

Pet Food Guidelines

Raw Fresh or Frozen Meat Pet Food Manufacturing

- Must be made in a facility that meets California Department of Agriculture (CDFA) regulatory requirements (a home kitchen cannot meet the requirements). It can be manufactured but does not have to be manufactured in a commercial kitchen. CDFA does not require the location be a commercial kitchen but it must meet CDFA requirements that are almost the same as a commercial kitchen. (commercial food kitchens are regulated by California Department of Public Health (CDPH))
- Bottom line: Explain and show the Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety Branch (MPES) inspector your pet food process and where you are going to make it. (Submit form 79-025 Request for Survey to initiate this action) <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/MPES/pdfs/79-025.pdf>
- Any parts or pieces from USDA inspected slaughterhouse or from a MPES licensed Pet Food Slaughterhouse may be used to manufacture pet food.
- Finished pet food products must be de-natured (e.g. addition of charcoal, ash) or de-characterized (e.g. addition of ground bone).
 - Must include enough to make it unfit for human consumption.
 - Bone fragments must be between be 1/8-1/4 inch.
- Labels are approved by MPES and must include;
 - (1) The common or usual name of the edible product;
 - (2) The name and address of the packer or distributor, and when the name of the distributor is shown, it shall be qualified by such terms as “packed for,” “distributed by,” or “distributors;”
 - (3) A statement of the net weight of the product;
 - (4) The establishment number of the establishment in which the product was processed in conjunction with the words “Processed in Establishment No.,”
 - (5) A statement of ingredients, if the edible product is made up of two or more ingredients. Such ingredients shall be listed by their common or usual names in the order of descending proportion;
 - (6) The words “Not For Human Food” or other wording required by the Secretary.
 - Ingredients in descending order of predominance (e.g. USDA beef, xx mineral, xx vitamin, xx vegetables, xx grain)
 - Safe handling statement (e.g. Perishable, keep refrigerated or frozen)
 - Any additional information (e.g. grass fed, cage free) is optional
 - Claims must have supporting documentation (e.g. organic)
- Label requirements
[https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/IB499C5606FAC11E1B1B5EE28F8EE1ABD?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/IB499C5606FAC11E1B1B5EE28F8EE1ABD?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=(sc.Default))
- Once licensed MPES Site inspections by CDFA occur at a minimum at least once a month but generally once every three months.
- **Inedible and condemned product from a CDFA licensed Custom Livestock Slaughterhouses and USDA Custom Exempt “Cut and Wrap” facilities is NOT ALLOWED to be used to manufacture pet food.**

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Meat, poultry products that can be used to make pet food:

- **USDA inspected slaughterhouse:** direct purchase.
De-natured or de-characterization is *not* required before leaving the slaughterhouse but products to be used for pet food must be properly labeled or shipped under seal.
- **CDPH licensed Food facilities:** Butcher shops, can use scraps from USDA inspected products to make pet food (e.g. grocery store, restaurant). Pet food manufactured must be de-natured or de-characterized. Must be sold from premises of manufacture, no distribution of the pet food is allowed. A Pet Food Licensed from MPES is not required.
- **Meat Processing Establishment (MPE):** May use or sell meat products for use in pet food, that are from USDA inspected establishments
An **MPE** may make pet food and depending on the product being used to manufacture the pet food they may need to be licensed as a MPES *Pet Food Processor*
- **Custom Livestock Slaughterhouse (CLS):** facilities would also have to become an approved *Pet Food Processor* in order to make pet food.
 - A state licensed CLS in order to use or sell meat or meat scraps from animals slaughtered to be used for pet food, must become a state licensed *Pet Food Slaughterer*
 - There are currently three MPES licensed Pet Food Slaughterers.
- **Mobile Slaughter Operator (MSO):** could become a state licensed *Pet Food Slaughterer* if all regulatory requirements for such an operation are met.
 - [MSO's](#) are exempt from CDFA MPES inspection,
 - Those that slaughter cattle must register with Bureau of Livestock ID.