

### 3 Ways The Wyoming Food Freedom Act Supports Cottage Businesses Everywhere

*Wyoming's Food Freedom Act is a game changer for cottage businesses everywhere. The WFFA eliminates regulations for the sale of eggs, raw milk and poultry. Will it encourage other states to do the same?*

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/real-food/the-wyoming-food-freedom-act-zbcz1512>

By Jason and Amanda Brengle, The Happy Cowgirl (<http://www.motherearthnews.com/biographies/jason-and-amanda-brengle-homesteading-wyoming-rangeland-consultants.aspx>)



**On March 3, 2015, the Wyoming Legislature passed what is considered to be a giant cottage food act.**

The Wyoming Food Freedom Act (WFFA) (<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/2010/Introduced/HB0054.pdf>) is groundbreaking legislation which allows any food except meat products to be sold by a producer directly to the consumer without inspection or licensing requirements. Poultry is not considered a meat product and is also allowed to be sold under the WFFA.

The only requirement of the WFFA is "the producer shall inform the end consumer that any food product or food sold at a farmers market or through ranch, farm or home based sales pursuant to this section is not certified, labeled, licensed, packaged, regulated or inspected."

This means raw milk, eggs, and even poultry are legal to sell directly to the consumer ~~without inspection and labeling.~~

**According to the Wyoming Food Freedom Act, its purpose is to:**

"to encourage the expansion and accessibility of farmers' markets, roadside stands, ranch, farm and home based sales and producer to end consumer agricultural sales by:

- Promoting the purchase and consumption of fresh and local agricultural products
- Enhancing the agricultural economy
- Encouraging agri-tourism opportunities in Wyoming
- Providing Wyoming citizens with unimpeded access to healthy food from known sources
- Encouraging the expansion and accessibility of farmers' markets, roadside stands, ranch and farm based sales and direct producer to end consumer agricultural sales."

### How the WFFA Differs From Other States

Currently more than 40 states allow the sale of "cottage foods" produced in home kitchens with no or minimal regulation, but the WFFA exceeds them all. In many states where cottage foods can be sold without government inspection, the sales are limited to food that does not require temperature control. The WFFA legalizes the unregulated sale of food that requires temperature control as long as the consumer is aware of it.



### 3 Ways the WFFA Benefits Cottage Businesses Everywhere

- 1. It blazes a trail.** Wyoming set a precedent in allowing small producers to sell a variety of agricultural products without regulation and other states are sure to follow suit. It will be especially helpful in states like Virginia and Maine where Food Freedom legislation has already been in the works. Wyoming Farmer's Market Association board member Bren Lieske told Wyoming Public Media, the state's farmers and other food producers operating under the new law "have the opportunity to model to other states that less regulation of locally-produced foods can be safe and good for local economies."
- 2. It shows the power of the grassroots movement.** The WFFA wouldn't have been passed without the grassroots support that was garnered. The legislative hearing was packed with consumers, ranchers, farmers and small food producers all in favor of less government regulation. Wyoming consumers wanted the choice to purchase directly from the producers and producers wanted the choice to sell directly to the consumer.
- 3. It allows the small producers to make more money.** With one summer of Wyoming Food Freedom Act under its belt farmers markets in the state already saw the positive impacts from the law. Wyoming State Rep. Tyler Lindholm who co-sponsored the law stated in interview with Reason (<https://reason.com/archives/2015/12/12/food-freedom-spreading-across-states#comment>) "I've talked with several Farmers Markets and their managers and have found the numbers being reported as doubling the number of consumers and producers in a multitude of products."

Wyoming has taken a pioneering role in food freedom that will hopefully forge a path for other states to do the same. If you don't live in Wyoming the most important thing you can do is to educate yourself about food freedom and the impacts it can have on producers and consumers.

*Jason, Amanda and their two daughters live on 20 irrigated acres outside of Cody, Wyoming. Jason has more than 15 years of professional natural resource, vegetation, rangeland management, invasive species management and rangeland restoration experience and Amanda has more than 9 years of experience in prevention and wellness program and nonprofit management. Together they own The Happy Cowgirl (<http://happycowgirl.com/>), where they blog and offer freelance writing services and small acreage consultation. Read all of their MOTHER EARTH NEWS posts here (<http://www.motherearthnews.com/search.aspx?tags=%22Jason%20and%20Amanda%20Brenge%22>).*

All MOTHER EARTH NEWS community bloggers have agreed to follow our Blogging Best Practices (<http://www.motherearthnews.com/blogging-faq.aspx#Blogging%20Best%20Practices%202>), and they are responsible for the accuracy of their posts. To learn more about the author of this post, click on the byline link at the top of the page.