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# UMaine Extension Partners With State to Strengthen Food Supply Chain

13 JUN 2020

Food safety experts from University of Maine Cooperative Extension provided technical assistance that allowed the State to fast-track temporary authorization for three rural Maine-based custom slaughter operations.

To ease a processing bottleneck caused by the increased demand for local meat during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) has authorized local facilities in Aroostook, Penobscot and Washington Counties with the university's help. Extension's Jason Bolton and Robson Machado assisted with the development of the food safety plans necessary for the Department's quick action and the processors' safe and humane operations.

"Farmers need to get their animals to market, and this temporary authorization eases the process and allows more locally-raised meat to reach Maine people," stated Amanda Beal, DACF Commissioner. "We are pleased that this action will relieve extended wait times to schedule USDA-inspected services, and that inspected meat processing will be available in two underrepresented areas of the state."

Added Dr. Jennifer Eberly, State Veterinarian and Maine Meat and Poultry Inspection (MMPI) Director, "We are excited to welcome these custom processors to the MMPI program and to offer Maine livestock producers new local options to have their animals processed. We are fortunate to collaborate with Drs. Bolton and Machado from University of Maine Cooperative Extension on this project, as they provided invaluable assistance in food safety plan coordination and review."

[For more information, click here.](#)

