

March 22, 2022

Dear Senator Starr and Representative Partridge,

I am writing to express my concern for the restrictions of On-Farm Slaughter (OFS) and the viability of itinerant slaughterers.

My family is committed to building local food resiliency in Vermont, and in particular in our town of Strafford. In 2017, we purchased a property that was last used as a working farm in 1953. We are currently installing a commercial bakery in order to produce bread for our town, and have plans to develop a mixed silvopasture system that integrates fruit and nut trees with intensive rotational grazing of sheep. This is a system that has been proven to rapidly build topsoil, resist erosion, and sequester carbon while simultaneously feeding Vermonters with high quality food. This is the kind of small-scale farm operation that adds strength and resiliency to our local food economy.

We are currently raising 100% of our family's meat, and would like to find ways to raise and offer lamb to our community. The ability to sell whole, half or quarter animals to interested customers in an animal share program, who would then employ an itinerant slaughterer to slaughter the animal on-site, would allow us to develop this aspect of our animal agriculture. If this option is prohibited or subject to cost-restrictive regulatory barriers, our ability to build our lamb operation, feed our community, and strengthen our local food system will be limited. Requiring customers who buy livestock for on-farm slaughter to be present during the slaughter or to require us to install a custom slaughter facility before being able to utilize the services of itinerant slaughterers are such prohibitive measures. Simply put, our business prospects will be limited by these measures, reducing the strength of our local food system and also decreasing the likelihood that our family will be able to make our full livelihood in the agricultural sector.

We'll do what we can to make our business viable and make Vermont stronger. I ask you and other legislators to do what is in your power to make this possible for us and for other small farms who would benefit from our existing practical On-Farm Slaughter regulation in Vermont statute - if that statute would hold weight with the administration.

Sincerely yours,

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