



## Mushy Meat

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### “Mushy Meat ” when grinding

The “mush” comes from the meat being pushed by the feedscrew through the plate holes but not being cut clean by the knife. This is caused if the knife and/or plate are dull or the tension between the plate and knife is not sufficient to allow the knife to clean cut the meat.

The tension between the plate and knife is set properly if the ring can tighten the plate tight against the knife. This can only occur if the plate protrudes out of the cylinder somewhat to allow the ring to contact the plate and tighten it against the knife.

Most feedscrews have a washer on the rear shaft that can wear out or get lost. This allows the feedscrew to insert too far into the cylinder thus allowing the plate to recess into the cylinder instead of protruding out.

Also, meat ground too many times will become “mushy”

### “Mushy Meat” when stuffing off a grinder using a stuffing tube.

The “mush” can come from the above listed reasons so start there. If everything looks ok with the plate and knife

Then...

The "mush" is occurring because the meat is staying in the cylinder too long; allowing the feedscrew to pulverize the meat. The meat stays in the cylinder too long because the stuffing horn creates a bottleneck slowing down the meat delivery out of the cylinder. As the feedscrew turns the meat slips between the feedscrew edge and the cylinder wall instead of moving forward and out of the cylinder and is getting “mushed” up. **This is called bypass**

Older feedscrews and cylinders that are worn have a wider clearance between them allowing even more meat to bypass.

Using a spacer plate (two hole kidney plate) without a knife will keep your meat from getting ground again but a spacer plate does not deal with the bottleneck created when a stuffing tube is installed (does not speed up the meat movement through the grinder cylinder). The longer the time spent in the cylinder with a turning feedscrew the musher the meat becomes.

If you must stuff off a grinder using a stuffing tube, grind the meat first through a kidney plate (2 or 3 hole plate) then install the final grind plate, usually a 3/16” plate, add the stuffing tube and grind and stuff on this second grind.

The best solution is to buy a stuffer. They were invented because of this problem of trying to stuff off a grinder. You will get an improved texture stuffing with a stuffer.

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### Summary

- Never grind meat more than twice,
- Keep the meat and grinding cylinder lubricated with water,
- Grind only very cold meat,
- The first grind should be done through a very big hole plate such as a kidney (2 or 3 hole) plate, this allows for bigger chunks and helps the feed screw to pick up and move the meat out against the backpressure (bottleneck) created by the plate and/or stuffing tube.
- Dull plates and knives can cause mushy meat
- Worn feedscrew and/or cylinder can allow bypass.
- The feedscrew should function as a conveyor and move the meat.
- Bypass increases time spent in the grinding chamber causing pulverized meat.

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