

Wild game guidance: Introduction

This guidance will explain how these regulatory requirements apply to wild game which is intended for human consumption.

The food safety and hygiene requirements for ensuring the safe production of foodstuffs, including wild game and wild game meat, are set out in relevant legislation. However, which of these requirements applies to a given person or business can differ depending on specific circumstances, with various exemptions to the rules also set out in these regulations. This guidance will explain how these regulatory requirements apply to wild game which is intended for human consumption.

The application of many of these requirements depends on whether you are a primary producer (for example, a hunter, member of a hunting party etc) and/or a food business operator (for example, preparing wild game for placing on the market) and whether you supply wild game directly to final consumers (defined as 'the ultimate consumer of a foodstuff who will not use the food as part of any food business operation or activity'), to a retailer or to an approved game handling establishment (AGHE) ([footnote 1](#)). The circumstances in which you may require approval as an AGHE will also be explained.

1.1 Intended audience

This guidance is intended for:

- primary producers (for example, hunters, members of hunting parties, shooting estates)
- persons who carry out an initial examination of hunted wild game
- persons who transport wild game and wild game meat
- FBOs who handle and supply wild game and wild game meat (for example, AGHEs, cutting plants, butchers, restaurants, farm shops etc).

1.2 Purpose of the guidance

This guidance aims to explain how the legal requirements apply in various situations in which wild game and wild game meat is supplied for human consumption. This includes guidance on the legal requirements which apply to the handling, examination, preparation, storage, transport and supply of wild game and wild game meat for human consumption. This guidance does not cover the legal requirements for farmed game, please see our 'glossary' for more information.

1.3 Legal status of guidance

This guidance document has been updated and published since the United Kingdom (UK) exited from the EU and the end of the Transition period. References to EU legislation have therefore been updated to reflect assimilated law, which is domestic law previously known as Retained EU Law (or REUL) but without the EU law interpretive features applied to it (supremacy, general principles of EU law and rights retained under section 4 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018), after the end of 2023). In Northern Ireland, the majority of food and feed hygiene and safety law is listed under Annex 2 of the Windsor Framework, so existing EU rules continue to apply and assimilated law only applies to goods moved via the [NI Retail Movement Scheme](#).

Assimilated EU Law is identified in FSA guidance using the following formats:

Assimilated Regulation (EU) No. xxx/xxxx or Regulation (EU) No. xxx/xxxx (REUL).

These guidance notes have been produced to provide:

Guidance on the legal requirements for compliance with:

Specific hygiene rules applying to businesses producing food of animal origin, set out in:

[Assimilated Regulation \(EC\) No. 853/2004](#) in Great Britain
[Regulation \(EC\) No. 853/2004](#) in Northern Ireland

General rules as regards animal by products and derived products not intended for human consumption, set out in:

[Assimilated Regulation \(EC\) No. 1069/2009](#) in Great Britain
[Regulation \(EC\) No. 1069/2009](#) in Northern Ireland

General requirements for the hygiene of foodstuffs applying to all food businesses, including primary producers, set out in:

[Assimilated Regulation \(EC\) No. 852/2004](#) in Great Britain
[Regulation \(EC\) No. 852/2004](#) in Northern Ireland

Rules on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products and associated acts, set out in:

[Assimilated Regulation \(EU\) No. 2017/625](#) in Great Britain
[Regulation No. \(EU\) 2017/625](#) in Northern Ireland

General principles and requirements of food law and procedures in matters of food safety, including traceability of food and feed, set out in:

[Assimilated Regulation \(EC\) No. 178/2002](#) in Great Britain
[Regulation \(EC\) No. 178/2002](#) in Northern Ireland

Best practice guidance

You are not required by law to follow best practice guidance.

The guidance notes on legal requirements cannot cover every situation and you may need to consider the relevant legislation itself to see how it applies in your circumstances. Businesses with specific queries may wish to seek advice from their local enforcement agency, which will usually be the [Trading Standards](#) / Environmental Health department of your [Local Authority \(LA\)](#).

Following these guidance notes will help you to comply with the law. You are not required by law to follow best practice guidance. All guidance on best practice is identified in shaded boxes, with a heading of “Best Practice”.

Review

We aim to keep all guidance up to date and undertake regular reviews to ensure guidance remains relevant. The next scheduled review date for this guidance is October 2026.

Contact us

We welcome your feedback on this guidance, including reports of any broken links or out-of-date content and will consider all feedback for the next intended review of the guidance. Please provide any feedback to wildgameguidance@food.gov.uk.

1. Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004 defines game-handling establishment as any establishment in which game and game meat obtained after hunting are prepared for placing on the market (this refers to approved and registered establishments). The reference to 'approved' game-handling establishment helps to point out the difference on the activities for which an establishment is allowed to perform.