

# Slaughtering animals for human consumption in the Northern Territory

Slaughter of animals for human consumption is common practice in the Northern Territory on large cattle stations to feed employees, and on small blocks in rural areas. Slaughter of animals for consumption by the wider community is governed by the *Meat Industries Act 1996* administered through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (DITT). The Act aims to:

- protect public health
- promote domestic and export markets for the meat industry by ensuring processing of wholesome meat for human consumption and related purposes.

The rules work to ensure meat sold for human consumption is prepared, stored and distributed hygienically.

## Important points for consumers or home butcher operations

- It is not an offence to slaughter an animal on your property for consumption by your family and staff, provided it is consumed on the property on which it is slaughtered.
- If you are the owner of a Bed and Breakfast operation, it is not an offence to supply home-butchered meat to paying guests. However, you must inform consumers that the meat has not been subject to commercial meat inspection.
- It is an offence to sell home-slaughtered meat through a roadhouse or community store. All meat used in these operations must be acquired from a licenced processor.
- Cattle stations may provide live animals to Aboriginal communities for slaughter and consumption by community members, as has been common practice for some time. This is legal under the Act where the meat is consumed on the same property on which it is slaughtered.
  - It is an offence to sell or barter this meat to another person.
  - A further offence occurs if the meat is moved off the property/station.
- For meat sold to the general community, there is a requirement for processing in a registered establishment that holds an Establishment Number. A qualified inspector, who holds a minimum Certificate 3 in Meat Safety, inspects meat in commercial abattoirs. The DITT Meat Industries Officer provides advice on how individual properties may achieve these standards, and provides training through a Registered Training Organisation for people wishing to undertake meat inspection training.

DITT can also offer advice to prospective proponents on model small-scale abattoirs. Small-scale meat processing facilities can help to provide better nutrition and health outcomes to remote communities.

Further information and advice on slaughtering animals for meat for human consumption may be obtained by contacting the DITT Meat Industries Officer on 08 8999 2255.