

Detailed guide: Animal by-product categories, site approval, hygiene and disposal

Updated: Disposing of small quantities of ABP section updated.

ABPs are animal carcasses, parts of animals, or other materials which come from animals but are not meant for humans to eat.

They can either be destroyed or can be used to make compost, biogas or other products.

ABP categories explained

ABPs are divided into 3 categories, based on the risks they pose.

Category 1 ABPs

Category 1 ABPs are classed as high risk.

They include:

- carcasses and all body parts of animals suspected of being infected with TSE (transmissible spongiform encephalopathy)
- carcasses of wild animals suspected of being infected with a disease that humans or animals could contract
- carcasses of animals used in experiments
- parts of animals that are contaminated due to illegal treatments
- [international catering waste](#)
- carcasses and body parts from zoo and circus animals or pets
- specified risk material (body parts that pose a particular disease risk, eg cows' spinal cords)

Category 2 ABPs

Category 2 ABPs are classed as high risk.

They include:

- animals rejected from abattoirs due to having infectious diseases
- carcasses containing residues from authorised treatments
- unhatched poultry that has died in its shell
- carcasses of animals killed for disease control purposes
- carcasses of dead livestock
- manure
- digestive tract content

Category 3 ABPs

Category 3 ABPs are classed as low risk.

They include:

- carcasses or body parts passed fit for humans to eat, at a slaughterhouse
- products or foods of animal origin originally meant for human consumption but withdrawn for commercial reasons, not because it's unfit to eat
- domestic catering waste
- shells from shellfish with soft tissue
- eggs, egg by-products, hatchery by-products and eggshells
- aquatic animals, aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates
- hides and skins from slaughterhouses
- animal hides, skins, hooves, feathers, wool, horns, and hair that had no signs of infectious disease at death
- processed animal proteins (PAP)

PAP are animal proteins processed from any category 3 ABP except:

- milk, colostrum or products derived from them
- eggs and egg products, including eggshells
- gelatine
- collagen
- hydrolysed proteins
- dicalcium phosphate and tricalcium phosphate of animal origin
- blood products (although any processed blood would still be subject to this guide)

Getting your site approved or registered

If your site uses ABPs, it needs to be approved by or registered with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

Whether you need approval or registration depends on what your site does and the ABPs you handle there.

Sites that need approval

You need approval if you are using ABPs at a:

- [processing facility](#)
- [biodiesel factory](#)
- [site that makes pet food](#)
- combustion site
- [commercial compost or biogas/anaerobic digestion site](#)
- [site that makes organic fertiliser or soil improver](#)
- site where boilers use tallow as fuel
- [high or low capacity incinerator site](#)
- [handling or storage plant](#)

- [site that stores derived products](#)

How to get your site approved

Complete an application form to [get your site approved](#).

Your application form needs to show:

- that you know how to set up and operate your plant
- that you've identified the most hazardous risk areas on your site
- that you have a workable plan to control these risks
- how you'll maintain hygiene in common areas like canteens, offices, waste water plants and boilers
- what you'll do if cross-contamination occurs
- how you'll manage spillages of any ABPs or processed products
- how you'll maintain equipment, clean it, and deal with any faults
- how you'll train your staff to safely operate the site
- where you'll store raw ABP materials and finished products

After you've applied, APHA inspectors will then check your site to make sure you're operating legally.

Sites that must register

You need to register your site if you use:

- blood or blood products, except if you're using them in feed
- medical devices like heart valves
- hides, skins, wool, hair, pig bristles, feathers, down or related materials
- commercial game trophies or taxidermy pieces
- chemicals derived from plant or animal fats
- bee-keeping by-products
- bones, horns, hooves and related materials
- milk, milk-based and milk-derived products
- colostrum (milk from animals) and colostrum-based products
- ABPs for feeding zoo or circus animals, or other wild animals
- ABP samples for research or diagnostic tests (unless this is for education)

You also have to register your site if it's a:

- [collection centre](#) (any site where dead stock is collected for use as feed for carnivores)
- site that mixes components for organic fertilisers or soil improvers
- cosmetics manufacturing site
- landfill site
- [pet cemetery](#)
- medical or veterinary supply factory

You also must register if you're:

- a trader selling untreated agricultural [wool or hair](#)

- an animal keeper who gets [hides and skins](#) from your animals returned after slaughter
- handling ABPs as trade samples, or for exhibition and artistic uses
- a [haulier or transporter](#) who doesn't work for an APHA-approved site or an FSA approved food or feed business

How to register your site

To [get your site registered](#) complete form AB117 and [post it to APHA](#).

When you don't need registration or approval

You don't need to be registered to:

- run a farm, breeding farm or a shop which produces ABPs
- supply other farms with colostrum (milk from animals) for feeding
- dispose of category 2 and 3 materials on your site, if they came from surgery on a live animal (eg horns from calves)
- collect and transport manure between 2 places on the same farm, or between farmers within the UK
- make game trophies or taxidermy pieces that aren't to be sold commercially
- use ABP samples for education, eg at a school, college, or university

ABP hygiene on your site

If you want to use different categories of ABPs on one site, you must:

- keep unprocessed ABPs in category-specific rooms, divided by floor-to-ceiling walls or partitions
- keep raw ABP material separate from any processed final products

If you run a category 3 processing, handling or storage plant, you must do one of the following:

- keep any category 1 and category 2 materials in a separate building, that's both:
 - divided from the category 3 plant by floor-to-ceiling walls or partitions
 - accessed by a dedicated entrance and exit
- prove to AHPA inspectors that you're using an equally effective method to separate category 1 and 2 material from your category 3 plant

Cleaning your site and vehicles

You must clean and disinfect your site and any containers or vehicles used for storing or transporting ABPs.

You should:

- make and enforce a cleaning plan for all areas of the site
- regularly inspect the site and all equipment to make sure they're clean,

and record the results

- have a waste-water disposal system
- disinfect vehicles fully, including the wheels, before they enter clean areas of your site
- make sure finished products are not contaminated by splashes or run-off
- have a pest control programme as protection against insects, rats, birds, and other pests

ABP safety and your staff

You must:

- control the movement of staff between areas that use different ABP materials
- make sure all clothing and footwear are disinfected after use
- make sure staff change protective clothing when moving between areas that use different categories of ABP
- use colour-coded protective clothing to identify staff working in clean or unclean areas
- clean and disinfect common areas like toilets, changing rooms, and canteens
- train staff so that they are familiar with your plant's safety procedures and keep a record of the training
- keep a list of any staff who own livestock in case a notifiable disease breaks out

ABP safety and your equipment

Your equipment can spread diseases if you don't clean and disinfect it.

You should:

- check all equipment regularly to make sure it works
- use trained maintenance staff to fix any broken equipment
- only use each piece of equipment for a single category of ABP, and colour-code accordingly
- limit the movement of equipment between clean and unclean parts of your site
- wash and disinfect equipment, especially if you're moving it between clean and unclean sectors
- use caustic decontamination for equipment that you're moving from category 1 processing sites to category 2 or 3

Loading and unloading ABPs

When you're getting your site approved or registered, inspectors will check your loading and unloading method is safe.

Generally, loading and unloading must be done inside, in a covered area, but inspectors may allow other methods.

Loading and unloading ABPs next to the building

If you can't drive a vehicle inside your building, you may be allowed to load and unload by docking with the building.

This means that a vehicle or container backs up to the building and empties or fills through a covered dock. This must not be open to the outside.

Docking is more likely to be approved when the materials you're transporting won't spill, eg a carcass is safer than liquid waste.

Unloading ABPs in outside yards

Inspectors may allow certain ABPs to be unloaded in outside yards, if the materials are:

- moved into the building immediately
- stored in covered and leak-proof containers or sealed packages
- dry, eg fresh whole carcasses, fully salted hides, skins, horns, hooves

They'll also check that:

- your yard is made from concrete or another material that won't let liquid seep through and contaminate the ground
- materials are not unloaded anywhere else on your site besides this yard

Loading ABPs in outside yards

If you want to load ABP materials in outside yards, inspectors will make sure:

- materials are held outside for the shortest possible amount of time, ideally loaded on the day of dispatch
- your containers are leak-proof and securely covered immediately after loading
- the ground under and around the container is made from concrete or another material that won't let liquid seep through
- the ground can be cleaned and disinfected, and has a fall to a foul drain

Keeping records and labelling

If you're moving consignments of ABPs or derived products, you must have a commercial document.

The commercial document must list:

- a detailed description of the contents, including category and quantity
- the date of transport
- an address of origin and destination, and contact names at both
- approval or registration numbers for the factory or vehicle
- the signature of whoever is responsible for the contents

- ear numbers and details of species, where carcasses have been taken from farms

You should keep a copy of the commercial document for at least 2 years.

Keeping records of consignments

You must keep a record of any consignments of ABPs or derived products that enter or exit your premises.

You can do this using your commercial document or a logbook – you should record:

- the date you sent or received the consignment
- a description of the material you sent or received including its category
- the weight, volume and quantity of the material
- the place where you sent the material or the place it came from

See

[an example of a logbook](#)

(MS Word Document, 49KB)

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Labelling

When labelling ABP vehicles or containers you should measure quantity by:

- weight
- number of containers, with estimates of their average weight
- number, for example '85 tripes'
- volume, for example '20,000 litres of bovine blood'

Vehicles, containers, or packaging must also have a label attached that says what category of ABP the contents are.

You must use these wordings:

- category 1 material – 'for disposal only'
- category 2 material – 'not for animal consumption'
- category 3 material – 'not for human consumption'

Disposing of ABPs

Category 1

You can only dispose of category 1 ABPs by:

- incineration or co-incineration at an approved plant
- [processing using processing methods 1-5](#) followed by permanent marking using GTH, then incineration or co-incineration

- pressure sterilisation (apart from possible TSE cases or animals killed under TSE eradication laws) followed by permanent marking, then landfill
- using them as fuel for combustion at an approved combustion plant
- sending them for burial at an authorised landfill, if they are [international catering waste](#)

Category 2

You can only dispose of category 2 ABPs by:

- incinerating or co-incinerating without processing or with prior processing, when resulting material has to be marked with glyceroltriheptanoate (GTH)
- sending them to authorised landfill after processing by pressure sterilisation and marking with GTH
- making them into organic fertilisers/ soil improvers, after processing and marking with GTH
- composting or anaerobic digestion after processing by pressure sterilisation and marking with GTH (milk, milk products, eggs, egg products, digestive tract content, manure do not need processing, providing no risk of spreading serious transmissible disease)
- applying them to land, in the case of manure, digestive tract content, milk, milk products and colostrum, this can be done without processing
- using them in composting or anaerobic digestion, if they are materials coming from aquatic animals ensiled
- using them as fuel for combustion
- using them for manufacture of certain cosmetic products, medical devices and safe industrial or technical uses

Category 3

You can only dispose of category 3 ABPs by:

- [incineration or co-incineration](#)
- sending them to landfill after they've been processed
- processing them, if they're not decomposed or spoiled, and using them to [make feed for farm animals](#) (where allowed by the TSE/ABP regulations)
- processing them and using them to [make petfood](#)
- processing them and using them to [make organic fertilisers and soil improvers](#)
- using them in [composting or anaerobic digestion](#)
- ensiling (turning them into silage) if they come from aquatic animals
- applying them to land as a fertiliser, in some cases
- using them as fuel for combustion
- using them to make cosmetic products or medical devices

Disposing of small quantities of ABPs

If you are a retail business producing a total weight of less than 20kg of raw or partially cooked meat, fish or shellfish waste per week, you can send this waste to landfill each week.

There is no need to register with APHA, however you do need to keep records of the type and approximate weight of ABP sent to landfill each week.

This is a weekly limit, not an average limit over a number of weeks.