is required to keep your labels for use with your product.

## **Directory of North Carolina Plants that Work with Independent Farmers**

The following directory lists the slaughter and processing facilities in North Carolina that are either NCDA or USDA inspected and are willing to work with independent producers. The directory lists contact information, species the plant processes, and services each plant provides. The plants are listed in alphabetical county order. We are lucky in North Carolina to have so many options for the slaughter of large animals. Independent producers have little or no access to these services in many states, as is the case for poultry processing in North Carolina.

## **Organic Slaughter and Animal Welfare Slaughter Certification**

Two areas that may be of concern to some farmers are whether or not plants provide for **Organic Slaughter** and **Animal Welfare Slaughter Certification**. Although most plant managers and owners who participated in this study were open to considering these services for their customers, none of them had been certified for either service. The most common sentiment was that if there was enough demand for the service, they would then become certified. USDA and NCDA does have guidelines for animal welfare which all plants must follow, but if you are interested in marketing meats that are slaughtered with more stringent animal welfare practices you will need to discuss this with the management of the plant you deal with. The same is true of Organic Slaughter. Although the requirements of the slaughter plant are minimal, the plant would need to be certified according to the rules of the National Organic Program (NOP) in order for you to have meat to sell that would qualify as an organic product.

## **Disclaimer**

Every effort was made to identify all the slaughter facilities in North Carolina that still work with independent farmers. The information included in this directory was sent to each plant to be reviewed for accuracy before the directory was published. In the event that any plant was left out that should be included or if any information found in the directory is found to be inaccurate, please contact me so that that plant can be included in future versions of this directory.

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## Locate Slaughter Facilities by Animal Type

### Calves

<u>Facility Name</u>	<u>Inspection</u>	<u>County</u>
Wayne Mays Meat Processing	USDA	Alexander
Matkins Meat Processors, Inc.	USDA	Caswell
Chaudry Halal Meat Company	USDA	Chatham
Jerry's Meat Processing	NCDA	Davie
Sessoms Packing Company	USDA	Hertford
McLamb's Abattoir	NCDA	Johnston
Caldwell Meat Processing Company	NCDA	Lincoln
Robersonville Packing Company	USDA	Martin
Key Packing Company, Inc.	NCDA	Moore
Country Slaughter & Meat Processing	NCDA	Richmond
Vealco	USDA	Rockingham
Wells, Jenkins & Wells Meat Processing	NCDA	Rutherford
M. L. Mitchell & Son	NCDA	Stokes
K & B Meat Processing	NCDA	Swain
Thomas Brothers Meat Processing	USDA	Wilkes
George Flowers Slaughterhouse	USDA	Wilson

### Cattle

<u>Facility Name</u>	<u>Inspection</u>	<u>County</u>
Wayne Mays Meat Processing	USDA	Alexander
Acre Station Meat Farm	USDA	Beaufort
Matkins Meat Processors, Inc.	USDA	Caswell
Chaudry Halal Meat Company	USDA	Chatham
Jerry's Meat Processing	NCDA	Davie
Gale McLamb Meats	NCDA	Harnett
Sessoms Packing Company	USDA	Hertford
McLamb's Abattoir	NCDA	Johnston
Caldwell Meat Processing Company	NCDA	Lincoln
Robersonville Packing Company	USDA	Martin
Key Packing Company, Inc.	NCDA	Moore
Country Slaughter & Meat Processing	NCDA	Richmond
Wells, Jenkins & Wells Meat Processing	NCDA	Rutherford
M. L. Mitchell & Son	NCDA	Stokes
K & B Meat Processing	NCDA	Swain
Thomas Brothers Meat Processing	USDA	Wilkes
George Flowers Slaughterhouse	USDA	Wilson

## **Goats**

<b><u>Facility Name</u></b>	<b><u>Inspection</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>
Wayne Mays Meat Processing	USDA	Alexander
Matkins Meat Processors, Inc.	USDA	Caswell
Chaudry Halal Meat Company	USDA	Chatham
Jerry's Meat Processing	NCDA	Davie
Sessoms Packing Company	USDA	Hertford
McLamb's Abattoir	NCDA	Johnston
Caldwell Meat Processing Company	NCDA	Lincoln
Robersonville Packing Company	USDA	Martin
Country Slaughter & Meat Processing	NCDA	Richmond
Vealco	USDA	Rockingham
Wells, Jenkins & Wells Meat Processing	NCDA	Rutherford
M. L. Mitchell & Son	NCDA	Stokes
K & B Meat Processing	NCDA	Swain
Thomas Brothers Meat Processing	USDA	Wilkes
George Flowers Slaughterhouse	USDA	Wilson

## **Sheep**

<b><u>Facility Name</u></b>	<b><u>Inspection</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>
Wayne Mays Meat Processing	USDA	Alexander
Matkins Meat Processors, Inc.	USDA	Caswell
Chaudry Halal Meat Company	USDA	Chatham
Sessoms Packing Company	USDA	Hertford
McLamb's Abattoir	NCDA	Johnston
Caldwell Meat Processing Company	NCDA	Lincoln
Robersonville Packing Company	USDA	Martin
Country Slaughter & Meat Processing	NCDA	Richmond
Vealco	USDA	Rockingham
Wells, Jenkins & Wells Meat Processing	NCDA	Rutherford
M. L. Mitchell & Son	NCDA	Stokes
K & B Meat Processing	NCDA	Swain
Thomas Brothers Meat Processing	USDA	Wilkes
George Flowers Slaughterhouse	USDA	Wilson

## **Swine**

<b><u>Facility Name</u></b>	<b><u>Inspection</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>
Wayne Mays Meat Processing	USDA	Alexander
Acre Station Meat Farm	USDA	Beaufort
Spencer Packing Company, Inc.	USDA	Beaufort

Matkins Meat Processors, Inc.	USDA	Caswell
Jerry's Meat Processing	NCDA	Davie
Gale McLamb Meats	NCDA	Harnett
Sessoms Packing Company	USDA	Hertford
McLamb's Abattoir	NCDA	Johnston
Caldwell Meat Processing Company	NCDA	Lincoln
Robersonville Packing Company	USDA	Martin
Key Packing Company, Inc.	NCDA	Moore
Country Slaughter & Meat Processing	NCDA	Richmond
Wells, Jenkins & Wells Meat Processing	NCDA	Rutherford
M. L. Mitchell & Son	NCDA	Stokes
K & B Meat Processing	NCDA	Swain
Thomas Brothers Meat Processing	USDA	Wilkes
George Flowers Slaughterhouse	USDA	Wilson

### **Buffalo**

<b><u>Facility Name</u></b>	<b><u>Inspection</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>
Matkins Meat Processors, Inc.	USDA	Caswell

### **Ratites**

<b><u>Facility Name</u></b>	<b><u>Inspection</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>
Matkins Meat Processors, Inc.	USDA	Caswell
Thomas Brothers Meat Processing	USDA	Wilkes

### **Poultry**

<b><u>Facility Name</u></b>	<b><u>Inspection</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>
Hickory Mountain Farms	USDA	Chatham

### **Rabbits**

<b><u>Facility Name</u></b>	<b><u>Inspection</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>
Hickory Mountain Farms	USDA	Chatham