



Goat/Lamb Harvest Process

International Center for Food Industry Excellence (ICFIE)
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1. Antemortem inspection

- Evaluation of live animal to be sure it is healthy and fit for slaughter.
- Requirement under FSIS-USDA regulations.

2. Stunning

- Animals must be rendered unconscious before bleeding, typically by captive bolt.

3. Exsanguination

- Ideally the animal will be shackled and hung upside down to allow a better bleed.
- The knife should sever the jugular and carotid arteries.
- Three to five percent of the bodyweight is expected to be lost in blood.

4. Pelt/feet/head removal

- This can be done using a cradle or with the carcass hanging.
- Lamb and goat pelts are removed by fisting the pelt.
- A hand is used to separate the fell membrane which attaches the pelt to the carcass. Occasionally goats are processed with the hide left on, similar to hogs.
- The legs are removed by breaking the joints at the metacarpus. The older the animal is, the harder it will be to create this clean break
- The head is removed at the atlas joint.

5. Bunging

- The bung needs to be freed from the surrounding tissues, typically tied and dropped into the body cavity.

6. Evisceration

- Goal is to remove the viscera without contaminating the carcass.
- The carcass is opened by cutting along the ventral midline.
- The viscera (intestines, spleen, liver and stomach) as well as the pluck (heart, lungs and trachea) are removed at this time

7. Trimming

- Any visible feces, milk or ingesta need to be trimmed from the carcass.

8. Inspection

- Any carcass inspection by a qualified individual (USDA) happens at this point.

9. Hot carcass weight

- A weight of the final carcass is recorded to know the yield and the weight for sales.

10. Rinsing of carcass/intervention application

- At this point any carcass microbial interventions can be applied.
- Typically this includes a hot water carcass wash and/or organic acid application (ex: acetic acid, lactic acid, etc.).

11. Chilling

- The carcass needs to be cooled to < 40°F within 24 hours.
- The carcass needs to be kept cold while stored.

