

An excellent video from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on salvage and care of big game meat.



ADF&G VIDEO LINK

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunting.meatcare>



- Kill shot placement
- Skinning and bagging
- Antler removal and care
- Hanging and care at camp
- Transportation



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Salvage and Care of Big Game Meat



MEAT SALVAGE AND CARE OF GAME

MEAT SALVAGE

Wanton waste of big game meat is an extremely serious offense punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and 1 year in jail. Big game meat you must salvage all edible meat. This includes:

- All of the neck meat
- All of the brisket (chest meat)
- All of the meat of the ribs
- Front quarters as far as the distal joint of the radius-ulna {knee}
- Hindquarters as far as the distal joint of the tibia-fibula {hock}
- All of the meat along the backbone between the front and hindquarters (backstrap and tenderloins)



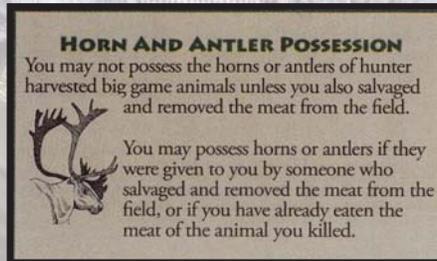
You are not required to salvage the meat of the head, guts, bones, sinew, and meat left on the bones after close trimming, or meat that has been damaged and made inedible by the bullet or arrow. These portions of the animal may be left in the field because they are not included in the definition of edible meat that must be salvaged.

HIDE SALVAGE

You must salvage the hide of a wolf, wolverine, coyote, fox, or lynx. You must salvage the entire hide (including claws attached) and skull of a brown/grizzly bear.

ANTLER SALVAGE

In hunts with antler restrictions, antlers must be salvaged and may not be altered unless required by permit conditions. Antlers must remain naturally attached to the unbroken/uncut skull plate if the required number of brow tines aren't present. In all big game hunts with antler restrictions, you may only possess or transport the animal if both antlers accompany the final load of meat.



EVIDENCE OF SEX

If you kill a big game animal (other than a sheep) where the bag limit is restricted to one sex, you must keep enough of the sex organs (penis, scrotum, testicles, udder, teats, vaginal orifice) naturally attached to part of a rear quarter to show the sex of the animal, until the animal is butchered or processed for storage. Antlers are not proof of sex. Horns are evidence of sex for Dall sheep, and they must be kept with sheep meat until it is butchered or processed for storage. Horns may be with the final load of meat.

FIELD DRESSING

Hunters should know how to field dress and care for game meat. Some hunters waste a lot of nutritious, tasty meat because they do not know how to properly field dress game. You will be successful with any method of field dressing as long as you remember these keys to meat care: **keep the meat cool, clean and dry.**

ALWAYS KEEP MEAT COOL, CLEAN, AND DRY

Heat is the greatest threat to game meat. To cool meat, remove the hide as quickly as possible and get the meat away from internal organs. The warmer the weather, the more urgent this becomes. Meat around the hip joint in the ham (rear leg) spoils most quickly.

BONED MEAT IS DIFFICULT TO KEEP CLEAN AND DRY

Some hunters "bone" the meat, that is, remove all edible meat from the bones. The reason to bone the meat is to reduce the weight to be packed. The problem with boning is that chunks of meat placed together in a game bag are harder to keep cool and dry. In some management units in Alaska it is illegal to bone the meat. The fewer cuts you make in the field, the more meat you'll get at home. After the meat is removed from the animal it should be placed in cotton meat bags. Good meat bags allow air to circulate to the meat but are tough enough to hold heavy loads. The meat bags also help keep the meat clean.

GAME CARE AT CAMP

Back at camp hang the bagged meat off the ground to help keep the meat clean and cool. A tarp should be loosely laced over the meat pole to keep rain off the meat bags. **All meat should be checked daily.** Any loose pieces of meat in the "hamburger" bag should be moved around each day to insure the meat remains cool and dry. If you don't have access to a meat pole, gather branches and layer them in a grid to keep the meat off the ground. The goal is to provide good air circulation. Loosely cover the pile with a tarp to keep the meat dry.

SPRAY MEAT WITH CITRIC ACID TO SLOW BACTERIAL GROWTH

Once all the meat is hung, remove the bags and spray the meat with a citric acid/water mixture. The meat should be sprayed until the mixture begins to run off the meat. About two ounces of citric acid for each quart of water will do the job.

Food grade citric acid can be purchased at most pharmacies or feed stores. The citric acid will slow down bacterial growth that spoils meat. It also creates a dark outer "crust" that makes it harder for flies to lay their eggs on the meat. Don't worry about the citric acid mixture getting the meat too wet. The mixture will dry quickly.

RIVER FLOAT MEAT CARE

If you are on a river float hunt it is very difficult to keep the meat dry and cool when it is stacked inside the raft. You must remove the meat from the raft every night before you camp and hang it where it can stay cool. **REMEMBER, A RAFT IS NOT A REFRIGERATOR!**

