

Virginia Rabbit Program

Introduction

The Virginia Rabbit Program was initiated after the Virginia General Assembly passed *Senate Bill 470 Rabbits; raising and processing for sale, exemption from certain inspections*. It allows individuals who wish to slaughter rabbits for sale in the Commonwealth to do so without being inspected every time rabbits are slaughtered. Individuals that slaughter rabbits in Virginia now have the option of complying with the requirements of the Virginia Rabbit Program, conducted in accordance with the Virginia Food Laws. Inspections will be conducted prior to operations, and randomly thereafter, no less than annually.

Where do I start?

A permit application (<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/dairy-food-and-beverage-manufacturing.shtml>) must be completed and submitted to foodsafety@vdacs.virginia.gov. Once it is reviewed, the applicant is contacted for a facility inspection. The permit will be mailed to the applicant after all the requirements have been met.

What requirements must be met?

The location and conditions of slaughter must be in compliance with the Virginia Food Laws (<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title3.2/chapter51/>) and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 21 Part 117 (<https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcr/CFRSearch.cfm?CFRPart=117>).

Each product must be labeled with safe handling instructions (per 2VAC5-585-270), the name of the product, net quantity of contents, and business name and address (per 2VAC5-585-900).

In order to operate, the permit must be valid and renewed annually. Thirty days prior to permit expiration, the individual should re-submit the permit application. Operating without a current/valid permit will be considered a violation and enforcement action may be forthcoming.