

***Ritual Slaughtering for the Purpose
of Producing Kosher and Halal Meat***
Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health
Position Statement, April 2012

The Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (OCMOH) supports initiatives that lead to healthy lifestyles. This includes supporting and developing policy that lead to safe, nutritious foods in sufficient quantity to sustain good health for all New Brunswickers.

The OCMOH conducted a jurisdictional scan of policies in Canada and met with members from both the Muslim and Jewish communities to help understand their needs and to develop this position statement.

The intent of this document is twofold; to communicate to abattoir operators how they can support communities who wish to have Halal or kosher meats by means of ritual slaughtering of an animal, and to communicate what is permitted or not permitted to occur on a farm in terms of slaughter for human consumption.

Section 14 of the *Public Health Act* states that “A person who holds a licence to operate a food premises shall ensure that food that is manufactured, processed, prepared, stored, handled or displayed on or in the premises is manufactured, processed, prepared, stored, handled or displayed under sanitary conditions.”

Abattoirs:

The OCMOH would like to inform abattoir operators that they can permit ritual slaughtering to occur in their premises by allowing the following to occur:

- Having a representative from the Jewish or Muslim community bless the animal.
- Having that person sever the jugular vein.
- The remaining processes (cleaning and eviscerating), must be conducted by the abattoir employee as per normal hygienic practices.
- Should the representative from the community be involved in this process, they must be trained by the abattoir and follow the procedures established by the abattoir that meet regulatory requirements.
- Should the representative wish to go in the slaughter area once the organs have been removed for their own inspection process, this can occur as long as they have followed proper hygienic procedures such as hand washing, wearing clean garments, etc.

It is understood by the OCMOH that abattoir operators may impose their own rules for the purpose of employee safety such as the size of the animal they would allow to have slaughtered without stunning or the type of equipment they would require to have prior to allowing this type of process to occur.

Farms:

Section 12(1) of the *Public Health Act* states that “no person shall operate a food premises (an abattoir) unless the person is the holder of a licence issued in accordance with the *Act* and the regulations”. A food premises includes a building or land where animals are slaughtered for the purpose of producing food for human consumption.

Section 3(1)(i) of the *Food Premises Regulation* exempts the owner of a farm from having a licence: “this *Regulation* does not apply to a premises that is a farm in respect of the slaughter of animals on the farm for the farmer’s personal use exclusively”.

Therefore, animals shall not be slaughtered at a farm for the purpose of offering the meat to members of the public. This meat shall be consumed only by the farmer and their family.

We hope that this will clarify the legal authority of what is permitted in New Brunswick and open discussion between members of these communities and licensed abattoir operators to enhance the Kosher and Halal food supply in N.B.