How to apply for approval of a meat or food establishment

Where you need to apply for approval of a food or meat establishment depending on the type of your establishment and your location.

Some meat and food establishments require approval before they can start operating. Depending on what activities you carry out and where you are based, you may need to apply for an approval from either the Food Standards Agency or your local authority.

Establishments approved by the Food Standards Agency

The following establishments must be approved by us before they start trading:

England and Wales

- slaughterhouses
- cutting plants
- game handling establishments
- wholesale meat market

Northern Ireland

- slaughterhouses
- cutting plants
- game handling establishments
- wholesale meat market
- collection centres of raw milk
- processing plants of liquid milk
- packing centres - packing and grading of eggs by quality and weight

You cannot start trading before receiving an approval. You must not commence any business activity which requires approval unless you have received conditional or full approval for your proposed activity from the FSA. If you start trading without approval, it is an offence which may lead to prosecution.

Establishments approved by local authorities

England and Wales

General establishments

- cold stores
- re-wrapping and re-packaging establishments

Meat establishments

- minced meat establishments
- meat preparations establishments
- mechanically separated meat establishments
- meat products processing plants
- rendered animal fats and greaves processing plants
- treated stomachs, bladders and intestines processing plants
- gelatine processing plants
- collagen processing plants

Fish and shellfish establishments

- live bivalve molluscs (LBMs) establishments including dispatch centres and purification centres
- establishments working with fishery products using factory and freezing vessels, processing plants, fresh fishery products, auction halls, wholesale markets

Dairy establishments

- collection centres of raw milk where it is cooled and filtered
- processing plants treating, processing and/or wrapping of dairy products (milk or any milk-based product)

Egg and egg product establishments

- packing centres - packing and grading of eggs by quality and weight
- processing plants - processing of egg products
- liquid egg plants - handling of unprocessed egg contents after removal of shell

Northern Ireland

General establishments

- cold stores
- re-wrapping and re-packaging establishments

Meat establishments

- minced meat establishments
- meat preparations establishments
- mechanically separated meat establishments
- meat products processing plants
- rendered animal fats and greaves processing plants
- treated stomachs, bladders and intestines processing plants
- gelatine processing plants
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Fish and shellfish establishments

- live bivalve molluscs (LBMs) establishments including dispatch centres and purification centres
- establishments working with fishery products using factory and freezing vessels, processing plants, fresh fishery products, auction halls, wholesale markets

Dairy establishments

- processing plants treating, processing and/or wrapping of milk-based products

Egg and egg product establishments

- processing plants - processing of egg products
- liquid egg plants - handling of unprocessed egg contents after removal of shell