Outline

• Processing Choices
• Transportation to Processor
• Questions to Ask Processors
• Common Pitfalls
• Resources Available to You
Processing Choices

• Marketing strategy will influence your options on how your animals are processed

• MUST ask the question: “Are you selling animals or are you selling meat?”
Processing Choices

- Selling Animals
  - On-Farm Sales
  - Private Sales
  - Sides, Quarters etc.
  - Marketing Agreement with Processor

- You are paying for the service of slaughter, processing packaging, etc.

- How do you handle offal, hide credits, storage, etc.?
Processing Choices

- Selling Meat
  - Sold in retail at processor
  - Wholesale to restaurant, institution, second party for re-sale

- You are selling the animal to the processor

- May have marketing agreement with processor

- Does this account for entire carcass?
Processing Choices

- USDA-inspected
- State-Inspected ("Equal To")
- Custom-Exempt
- On-Farm (poultry)
Federal Inspection: Operators who produce their meat products in Minnesota and sell their products in Minnesota and other states, or will export them to other countries, must be inspected by the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). These businesses may harvest their own animals, or may purchase products from other USDA inspected sources and further process these products under continuous inspection.
Processing Choices

State Inspection: Operators who produce and sell their products only in Minnesota can be inspected by the State Equal-To inspection program. These businesses may harvest their own animals or purchase products from either USDA or State inspected sources for further processing in their facility.
Processing Choices

• MN Program was started in 1999 – other states have had a program since early 1970’s

• 53 facilities under inspection
  – Slaughter
    • 21 beef and/or pork
    • 4 poultry
    • Most of these process
  – 29 only further process
Processing Choices

Custom Exempt:

• The customer(s) maintain ownership of the animal through processing

• Paying for the service of slaughter, fabrication, packaging, labeling, storage

• Product is only intended for the animal owner and their house guests

• NOT FOR SALE
Transportation to Processor
Transportation to Processor
Transportation to Processor

- Trailers should be kept in good repair.
- Sufficient height between decks to prevent back injuries
Transportation to Processor

• Pigs and sheep
  – Transported for a few hrs can remain standing
  – Long distances, need enough space to lie down
  – May need more space on extremely hot days

• Cattle
  – Should remain standing during journey
  – Horned or polled
  – If stocked too tightly a downed animal may get trampled because it will not be able to get up
Transportation to Processor

- Wind chill
  - When a truck is moving 50 mph on a 20-degree F (-7C) day, the wind chill factor for pigs is minus 23 degrees F (-31 C).
Transportation to Processor

Livestock Weather Safety Index

Humidity

Temp. (degrees F.)

Alert

Danger

Emergency
Questions to Ask Processors

• Days(s) that the facility slaughters?
  • Inspection restriction

• How far ahead you have to plan/schedule slaughter?

Questions to Ask Processors

- Minimum/maximum animal numbers?
  - Per shipment?
  - Per slaughter?
  - Per year?

- Kosher? Halal? Organic Certified?
Questions to Ask Processors

- Who will dispose of offal?
- Will you market organ meats?
  - Does the facility salvage these?
- Will you take the hide or receive drop credit?
- Maintain animal identification?
Questions to Ask Processors

• Air chilled or water chilled (poultry)?

• Dry aging of beef carcass?
  • Commonly 10-14 days for benefit
  • May be 4-6 weeks or longer
  • Understand product loss

• Pork, lamb, goat and poultry not typically aged
Questions to Ask Processors

Fresh Meat Fabrication

• Does the processor work with the cuts you want?
  • Eg. Flat iron, Teres Major, Sierra Cut vs. Chuck Roast

• How much bone are you trying to sell?
  • Eg. T-Bones and Porterhouses vs. New York Strips and Tenderloin Steaks
Questions to Ask Processors

Processed Meat Fabrication

• Does the processor make the products you want?
  • eg. Summer Sausage, Jerky, Snack Sticks, Cured Hams, Bacon, Bratwurst, Fully Cooked Items?

• Does your animal provide the proper meat block for these further processed products?
  • Many sausages are not single species formulas
  • Very lean carcasses are not suitable for sausage
Questions to Ask Processors

Processed Meat Fabrication

• Do you have a recipe for the products, or will you work with the processor to develop a flavor profile?

• What are the costs of all non-meat ingredients and further processing?

• What is the timeline for further processed products?
  • Longer processing time than fresh meat
Questions to Ask Processors

Available packaging options
Questions to Ask Processors

Butcher Paper

- First modern meat wrapping material
  - Waxes to prevent liquid from leaking through
  - Cheap because not very high quality and not cut
- Not an air-tight wrapping
  - Freezer burn
Questions to Ask Processors

PVC Overwrap

- Clear
- Clingy (Saran Wrap)
- Can be sealed
- Can be used in hot-fill operations
- Allows oxygen transport
- Good barrier against water transport
- Usually not form fitting
Questions to Ask Processors

**Modified Atmosphere Packaging**

- Vacuum Packaging
- Gas Flush Packaging
  - Negative Pressure
  - Batch Replacement
Questions to Ask Processors
Vacuum Packaging

• Can remove more than 99% of oxygen

• Keep color in deoxymyoglobin state

• Discourages growth of both pathogens and spoilage organisms

• Eliminates freezer burn
Questions to Ask Processors

Product Labeling

- General requirements
  - Company name and address
  - Ingredient list
  - Net weight
  - Common product name
  - Federal or State legend
  - Handling statement (perishable product)
  - Safe handling statement (Raw only)
Label Features

Company Name and Address

Saucy Sausage Company
12345 Any Street
Sausageville, MN 54321

Ingredient list

Ingredients: Pork, salt, dextrose, monosodium glutamate, spices, flavoring, BHA, BHT, citric

Common product name

NET WT. ______

KEEP FROZEN

State legend

Handling statement

Minnesota Inspected and Passed
EST 0101
Common Pitfalls

• Identify your market early and ensure proper demand

• Can you supply a consistent supply of your product in a sufficient volume to meet your processor/customer demand?

• Start small, then increase volume as needed

• BE REALISTIC AND PATIENT!
Common Pitfalls

“All of these processors aren’t doing it right, I will just open a processing plant of my own!”
Common Pitfalls

• Understand the yields on your product
  • Pork Dressing Percentage: 72%
  • Beef Dressing Percentage: 62%
  • Lamb Dressing Percentage: 52%

• Cannot sell much bone or excess fat

• Fabrication (Cut-Out) percentage around half
  • Pork ~ 55%
  • Beef 46-55%
Common Pitfalls

Example

1,200 lb. steer

Dressing percentage of 62% yields a 744 lb. hot carcass

Dry aging 10-14 days (5% loss) yields a 706.8 lb. cold carcass

Yield Grade 3 Carcass (average) will yield approximately 50% boneless closely trimmed retail cuts = 353.4 lb. Beef

30%
Common Pitfalls

- Not all cuts are created equal
- Do you have a market for all cuts?
Resources Available

www.extension.umn.edu/meatscience
Resources Available

www.ansci.umn.edu/meatlab
Resources Available

www.mda.state.mn.us
Resources Available

www.fsis.usda.gov
Resources Available

www.mamponline.com
Resources Available

www.aamp.com
Resources Available

www.nichemeatprocessing.org
Resources Available

www.minnesotagrown.com
Resources Available

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Thank You

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