

Some thoughts on H.426:

My name is Leonard Bull, and I live in New Haven. I am retired and a past Professor and Chair of Animal Science at UVM, Emeritus Head and of Animal Science at NCState University, and past initial member and Chair of the Vermont Agriculture and Forest Products Development Board. I was raised on a dairy farm in Massachusetts, and did not have my first pasteurized milk until I was in the second grade, when, ironically, the school milk that we had (pasteurized) was provided by the milk plant that bought our farm milk! So I had some of the milk that we produced, pasteurized, (commingled) at that time. I would like to comment briefly on the current discussion on the sale of raw milk in Vermont (H. 426). I hope that my comments will help result in this proposed bill receiving a fair and balanced hearing and consideration.

The sale of raw milk in the states within the US is a patchwork--(far from "black and white..maybe brown is better??--I was raised milking Jerseys!..) which is most easily realized by looking at the map in the internet link: http://www.farmtoconsumer.org/raw_milk_map.htm. I am not going to detail all of the information in that site, because I am sure that each of you have read and reviewed this information carefully in preparation for your consideration. In short, 11 states including VT allow unlicensed sale of raw milk on-farm, with 4 of those, including VT, having volume limits. In addition, 11 states, including 3 that are among the 11 above, allow unlicensed on-farm sale, allow sale in retail locations and at farmers markets, as well as on-farm sale, with a permit required. Further, 7 states allow licensed on-farm sale of raw milk, and sale of raw milk is considered illegal in 17 states. Clearly a hodgepodge of regulations, restrictions and limitations. And the rules are regularly changing or being modified, as is the case under consideration here.

That everyone wants a safe food supply is not at issue. At the same time, the various kinds of food that are consumed raw in the US (vegetables, fruits, nuts, some meat including fish, milk, etc.) are subject to highly variable regulatory oversight, which place variable burdens on the producer, regardless of size or type of operation. And with sometimes variable restrictions between states, additional pressures are added. **In the case of raw milk, I personally think that a national, single regulation would be an ideal goal.**

It seems to me that here in VT there is the ideal group that was formed to provide thoughtful, fact based advice to policy makers. That group is the Vermont Agriculture and Forest Products Development Board (VAFPDB). In a sense, VAFPDB is intended to function like the Congressional Research Service at the Federal level and is intended to be a non-partisan body.

I believe that the VAFPDB should be charged with a thorough review and consideration of the issues associated with H. 426, on a top-priority use-of-time basis, just as was done for the issues associated with **on-farm slaughter, maple grade labeling, GMO labeling, and I believe is being done with Current Use, and provide recommendations and advice on how to most fairly and equitably develop a Bill for consideration on the sale of raw milk.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

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