

1 Introduced by Committee on Agriculture and Forestry

2 Date:

3 Subject: Agriculture; miscellaneous subjects; produce inspection; livestock  
4 offloading

5 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to amend the  
6 Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets' authority to administer and  
7 enforce requirements for the growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of  
8 produce for human consumption. The bill would also clarify what constitutes  
9 arrival of the conveyance onto facility property for the purpose of the transport  
10 of livestock and poultry to slaughter.

11 An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects

12 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

13 \* \* \* Produce Inspection \* \* \*

14 Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. § 21(b) is amended to read:

15 (b) The Secretary shall have the authority to:

16 (1) respond to and remediate incidences of mass animal death,  
17 agricultural structure fires, or other emergencies on a farm in order to prevent a  
18 public health hazard;

19 (2) condemn, confiscate, or establish restrictions on the use, sale, or  
20 distribution of adulterated raw agricultural commodities or animal feed; and

1           (3) cooperate with the Department of Health and other State and federal  
2 agencies regarding:

3           (A) the prevention or remediation of the adulteration of raw  
4 agricultural commodities, food, or animal feed on farms; and

5           (B) application of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act,  
6 ~~21 U.S.C. §§ 2201-2252~~ Pub. L. No. 111-353, to farms, farm products, or  
7 value-added products produced in the State.

8 Sec. 2. 6 V.S.A. § 852 is amended to read:

9 § 852. AUTHORITY; ~~ENFORCEMENT~~

10       (a) The Secretary may enforce in the State the requirements of:

11           (1) the rules adopted under the ~~federal~~ U.S. Food and Drug  
12 Administration Food Safety Modernization Act, ~~Public Law No. 111-353~~, for  
13 ~~standards for growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of produce for human~~  
14 ~~consumption~~ Standards for Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of  
15 Produce for Human Consumption, 21 C.F.R. part 112; and

16           (2) rules adopted under this chapter.

17       (b) The Agency may collaborate with the ~~Vermont~~ Department of Health  
18 regarding application of the ~~federal Food Safety Modernization Act and the~~  
19 ~~rules adopted thereunder~~ U.S. Food and Drug Administration Food Safety  
20 Modernization Act, Standards for Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding

1 of Produce for Human Consumption, 21 C.F.R. part 112, and application of the  
2 rules adopted under this chapter.

3 (c) The Secretary shall carry out the provisions of this chapter using:

4 (1) monies appropriated to the Agency by the federal government for the  
5 purpose of administering the federal Food Safety Modernization Act and the  
6 rules adopted thereunder;

7 (2) monies appropriated to the Agency by the State for the purpose of  
8 administering this chapter; and

9 (3) other gifts, bequests, and donations by private entities for the  
10 purposes of administering this chapter.

11 Sec. 3. 6 V.S.A. § 853 is amended to read:

12 § 853. FARM INSPECTIONS

13 (a)(1) The Secretary may inspect a produce farm during reasonable hours  
14 for the purposes of ensuring compliance with:

15 (A) the federal standards for growing, harvesting, packing, and  
16 holding of produce for human consumption, as adopted under 21 C.F.R.  
17 part 112; or

18 (B) the rules adopted under this chapter.

19 (2) This section shall not limit the Secretary's authority to respond to an  
20 emergency in order to prevent a public health hazard under section 21 of this  
21 title.

1       (b) ~~After inspection, the Secretary may issue an inspection certificate that~~  
2       ~~shall include the date and place of inspection along with any other pertinent~~  
3       ~~facts that the Secretary may require.~~

4       (e) The Secretary may coordinate with other State agencies and  
5       organizations to carry out inspections at or near the same time on a given  
6       produce farm.

7       Sec. 4. 6 V.S.A. §§ 856 and 857 are added to read:

8       § 856. ENFORCEMENT; CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

9       When the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets determines that a  
10      person is violating the rules listed in section 852 of this title, the Secretary may  
11      issue a written warning that shall be served in person or by certified mail,  
12      return receipt requested. A warning issued under this subsection shall include:

13           (1) a description of the alleged violation;

14           (2) identification of this section;

15           (3) identification of the applicable rule violated; and

16           (4) the required corrective action that the person shall take to correct the  
17      violation.

18      § 857. ENFORCEMENT; ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS

19      (a) Notwithstanding the requirements of section 856 of this title, the  
20      Secretary at any time may pursue one or more of the following:

1           (1) issue a cease and desist order in accordance to a person the Secretary  
2           believes to be in violation of the rules listed in section 852 of this title;

3           (2) issue a verbal order or written administrative order to protect public  
4           health, including orders for the stop sale, recall, embargo, destruction,  
5           quarantine, and release of produce, when:

6           (A) the U.S. Food and Drug Administration requires immediate State  
7           action; or

8           (B) an alleged violation, activity, or farm practice presents an  
9           immediate threat to the public health or welfare;

10           (3) order mandatory corrective actions;

11           (4) take any action authorized under chapter 1 of this title;

12           (5) seek administrative or civil penalties in accordance with the  
13           requirements of section 15, 16, or 17 of this title.

14           (b) When the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets issues a cease  
15           and desist order, written administrative order, or required corrective action  
16           under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall provide the person  
17           subject to the order or corrective action with a statement that the order or  
18           corrective action is effective upon receipt and the person has 15 days from the  
19           date the order or corrective action was issued to request a hearing.

20           (c) If the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets issues a verbal order  
21           under this section, the Secretary shall issue written notice to the person subject

1 to the order within five days of the issuance of the verbal order. The written  
2 notice shall include a statement that the person has 15 days from the date the  
3 written notice was received to request a hearing

4 (d) If a person who receives a cease and desist order, a verbal order, an  
5 administrative order, or a mandatory corrective action under this section does  
6 not request in writing a hearing within 15 days of receipt of the order or within  
7 15 days of written notice for a verbal order, the person's right to a hearing is  
8 waived. Upon receipt of a written request for a hearing, the Secretary  
9 promptly shall set a date and time for a hearing. A request for a hearing on a  
10 cease and desist order, verbal order, or administrative order issued under this  
11 section shall not stay the order.

12 (e) A person aggrieved by a final action or decision of the Secretary under  
13 this section may appeal de novo to the Civil Division of the Superior Court  
14 within 30 days of the final decision of the Secretary.

15 \* \* \* Livestock and Poultry Transport for Slaughter \* \* \*

16 Sec. 5. 6 V.S.A. § 1461a(c) is amended to read:

17 (c) Livestock and poultry that are transported to a commercial slaughter  
18 facility within the State shall not be removed from the facility without the  
19 facility's ~~owner~~ owner's first obtaining written permission from the State  
20 Veterinarian. For purposes of this section, arrival of the conveyance onto  
21 facility property and the offloading of livestock or poultry constitutes transport

1 to a slaughter facility, regardless of whether the animals have been ~~offloaded~~  
2 ~~or~~ presented for antemortem inspection. The State Veterinarian may require  
3 inspection and testing prior to issuing consent for removal.

4 \* \* \* Effective Date \* \* \*

5 Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

6 This act shall take effect on passage.