

Dissections & abattoirs

Recently, SSERC received an enquiry from a teacher who had visited their local abattoir to collect hearts and lungs for dissection back in the classroom. The abattoir requested that a form from Food Standard Scotland was completed prior to dispatching any materials.

Having researched this, SSERC can now provide updated guidance to schools who wish to obtain animal by-products (ABPs) from abattoirs/slaughterhouses in Scotland. The guidance does not extend to materials obtained from butchers or other commercial premises, e.g. supermarkets.

Legislation

This guidance reflects legislation outlined by the EU Animal By-Product Regulation (2009), which is implemented in Scotland by the Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013. The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is responsible for inspecting animal by-product operators in Scotland, which includes abattoirs/slaughterhouses.

Category of Animal By-Products

Animal by-products are defined as the entire bodies or parts of animals which are not intended for human consumption. ABPs can be one of three categories based on the risks they pose. **Category 3 ABPs**, which includes carcasses or body parts from a slaughterhouse, passed fit for humans to eat, but have been withdrawn, are classed as **low risk**. These will be the materials provided for dissection purposes in schools.

You do not need to register with the APHA to use Category 3 ABP samples for education, e.g. at a school, college or university. However, Food Standards Scotland (FSS) require completion of a specific form [1]. This allows abattoirs to track disposal of ABPs; schools, following dispatch from the abattoir, take responsibility for the appropriate disposal of the ABPs.

Disposal of Category 3 ABPs

Providing the school is disposing of less than 20 kg of ABPs per week, the material can be double-bagged and put out to landfill bins to prevent environmental contamination risks. There is no need to register with APHA; however, a record of the type and approximate mass of ABP sent to landfill each week should be kept. This is a weekly limit; not an average limit over a number of weeks.

References

- [1] Food Standard Scotland, "Dispatch of SRM or any other ABP for exhibition, teaching, scientific research, special studies or analysis" form. Available [here](#) for download.

Figure 1 - Part 1 of the FSS form must be completed by the person responsible for handling and disposing of the ABPs received from the abattoir.

Figure 3 - Part 3 of the FSS form will be completed by a member of staff at the abattoir.

Figure 2 - Part 2 of the FSS form will be completed by the FSS Technical Lead at FSS Aberdeen and then returned to the school.

Completion of the Food Standard Scotland Form

The form can be downloaded from the SSERC website (or see references section) and Part 1 of the form (see Figure 1) should be completed by an appropriate member of staff. A "project" must be described, outlining the quantity of material required, the frequency of collection and the duration of the project. Once completed, the form must be emailed to Approvals@fss.scot (or posted to FSS, 4th Floor, Pilgrim House, Old Ford Road, Aberdeen, AB11 5RL).

Once the form is received by FSS, the technical lead at FSS Aberdeen will complete Part 2 of the form (Figure 2), return a completed copy to yourself, and retain a copy for one year.

The completed form should be taken to the abattoir when collecting ABPs. A member of FSS staff at the abattoir will complete Part 3 of the form (see Figure 3), detailing the date of dispatch, type of material and ABP category, number/mass of material, recipient's name and signature and their own name as the authorising officer. <<