



CUSTOMER GUIDELINES

T&E MISSION

We are in the health business: creating healthy customers, healthy regional farmers, healthy workers, and a healthy food community by connecting local farmers to local eaters, retaining food dollars in our local communities, providing a safe, healthy, and affordable food supply, and healing the earth by promoting ecologically sound farming practices.

OUR SERVICES

T&E Meats processes animals for producers primarily from Virginia. We slaughter, cut, and pack beef and hogs. We do some processing of small ruminants such as lamb, but only for a few long-time customers. We also scald whole hogs from 75 pounds up to 400 pounds. T&E Meats prides itself on our customer service and quality meat cutting and packaging, and we know that our success is tied to yours. Whether you are selling custom locker beef for individual customers or USDA inspected product bearing the stamp of inspection, we can handle your needs.

We value an informed customer base built on honesty, respect, and transparency. With that in mind, we encourage you to meet our staff before working with us because it adds to your understanding of slaughter to pack process. We are happy to help you understand and complete your cutting instructions and give you the tools and knowledge to communicate to your customers.

SCHEDULING ANIMALS FOR SLAUGHTER AND PROCESSING

To request a slaughter date for your animals please contact us at 540-434-4415 or office@temeats.com. You can also use the scheduling feature on our web site to submit a scheduling request. We schedule on a first come, first served basis. Our lead time for scheduling can vary greatly depending on the season, so it is important to plan ahead.

- 1) HOG SCALDS:** If your hog is to be scalded please tell us when you schedule the slaughter, and keep in mind that our scalding has a range from 75 to 400 pounds live weight. If we judge a hog in the barn to be too large or too small, we will notify you for pick up or will skin the hog if we can't get ahold of you. Also, tell us if your scalded hog needs to be butterflied, split, or cut into primals by noting on the STALL TAG. Scalds intended to be left whole for pit roasting must be under 150 lbs hanging weight. Note that hogs are scalded on **Thursdays**, and picked up during the following week. If you need a scalded hog for a weekend BBQ, please understand that it must be slaughtered 8 days before. Not to worry, it is kept cold and fresh.
- 2) BOAR HOGS:** T&E Meats **does not slaughter intact boar hogs.**

DROPPING OFF YOUR ANIMALS

- 1) **DROP OFF DATE:** T&E Meats schedules animals to be dropped off **the day before** slaughter. This provides time for the animals to recover from the stress and heat fatigue incurred during transportation, thus giving you a better meat product. It also ensures that we are able to minimize negative production issues on the Kill Floor.
 - 2) **DROP OFF TIME:** If you are new to T&E or want help with unloading, you should bring your animals during our business hours, from 8:00 am to 12:30 pm and from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, so we can provide assistance. However, the barn is available for dropping off animals 24 hours/day. We are not available to take animals over the weekend.
 - 3) **DROP OFF INSTRUCTIONS**
 - **Barn Location:** Our barn is located behind the T&E plant and is accessible from lane on the east side of building. If you have a long trailer, you will need to back down the lane.
 - **Stall Tags:** To avoid delays, ***make sure to fill out a stall tag and place it in the placeholder on the stall door*** when dropping off animals. Each species has its own stall tag, and ALL relevant fields must be completed. Animals dropped off without clear ownership will be slaughtered and given a standard cut sheet. For scalded hogs, indicate the number of hogs intended for scalding, and they must have a clear identifier such as an ear tag, paint, or distinct visual characteristics to identify it from a group. Paint is provided. **Circle which organs you want to save. Any organs not selected on the stall tag will not be saved regardless of what your cut sheets state!**
 - 4) **ANIMAL LIABILITY:** Customers are responsible for their live animals until received into our barn. T&E Meats assumes responsibility for meat at slaughter.
 - 5) Please note that all animals are slaughtered under voluntary USDA inspection. “Custom Not For Sale” is only for the purpose of labeling and pricing.
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CUTTING INSTRUCTIONS

T&E Meats has separate cut sheets for each species. We MUST have your cut sheets when the animals are dropped off to ensure that we have enough time to review your instructions and ask any clarifying questions we might have before processing your meat. Cut sheets are available on our website: tEMEATS.com or in the front office. We are available for consultation regarding cutting strategies and we encourage you to ask questions. **Cut sheets are due by slaughter date, not cutting date! Cut sheets not turned in on time will be assessed a late fee and/or be given a standard cut sheet.**

- 1) **CUTTING INSTRUCTIONS:** To deliver your cutting instructions or ask any questions related to your order, please contact us at:
Phone: (540)-434-4415 Email: operations@tEMEATS.com or office@tEMEATS.com
- 2) **CUTTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR WHOLE, HALF AND QUARTER ANIMALS:** It is the producer’s responsibility to provide all associated cut sheets with custom-exempt animals. In addition, T&E Meats is required by law to have the names, phone numbers, and addresses of all individuals sharing a custom-exempt animal.

ANIMAL & MEAT IDENTIFICATION AND TRACKING

At slaughter, we affix a carcass tag to each animal that includes a unique T&E Meats identification number--the TEID#. This number and all other relevant identifying information such as ear tags are entered into our records at that time. The TEID# follows your meat through processing and is recorded on your cutting instructions, on your invoice, and on the boxes that you pick up when your product is ready.

The TEID# is formatted as follows: month & date of slaughter, number in line of slaughter, and the carcass weight. Thus, if your beef was the 8th animal slaughtered on July 12th, with a carcass weight of 745 pounds your beef is identified as TEID#:71208-745.

SLAUGHTER AND MEAT PROCESSING SCHEDULE

- 1) We want to share our typical processing schedule for each week, so you can understand how we operate and make production decisions based on our workload. The schedule is subject to change without notice.

DAY	KILL FLOOR/BARN	Cutting/Packing	Smokehouse
Monday	Not active; Cleanup & set up. Receive animals for next day's slaughter	Cut & Pack: pork & sausage	Process and Brine Bacon; Slice and pack previous weeks smoked products.
Tuesday (Invoice Pork Customers with smoked product)	Slaughter beef; receiving animals in barn for next day's slaughter.	Finish pork & sausage	Smoke Bacon; Process and Brine Hams; Finish slicing and packing smoked products.
Wednesday	Slaughter beef or lamb; receiving animals in barn for next day's slaughter.	Cut & Pack: Beef	Finish smoking Bacon or Smoke Hams
Thursday	Slaughter beef and hogs. Scald Hog day	Cut & Pack: Beef	Finish smoking process of all meats.
Friday (Invoice Beef Customers)	Slaughter hogs; Start barn cleaning process.	Cut & Pack: Beef	Record-keeping.

- 2) **BEEF AGING:** Beef needs to dry age at least 3-5 days. We offer extended dry aging time for 7-10 days **at our discretion and as the cutting schedule allows**. Dry-aging longer than 2 weeks will be charged at the rate of \$10.00 per head per week.
- 3) **PORK PROCESSING DETAILS:** Pork does not need to age and is usually available for pick up 7-10 days after slaughter, based on cutting instructions or smoked product.
- 4) **LAMB PROCESSING DETAILS:** Lamb and goat do not need to age and are usually available for pick up 5-10 days after slaughter. T&E Meats no longer separates out lambs by animal. We take one set of cutting instructions per group of lambs/goats and process them as a whole group.
- 5) **PROCESSING FEES:** Please refer to current Fee Schedule, available elsewhere on our web site.

PORK SAUSAGE BLENDS AND FEES

T&E Meats excels at making quality sausage in a wide variety of blends and formats. Our sausage blends come pre-formulated from several different vendors. Sausage-making is very labor intensive, and we need to consider many specific factors, both regulatory and quality oriented, as we schedule our daily production. Therefore we request that customers try to understand our specific production policies, as these may affect how we will process their hogs. While at times they may appear frustrating to your desires, in the end, these policies are in your best interest, designed to maximize your sausage quality and efficiency of carcass use.

NOTE: We would love to take some time to clarify our policy when it comes to sausage blends and formats ordered, as sausage making is a time and labor intensive process that requires a lot of pre-planning as well as in the moment decision making.

We consider sausage making to be a service, but not a guarantee. In order to keep our process as efficient and effective as possible, we require a 50 pound minimum of each spice blend as well as each format. On your cut sheet, please list your preferences in numerical order and indicate weight if higher than 50 lbs. Any trim left over after filling all preferences will be added to first preference unless otherwise noted.

We understand that with multiple cut sheets for either custom or retail for the same producer, it may be difficult to reach the 50 lb. minimum to receive your preferences. If you are interested in combining hog trim from multiple cut sheets to meet minimums, as long as all hogs are from the same producer, we are happy to combine trim and separate accordingly. We will leave that to your discretion, you just need to clearly indicate this intention either on your cut sheet, or call/email in your request.

- 1) **SAUSAGE BLENDS FOR PORK:** We can provide the blends below in loose, 1oz or 2oz collagen cased links, rope, 4oz hog cased links, and 2oz or 3oz patties.
 - Sage Breakfast
 - T&E Classic (no-sage breakfast)
 - Mild Italian
 - Sweet Italian (whole fennel seed)
 - Hot Italian
 - Chorizo
 - Garlic Brat Seasoning

 - 2) **CUSTOM SAUSAGE BLENDS:** T&E Meats offers a wide variety of spice options to maximize your retail power. Unfortunately, we cannot make “custom” recipes for your sausage because each recipe requires label approval by the USDA, which is a long and time-consuming process. However, T&E Meats is willing to consider different spice blends for high volume jobs. If we decide to submit the associated label for approval, a \$75.00 fee will be assessed to cover our time.

 - 3) **SAUSAGE FEES:** Please note that our prices are subject to change without notice.
 - Unseasoned Ground pork: \$0.40/lb
 - Loose sausage: \$1.00/lb
 - 1oz/2oz “Little Links”: \$1.75/lb (tray pack included in price)
 - 4oz “Bratwurst Links”/Patties: \$2.00/lb
 - Surcharge on Chorizo, Sweet Italian, Garlic: \$0.25/lb
 - Tray packing 4 oz links and patties: \$0.20/lb
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PRODUCT LABELING

T&E Meats offers three types of labeling, based on specific customer needs.

- 1) **LABELING FOR CUSTOM-EXEMPT ANIMALS:** For locker beef/custom-exempt processing, T&E provides stickers that identify the particular meat cuts at no extra charge. These stickers do not include the USDA identification mark and cannot be retailed.
- 2) **T&E LABELING:** For customers who are just starting to market meat products and for those who do not have their own brand, we can provide T&E labels that include the T&E logo and address, the name of the meat cut, the pounds of product in the package, and our USDA stamp. Product with T&E labels is processed under USDA inspection and can be sold through farm stores and other retailers and to restaurants.
- 3) **BRANDED MEATS:** For customers who want to sell meat under their own brand, T&E Meats offers custom labeling. Please keep in mind that lead time is important for creating these labels. You cannot drop off a beef and expect to get labels made by the time we cut it. To get a custom label made, please send your label information in a black and white format to office@temeats.com.
 - **NOTE:** We strongly discourage any special labeling claims such as: “grass-fed”, “pasture raised”, “natural”, breed claims (e.g. “angus”, “Berkshire”), “no added hormones or antibiotics”, etc. These claims must be approved by USDA/FSIS and getting these approvals is very time consuming, with no guaranteed results. We encourage our clients to make these claims verbally, on their websites, through their literature, social media, etc. rather than on a USDA branded label. If you absolutely must have a special claim, T&E Meats will work with you to get it approved. Due to the extra time it involves we will assess a fee of \$200.00, and again we cannot guarantee label approval.

PRODUCT PACKAGING

T&E Meats packages most products into high quality, BPA free, powder-free vacuum-sealed bags. All products that we use at T&E have been tested and approved with the FDA for use specifically with food. Although we do our best to ensure a solid seal on all the packages, we are unable to guarantee a 100% sealing rate. There are some things you can do to improve the chances of lasting seals on your products:

- 1) **HANDLE PRODUCT WITH CARE:** One of the major causes of broken seals is rough handling. Our plant staff has been trained to handle each piece carefully and gently while the product is under our roof in order to provide you, the customer, with the best quality product.
- 2) **MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE STORAGE TEMPERATURES:** The expansion and contraction of meat when it thaws and freezes can cause the seals on the packaging to loosen. Take extra care to ensure the product is kept at an appropriate temperature. This is also very important for food safety reasons.

For your convenience, T&E Meats will box your meat in cardboard boxes for easy transport. Palletizing is available for large quantities. Please pass this information on to your customers! 😊

PICKUP AND PAYMENT

1) PICKUP

- **Pickup Notification:** Since we are unable to guarantee a pickup time or date in advance, we will notify you as soon as your product is ready. Typically, the first indication you will receive that your order is ready for pickup is an e-mail containing your invoice. Please do not assume your product is ready before we notify you, but feel free to refer to the weekly production schedule to have a general timeframe of when you could anticipate an email from us.
- **Packing:** T&E Meats boxes your meat in cardboard boxes for your convenience, and we can palletize large quantities.
- **Pickup Hours:** Our office hours are Monday – Friday from 8:00 am to 12:30 pm and from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, so customers should plan to pick up their orders during those hours. However, if you are going to be picking up your product after 2:00 pm, we ask that you notify us ahead of time so we can pre-position your order to minimize interference with our clean up and sanitation schedule.
- **Pickup Timeframe:** Your finished product must be picked up within 7 days of notification of completion.
- **Storage Fees:** Please understand that due to limited freezer capacity, we hold quite strictly our policy in regard to Late Pickups. We offer a 5 business day window to pick up the entire order. Product left in our facility longer than that grace period will be charged a storage fee of **\$15.00 per animal per day**. Product held longer than 30 days will be donated to the food bank or Salvation Army.
- Entire orders picked up within 48 business hours will receive a 2% discount. This does not apply to partially picked-up orders.
- **The producer/farmer is held responsible for communicating to their customers when their order is ready for pick up. The producer/farmer is also held responsible for all unpicked up product. All organ meats always go in totality to the farmer.**

2) PAYMENT

- **Payment:** Payment is required when product is picked up.
- **Payment Options:** Our payment options include: cash, personal or business check, Visa, Mastercard, or Discover cards (American Express not accepted).
- **Credit Card Transactions:** For your convenience, we can process your credit card transactions over the phone.
- **Returned Check Fee:** Customers with returned checks will be charged a \$35.00 fee.