

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
Food Safety and Defense Task Force  
Food Innovation Team Subcommittee**

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Title: <b>Attachment 5: FIT Recommendation Report Template</b>	

**Data Privacy Warning:**

The Food Innovation Team (FIT) regularly requests data from food business owners (FBOs) interested in participating or gaining food business licensing guidance from FIT through the Pre-Screening Intake Form (PSIF), during FIT meeting proceedings, and as part of the regular processes of FIT. The information provided for these FIT activities will be used before, during, and after FIT meetings to answer licensing questions from FBOs. Information provided is public information and will be discussed at a meeting that is open to the public. If you have information that you want protected, please contact the Food and Feed Safety Interim Division Director, Katherine Simon (Katherine.simon@state.mn.us or (651) 201-6596) before filling out this form and submitting it to FIT.

**FIT Website Notification:**

Please note that all information contained in this form is subject to public information requests. The information contained in this form will be included on the FIT website with the exception of items under the “General Business Information” category.

**Date of FIT Meeting:** 5/21/2019

**Meeting Participants:**

- FIT Members:
  - James Backstrom
  - Jane Jewett
  - Julia Selleys
  - Molly Herrmann
  - Jim Roettger
  - Lolly Occhino
  - Lauri Clements
  - Kathy Zeman (WebEx)
  
- Other:
  - Katherine Simon (MDA)
  - Collin Kappenman (MDA)

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General Business Information (Do not include this section in public-facing online database)	
Name of business:	Prairie Horizons, LLC
Location of business:	Starbuck, MN
Referred by:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDA <input type="checkbox"/> MDH <input type="checkbox"/> FIT member <input type="checkbox"/> MDA Delegated Agency <input type="checkbox"/> MDH Delegated Agency
Current license(s), registration(s), and/or exemption(s): (Please include date of issuance.)	MDA license #
Why was this business referred to FIT?	
Current business model:	Prairie Horizons raises organic grass-fed beef and has it processed at the Belgrade Locker, a MN Equal-To inspected plant. Sales are through an on-farm store, deliveries, and sales of quarters, halves and wholes.
Key issues examined by FIT:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Processes of inspection and disposition of carcasses and organs at Equal-To plants</li> <li>2. Reporting of disposal of condemned carcasses and organs</li> </ol> Potential for the farmer to get a condemned liver back for diagnosis
Other issues:	
How was the issue resolved?	
Description of resolution:	<p>Farmers who want their own organ meats back must be very proactive with their processing plant. Request that the processor keep the livers with the carcass, request that the processor make sure the inspector knows the livers are desired.</p> <p>The farmer can contact the inspector directly to make sure it is known that the livers are desired. The farmer can ask the processing plant for the inspector's contact information. The inspector will be present on slaughter days, so a farmer can also make contact with the inspector in person on those days.</p> <p>Queries about disposition of organs must be made promptly after the slaughter date. It is too late to wait until the carcass has aged; been cut, wrapped, and frozen; and returned to the farmer – that may be three to four weeks after slaughter. Records are not kept on individual livers on slaughter days.</p> <p>Farmers who want an answer for their own information about reasons for condemned organs need to plan to attend the slaughter of their animals. Two pathways:</p>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take photos of the organs and send to a veterinarian</li> <li>2. Request release of the condemned organ to be brought to a veterinarian or sent in for testing. Condemned organs must normally be denatured before being released. Usually this is done with a green dye that renders organs inedible, but could be done with bleach, charcoal or ash. The organ could be slashed for release to be taken to a veterinarian.</li> </ol>
Other notes:	<p>Organs stay with carcass through inspection of carcass until it's determined the carcass passes inspection; then organs that pass inspection typically go into a commingled bin.</p> <p>Very difficult to keep records on individual organs – inspectors have bloody hands, the slaughter areas are wet, and they can't reasonably take notes. Do keep records re: whole-carcass condemnation.</p> <p>Systems are designed for large-scale plants. Records are made of how many livers were condemned, but no tracking of individual livers.</p> <p>Value of organ meats is changing with a changing culture. Inspectors are willing to take extra care with organs, but need to know that's wanted.</p> <p>Based on testimony from Mary Jo Forbord's emails, she stated that their processor noted livers from their beef consistently had a different appearance from most livers. Mary Jo stated communication was always done with their processors to request that livers be returned.</p> <p>Sometimes a bin of organs will accidentally get dropped on the plant floor and rather than deal with cleaning and trimming to rescue the organs, the plant will simply discard those livers.</p> <p>Farmers who are marketing inspected organs with specific claims, if they aren't actually getting their own organs back, could be inadvertently doing false advertising. Custom-exempt livers have to stay with the carcass with rare exceptions.</p> <p>Animals are aged at the plant based on teeth. If farmers disagree, they can supply their own documentation to the plant to document the age of the animal. Could be a registration paper, or birth records + ear tags. If there are no records, MDA goes by the teeth. Liver, heart, tongue, kidneys, sweetbreads, tripe are all still allowed on 30+ month animals. Could be an issue with oxtail – would have to have the "wings" removed from the top of the tail.</p>

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	<p>Inspectors are not veterinarians to diagnose a problem with an organ. They are trained to determine normal vs. abnormal, and their decision to discard an organ is not subject to appeal.</p> <p>MDA acknowledged lack of follow-up from Dr. Jopp. That was an unfortunate oversight.</p> <p>Mary Jo concerns: Transparency of information; it hasn't been clear how to access information about what happens with animals after they leave the farm.</p>
Who resolved the issue (name(s) and organization(s)):	FIT group; Dr. Nicole Neeser and Nicole Droher from Dairy & Meat Inspection.
Date of resolution:	5/21/2019
Licensing authority representative (name and organization):	Dr. Nicole Neeser – Dairy and Meat Inspection Division, MDA
<b>Recommendations / Lessons Learned</b>	
Internal (FIT):	Educational training for farmers who market their own inspected meat to let them know that carcasses could be condemned, organs could be condemned, and they may not get all their own organ meat or burger trim back, and they need to be proactive with processors and inspectors in order to get answers.
Licensing agency:	
Rules / Statutes:	