

Hi Linda

Thank You for the opportunity to have our voices heard. We made some recommendations during our testimony and the Senate Ag Committee asked us if we would put our recommendations in writing and pass them on.

- We would recommend that the exemption apply for up to 1000 birds.
- Beyond 1000 birds we would ask that farmers/producers develop a HACCP plan.
- We would also ask that the VAAFM make available educational materials/resources/contacts for interested folks who would like to further their knowledge of food safety, acceptable building materials, water testing, chill times, sanitation, HACCP plan development and certification, Agency of Agriculture's requirements for wastewater.
- Uninspected meat labels are printed in such a way that the verbiage "Exempt per 6 V.S.A. § 3312(b): NOT INSPECTED" is printed the same size minimum of the farm's name/address and safe handling instructions. This would adequately ensure that the information is made prominent to the consumer when choosing to make a purchase.
- Regulated label claims should not be allowed to slaughter their birds under this exemption as there is no current way to certify the slaughter/processing conditions meet the Organic Standards that the inspected facilities have to maintain to allow them to use this claim. Our USDA (and State inspected facility before we became federal) has to have a yearly inspection by NOFA to ensure we meet Organic Standards for the farms we processed for who are Organic. This includes old layers/stew hens. This should also apply to all label claims (ex. Pasture raised, non-gmo etc)

We believe providing some information to those who want it will pay dividends back to the state meat section when these people come under inspection by already having some basic knowledge. It can take years for seasonal producers to become comfortable with all that is required to operate under inspection, state or federal.

Providing some information can also help ensure producers are armed with the right knowledge to produce safe and wholesome poultry with minimal risk to fellow Vermonters, and help ensure Vermont's reputation is not tarnished by foodborne illness cases, even if they never operate under inspection.

Thank you for your time.

Jason and Amber Hubner