

# Applying for approval of a food establishment

How to apply for approval for meat, dairy, egg, fish, shellfish and animal produce establishments.

If your food business makes, prepares or handles meat, dairy, egg, fish, shellfish or animal produce for supply to other businesses, it may require approval by the local authority.

If you think you may need approval, please [contact your local authority](#) before applying.

## When you don't need to apply for approval

There are some exemptions from the requirement to be approved, including:

- you only sell direct to the public
- you are a retail business supplying products of animal origin to other businesses (including caterers) on a marginalised, localised and restricted basis

Additionally, there may be an exemption available depending on the extent to which you wish to supply food of animal origin to other businesses. You should [contact your local authority](#) to determine whether you could claim such an exemption from the need for approval.

If a food business is exempted from the requirement to be approved, you must [register your food business](#) with the local authority at least 28 days before opening. If you are already trading and have not registered, you need to do so as soon as possible.

You must still follow the rules for [controlling the temperature and storage of any food you transport](#).

## Establishments approved by local authorities

### General establishments

These are:

- cold stores
- re-wrapping and re-packaging establishments

### Meat establishments

These are:

- minced meat establishments
- meat preparations establishments

- mechanically separated meat establishments
- meat products processing plants
- rendered animal fats and greaves processing plants
- treated stomachs, bladders and intestines processing plants
- gelatine processing plants
- collagen processing plants

## **Fish and shellfish establishments**

These are:

- live bivalve molluscs (LBMs) establishments including dispatch centres and purification centres
- establishments working with fishery products using factory and freezing vessels, processing plants, fresh fishery products, auction halls, wholesale markets

## **Dairy establishments**

These are:

- collection centres of raw milk where it is cooled and filtered
- processing plants treating, processing and/or wrapping of dairy products (milk or any milk-based product)

## **Animal produce establishments**

These are:

- packing centres - packing and grading of eggs by quality and weight
- processing plants - processing of egg products
- liquid egg plants - handling of unprocessed egg contents after removal of shell

You need to [apply for approval from the Food Standards Agency](#) if you run:

- slaughterhouses
- cutting plants
- game handling establishments
- wholesale meat market

## **Apply for approval**

[Food premises approval \(England\)](#)

[Food premises approval \(Wales\)](#)

[Food premises approval \(Northern Ireland\)](#)

## **Approval assessment**

To obtain approval strict hygiene standards, both structurally and procedurally are required.

Approval will not be given unless the required standards are met before any food is sold for consumption. The standards are defined in [the Specific Food Hygiene \(Regulation \(EC\) No. 853/2004 \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2019](#).

You cannot start trading before receiving approval. You must not commence any business activity which requires approval unless you have received conditional or full approval for your proposed activity from the local authority. If you start trading without approval, it is an offence which may lead to prosecution.

Once approved, details of the premises together with information relating to types of foods produced are added to the list of [approved Great Britain food establishments](#) and [approved establishments with special EU arrangements if in Northern Ireland](#) registers.

## **Right of appeal**

You have a right to appeal a decision made by the local authority that has refused to grant an approval.

You can appeal against that decision to a Magistrates Court and must submit an appeal one month from the date when you were notified of the decision.

## **List of approved food establishments**

- [Approved UK food establishments](#)
- [Approved EU food establishments](#)