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Wyoming Expands Food Freedom Act

By Farm-to-Consumer | March 28, 2017



On March 6 Governor Matt Mead (R) signed two different bills into law that further expand sales of unregulated foods from producer direct-to-consumers in Wyoming. The bills are **House Bill 129** (HB129), sponsored by Representative Tyler Lindholm (R-01), and **Senate File 118** (SF118), sponsored by Senator Dan Dockstader (R-16). The bills, which go into effect on July 1, 2017, amend the **Wyoming Food Freedom Act** which passed into law in 2015.

HB 129 extends access to most products; the original act did not allow the sale of meat products other than poultry. The bill exempts the sale of domestic rabbit meat and the sale of farm-raised fish (other than catfish) from state regulation.

In addition, HB 129 allows the unregulated sale of "portions of live animals before slaughter for future delivery" regardless of whether the slaughter and processing take place at a custom or inspected facility. Currently, Wyoming only permits the sale of portions of animals for future delivery only if the processing is done by the purchaser or by a state- or federally-inspected processing facility. The change in the law should

increase access to locally produced meat; USDA's position has been that there can be an unlimited number of owners for a custom-slaughtered and -processed animal.

SF118 allows the sale of unregulated homemade food to be sold at a facility also selling inspected food as long as the facility is located at the ranch, farm, or home where the unregulated food is produced. The "retail space" where the unregulated food is sold must be physically separated from the area of the facility where the inspected food is sold with a "separate door and separate cash register or point of sale." There must also be separation of coolers, freezers, and warehouse or other storage areas to prevent the commingling of inspected and uninspected products. The bill also requires signage to indicate what sections of the store are offering inspected items for sale and which sections are offering uninspected items for sale.

Current law prohibits foods produced under the Food Freedom Act from being sold in an on-farm store that sells food produced by inspected (approved) sources. An on-farm store selling inspected food is subject to cumbersome laws that govern commercial food establishments; SF118 is an effort to navigate these laws to improve the ability of producers under the act to market their products and make the farm store a one-stop shop.

Congratulations to Rep. Lindholm and Sen. Dockstader for further advancing food freedom of choice.

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Educational and policy work also provide an avenue for FTCLDF to build grassroots activism to create the most favorable regulatory climate possible. In addition to advising on bill language, FTCLDF supports favorable legislation via action alerts, social media outreach, and the online petition service.

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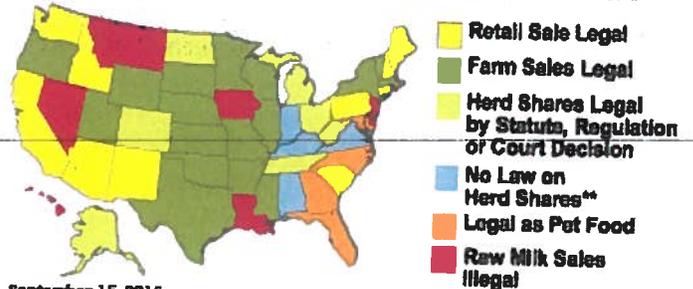
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