

Licensing requirements for field harvesters of game animals for human consumption

Overview

Businesses that harvest game animals for human consumption must:

- meet skill and knowledge requirements
 - apply for a [NSW Food Authority licence](#)
 - comply with relevant requirements in the:
 - *Food Act 2003* (NSW)
 - NSW Food Regulation 2025
 - Australian standard for the hygienic production of wild game meat for human consumption: AS 4464:2007
 - prepare for regular audits.
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Step 1: Skills and knowledge

All harvesters must have completed the **relevant units** of the approved hygiene course, the [Game Harvester Skill Set](#) before applying for their Food Authority licence. The below units may be completed at any time with a registered training organisation before applying:

- AMPCOR202 – Apply hygiene and sanitation practices
 - AMPGAM301 – Apply knowledge of the wild game meat industry
 - AMPGAM302 – Operate a wild game harvester vehicle
 - AMPGAM304 – Eviscerate, inspect and tag wild game carcass in the field
 - AMPWHS201 – Sharpen and handle knives safely.
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Kangaroo harvesting

As well as completing the Game Harvester Skill Set, field harvesters of unflayed kangaroos must also:

- successfully complete the [AMPGAM303 - Use firearms to safely and humanely harvest wild game](#) unit of competency
 - possess either a Professional or Landholder [Kangaroo Harvester Licence](#) from the NSW Kangaroo Management Program.
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Step 2: Apply for a Food Authority licence

NSW law requires people harvesting game animals for human consumption to be licensed with the Food Authority. Licence fees apply.

The vehicle used for animal harvesting must also comply with relevant food safety and hygiene requirements (see *Field harvesting vehicle requirements* in this document). You can choose to upload photographs of the vehicle to the licence application form or have the vehicle inspected by a food safety officer.

Evidence of meeting the previously outlined skills and knowledge requirements must also be submitted with the Food Authority licence application.

- Apply online at: formsfa.bfs.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forms/11033

Next steps

- Harvesting must not begin until an acceptable licensing assessment has been conducted and the field harvesting vehicle complies. Anyone supplying carcasses to field chillers/processors without the necessary licence can be prosecuted and their carcasses condemned.
 - A licence and vehicle sticker will be issued once the application and vehicle have been assessed. Record the licence number on tags placed on carcasses in the field chiller and display the licence sticker on the harvesting vehicle.
 - Game meat harvester vehicles will be routinely checked (audited) by the Food Authority.
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Step 3: Implement a food safety program

Game meat field harvesters are required to operate in accordance with an approved **food safety program (FSP)**. An FSP is a written document showing that a business has examined their food production activities and identified all potential food safety hazards. The FSP will be audited for compliance by the Food Authority.

A template is available to help game meat harvesters meet the relevant requirements. It should be completed for a single vehicle and includes recording forms for 12 months:

- [Wild Game Meat Field Harvester Food Safety Program \(Word, 1.77 MB\)](#).
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Record keeping

All wild game meat businesses must have a documented system to identify, trace and recall meat sold by the business. All records must be kept for 2 years. Records should include the:

1. date of harvest
2. area from which each wild game animal was harvested
3. name and licence number of the field harvester.

Export

Game meat businesses wishing to export product overseas need to comply with the traceability controls outlined in the food safety program to ensure carcasses are eligible for export.

More information about export is on the [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website](#) and in the factsheet [Export Control \(Wild Game Meat and Wild Meat Game Meat Products\) Rules 2021](#) (PDF, 312 KB).

Field harvesting vehicle requirements

Carcase rack

The field harvesting carcase rack must be designed so that carcasses are carried in a way that allows them to cool and protects them from contamination.

- Carcasses must be spaced and hung within the tray using crossbars with spikes. Spacing between the pelvic spikes on cross bars must be no less than 270mm in any direction. Practicably, you should have no more than 5 or 6 spikes on each crossbar. Spikes are not required for rabbits or hares.
- Sufficient space must be provided between carcasses to enable effective cooling. Cooling is critical to reduce bacterial growth and prevent conditions such as bone taint.
- Carcasses must be hung, not flat stacked, to enable them to adequately drain, prevent cross contamination and allow cooling.
- There must be enough racks to allow all eviscerated carcasses to be transported within the boundary of the hanging frame. Carcasses are not to be transported hanging on the outside of the rack because they could be contaminated by dust.

Dog box

- Dogs used in the procurement of game animals must be transported on the field harvesting vehicle in a compartment that is separate from the carcasses and processing equipment.
 - The solid partition (not mesh) must be at least 850 mm high, and sealed, rolled or joined at the bottom to prevent potential contamination, for example from dog urine. It must allow airflow to the carcasses. Galvanised sheet metal is highly recommended for this.
 - Leave space between the dog wall and the first row of carcase spikes to help cooling.
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Construction and maintenance

- The tray of the vehicle can be constructed of painted mild steel, aluminium or stainless steel. It must be kept free of rust and must be of a finish that makes contamination clearly visible (no dark colours).
- Contact surfaces such as pelvic racks, crossbars, spikes and hooks must be galvanised dipped steel or stainless steel. Other industrial applications, such as powder coating or pre gal bars (using cold gal paint on weld seams) are allowed for the non-contact parts of the tray.
- Dressing spikes on the side of the tray do not require gal dipping, only painting, as long as the carcass is hung by the leg during dressing.
- Although gal dipping of the entire tray is initially more expensive than other methods, it is strongly recommended as it will require less maintenance.
- No part of the tray is to be made of exposed or painted wood, because wood is porous and difficult to clean. Where table-top trays are constructed of wood, a false floor can be made on top of it from galvanised sheet metal.
- The height of the hanging rack should be between 900 mm and 1000 mm.
- The water tank can either be built into the tray or PVC tubing of 150 mm diameter can be used. Water tanks or containers are not to be fitted inside the harvesting tray itself, as this can make it more difficult to clean.
- Spare wheels/tyres must not be stored within the tray or rack to prevent contact with carcasses.

Equipment

The vehicle must be equipped with the following:

- boning knives and a sharpening steel
- at least 20 litres of potable water for washing hands and equipment
- hand wash facility with taps, which must be located near the normal processing area, and disposable paper towel for drying hands
- detergent or liquid soap dispenser, which must be within 300 mm of the water tap. A dedicated sanitiser dispenser for knives (known as a bump sanitiser) must also be fitted on the tray
- sealable knife container, which must be within 300 mm of the water tap. It must be able to be cleaned and made of an approved material, such as stainless steel, galvanised dipped steel, or PVC tube. The container must be watertight to store sanitising liquid.

At the end of each harvesting operation the field harvester must clean and sanitise the hanging frames, floors and equipment used in processing. These must also be clean at the commencement of harvesting.

More information

- See [Game meat harvester vehicles - NSW Food Authority](#)
- Visit www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au
- Contact the Food Authority helpline:
 - Email food.contact@dpird.nsw.gov.au
 - Phone 1300 552 406

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