

Primary Produce Safety Amendment (Wild Game Meat Donation) Bill 2025

A BILL FOR

An Act to amend the Primary Produce Safety Act 2011 to enable licensed recreational hunters to donate wild game meat to food banks and charities via approved processing pathways or unregulated direct donations, modelled on New Zealand's charitable wild game donation provisions, while maintaining food safety, traceability, and biosecurity standards where applicable, and providing for liability waivers in unregulated donations.

PART 1 - PRELIMINARY

1. Short title

This Act may be cited as the Primary Produce Safety Amendment (Wild Game Meat Donation) Act 2025.

2. Commencement

This Act commences on a day or days to be proclaimed.

3. Principal Act

In this Act, the Principal Act means the Primary Produce Safety Act 2011.

PART 2 - PRINCIPAL ACT AMENDED

4. Section 3 amended (Interpretation)

After section 3(1) of the Principal Act, insert the following definitions:

- **donor hunter** means a person who holds a valid hunting permit under the Nature Conservation Act 2002 and donates wild game carcasses in accordance with an approved wild game donation scheme or an unregulated wild game donation;
- **wild game animal** means a feral or wild animal species declared under section 3A to be eligible for donation, including fallow deer, wallaby, rabbit, but excluding protected native species; **wild game meat** means the carcass, or any part of the carcass, of a wild game animal that has been harvested and donated for processing and distribution to food banks or charities;
- **approved wild game donation scheme** means a scheme approved under Division 2A of Part 3 for the collection, processing, and distribution of donated wild game meat to registered charitable organisations;
- unregulated wild game donation** means the free transfer of a carcass or portion of a wild game animal by a licensed hunter directly to a registered charity or food bank without processing, inspection, or commercial accreditation;
- **registered charity** means an organisation registered under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth) or a declared charitable body under Tasmanian law;
- end user** means any individual who receives or consumes donated wild game meat from a registered charity or food bank.
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5. Section 3A inserted (Declaration of wild game animals for donation)

After section 3, insert:

3A. Declaration of wild game animals for donation

1. The Minister, by notice in the Gazette, may declare a species of feral or wild animal to be a wild game animal for the purposes of donation under this Act if satisfied that –
 - (a) the species is not a protected native species under the Nature Conservation Act 2002; and
 - (b) donation of meat from the species supports pest management and community food security without unacceptable risks to public health or biosecurity.
2. A declaration may specify conditions, including geographic areas, seasonal limits, and health testing requirements.

3. Before making a declaration, the Minister must consult with –
 - (a) the Director of Biosecurity;
 - (b) representatives of hunting, food relief, and conservation sectors;and
 - (c) the Tasmanian Game Council or equivalent body.
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6. Section 8A inserted (Exemption for unregulated wild game donation)

After section 8, insert:

8A. Exemption for unregulated wild game donation

1. Despite any provision of this Act or the regulations, a person who holds a valid hunting permit under the Nature Conservation Act 2002 may donate the carcass or any portion of a wild game animal to a registered charity or food bank if –
 - (a) no payment or reward is received;
 - (b) the meat is not processed, packaged, or stored at accredited premises;
 - (c) the meat is clearly labelled:
> **“DONATED WILD GAME - NOT FOR SALE - GIVEN AS IS”**; and
 - (d) the recipient charity or food bank obtains a signed liability waiver from the end user in accordance with subsection (5).
2. The recipient charity or food bank may distribute the donated meat to individuals in need without further regulatory compliance, provided it is not sold or supplied commercially.
3. This exemption does not apply to:
 - (a) protected native species;
 - (b) animals showing signs of disease or contamination; or
 - (c) meat intended for public sale or trade.
4. The donor must, on request, provide to the recipient:
 - (a) their name and hunting permit number; and
 - (b) the date and location of harvest.
5. For unregulated wild game donations, the meat is acceptable for distribution only if the end user signs a liability waiver acknowledging:
 - (a) acceptance of full liability for food safety and any adverse reactions arising from consumption; and
 - (b) waiver of any right to seek legal reparations, compensation, or remedies against the donor hunter, the registered charity, food bank, or any other party involved in the donation chain for any harm, injury, or loss related to the donated meat.
6. The liability waiver under subsection (5) must be in a form prescribed by the regulations and retained by the registered charity or food bank for at least 3 years.

7. This section operates in addition to the protections for food donors under section 35F of the Civil Liability Act 2002.
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7. Part 3, Division 2A inserted (Regulated wild game meat donation schemes)

After Division 2 of Part 3 of the Principal Act, insert:

Division 2A - Regulated wild game meat donation schemes

11A. Approval of wild game donation schemes

1. A registered charity, food bank, or accredited meat processor may apply to the Director for approval of a wild game donation scheme.
2. The Director may approve a scheme if satisfied that it provides for –
 - (a) collection of carcasses from donor hunters at designated drop-off points;
 - (b) initial field dressing and chilling by the hunter in accordance with hygiene guidelines issued by the Director;
 - (c) transport to an accredited processing facility within 24 hours under refrigeration at or below 5°C;
 - (d) full traceability from hunter to recipient, including tagging with donor identification, harvest date, and location
 - (g) distribution only to registered charitable organisations for non-commercial food relief.

The scheme must align with New Zealand's charitable wild game donation model under the Animal Products Act 1999, adapted for Tasmanian conditions.

3. Approval is subject to annual audit and reporting on volumes donated and distributed.

11B. Obligations of donor hunters under regulated schemes

1. A donor hunter may only donate wild game carcasses under an approved scheme if –
 - (a) they hold a valid hunting permit and firearms licence;
 - (b) the animal was harvested in a declared area and season;
 - (c) field dressing is completed within 2 hours of kill, with evisceration and cooling to below 7°C within 6 hours;
 - (d) the carcass is tagged with a unique identifier provided under the approved scheme; and
 - (e) the carcass is delivered to a designated drop-off point within 24 hours.

2. Donor hunters must complete basic training in wild game hygiene (provided free by the Department or approved providers).
3. No fee may be charged or accepted for donated meat.

11C. Processing and distribution of donated wild game meat under regulated schemes

1. Donated wild game meat may only be processed at premises approved under section 11 and participating in an approved donation scheme.
2. Processed meat must be labelled:
 - > **“Donated Wild Game Meat - Not for Sale - Processed under Approved Charitable Scheme”**
 - > including species, processor, and batch code.
3. Distribution is restricted to registered charities and food banks for direct provision to individuals in need.
4. Sale of donated wild game meat is prohibited and constitutes an offence under section 48.

11D. Biosecurity, welfare, and record-keeping under regulated schemes

1. All activities under an approved scheme must comply with the Biosecurity Act 2019 and Animal Welfare Act 1993.
2. Processors must maintain records for 3 years, including donor details, inspection results, and distribution logs.
3. The Director may suspend or revoke scheme approval for non-compliance.

8. Section 48 amended (Offences)

After section 48(2), insert:

1. A person does not commit an offence under this section by donating or receiving wild game meat in accordance with section 8A or Division 2A of Part 3.

9. Section 59 amended (Regulations)

After section 59(2)(e) of the Principal Act, insert:

1. the regulation of wild game meat donation schemes and unregulated donations, including hygiene standards, training requirements, reporting obligations, and forms for liability waivers.
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10. Primary Produce Safety (Meat and Poultry) Regulations 2024 amended

- 1. The Primary Produce Safety (Meat and Poultry) Regulations 2024 are amended as follows.
- 2. After regulation 4, insert:

4B. Donated wild game meat under regulated schemes

- 1. Wild game carcasses accepted under an approved donation scheme are exempt from commercial accreditation requirements provided all scheme conditions are met.
- 2. Carcasses must be accompanied by a donation declaration form signed by the donor hunter.
- 3. Regulation 4 does not apply to donated wild game meat under a regulated scheme to the extent of any inconsistency with an approved scheme.

4C. Unregulated meat donation

Regulation 4 and Schedule 1 do not apply to meat donated under section 8A of the Act.

- 1. Schedule 1 amended by inserting after the item relating to game birds:

Item	Description	Requirements
5	Donated wild game animals (as declared under section 3A)	Harvested by licensed hunters; for regulated schemes: field dressed and chilled per guidelines; processed under approved charitable donation scheme; full traceability; distribution only to registered charities; compliance with AS 4696 where applicable. For unregulated donations: direct transfer without processing, labelled "NOT FOR SALE - GIVEN AS IS"; end users must accept liability via signed waiver.

PART 3 - REPEAL OF ACT

11. Repeal of Act

This Act is repealed on the second anniversary of the day on which the last section of this Act commences.

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

This Bill combines regulated and unregulated pathways for donating wild game meat, enabling recreational hunters to support food relief while addressing pest management.

Regulated schemes (Division 2A) provide structured, safe processing for larger-scale donations, inspired by New Zealand's "Hunters Helping the Hungry" model, with traceability and inspections.

Unregulated donations (Section 8A) allow simple, direct transfers without bureaucracy, modelled on good-faith systems in rural jurisdictions, with basic safeguards like labelling and mandatory liability waivers where end users accept full responsibility for food safety and waive legal reparations.

The Bill builds on Tasmania's Commercial Use of Wild-shot Deer Trial (extended to April 2026), redirecting surplus meat into food relief without creating a commercial market undermining deer farmers. Both pathways prohibit sale, ensuring focus on charity. Liability provisions align with existing protections under the Civil Liability Act 2002.

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To be presented by the Minister for Primary Industries and Water