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H.728

Introduced by Representatives Buxton of Tunbridge, Christie of Hartford,
Stuart of Brattleboro, Young of Glover and Zagar of Barnard

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Agriculture; meat inspection; itinerant custom slaughter

Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to remove impediments to itinerant
custom slaughter and to ensure the humane slaughter of animals by itinerant
slaughterers.

An act relating to the humane treatment and slaughter of animals

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

Sec. 1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

It shall be the purpose of this act:

(1) to allow those who own, operate, or work at a slaughtering plant to
also engage in the practice of itinerant custom slaughter; and

(2) to promote humane and sanitary slaughter practices among itinerant
custom slaughterers.

1 Sec. 2. 6 V.S.A. chapter 204 is amended to read:

2 CHAPTER 204. PREPARATION OF LIVESTOCK AND
3 POULTRY PRODUCTS

4 * * *

5 § 3302. DEFINITIONS

6 As used in this chapter, except as otherwise specified, the following terms
7 shall have the meanings stated below:

8 * * *

9 (43) "Itinerant custom slaughterer" means a person who for
10 compensation or gain slaughters livestock or poultry:

11 (A) at a person's home or farm for the person's exclusive use by him
12 or her and members of his or her household and his or her nonpaying guests
13 and employees; or

14 (B) owned by a person who has entered into a contract with another
15 person to raise the livestock on the farm where it is intended to be slaughtered.

16 * * *

17 § 3304. POWERS OF THE SECRETARY

18 In order to accomplish the objectives stated in section 3303 of this title, the
19 secretary shall:

20 * * *

1 (7) by rules require that the following classes of persons shall keep
2 records and for periods as are specified in the rules to fully and correctly
3 disclose all transactions involved in their business, and afford to the
4 commissioner and his or her representatives, including representatives of other
5 governmental agencies designated by him or her, access to places of business,
6 and opportunity, at all reasonable times, to examine the facilities, inventory,
7 and records, to copy the records, and to take reasonable samples of the
8 inventory upon the payment of the fair market value, any persons that engage
9 in or for intrastate commerce:

10 (A) in the business of slaughtering any livestock or poultry, or
11 preparing, freezing, packaging, or labeling, buying, or selling as brokers,
12 wholesalers, or otherwise, transporting, or storing any livestock products for
13 human or animal food;

14 (B) in business as renderers or in the business of buying, selling, or
15 transporting any dead, dying, disabled, or diseased livestock or poultry, or
16 parts of the carcasses of any of these animals, including poultry, that died
17 otherwise than by slaughter; or

18 (C) who are required to be licensed under section 3306 of this title.

19 (8) adopt best practices slaughter manuals and provide resources to
20 assist farms contracting with itinerant slaughterers to promote sanitary and
21 humane conditions and procedures for slaughter and processing.

1 * * *

2 § 3306. LICENSING

3 * * *

4 (f) Itinerant custom slaughterers, who slaughter solely at a person's home
5 or farm ~~and who do not own, operate or work at a slaughtering plant~~ shall be
6 exempt from the licensing provisions of this section. An itinerant custom
7 slaughterer may slaughter livestock owned by an individual who has entered
8 into a contract with a person to raise the livestock on the farm where it is
9 intended to be slaughtered.

10 * * *

11 § 3312. INSPECTION; EXCEPTIONS

12 (a) Inspection shall not be provided under this chapter at any establishment
13 for the slaughter of livestock or poultry or the preparation of any livestock
14 products or poultry products which are not intended for use as human food, but
15 these products shall, prior to their offer for sale or transportation in intrastate
16 commerce, unless naturally inedible by humans, be denatured or otherwise
17 identified as prescribed by rules of the secretary to deter their use for human
18 food. These licensed establishments shall be subject to periodic review.

19 (b) Inspection shall not be required for the slaughter or preparation of
20 poultry products of the producer's own raising on the producer's own farm,
21 whether or not they are intended for use as human food if:

1 (1) Fewer than 1,000 birds are slaughtered annually; and

2 (2) No birds are offered for sale or transportation in interstate
3 commerce; and

4 (3) The poultry products are only sold, as whole birds only, from the
5 farm, at a farmers' market, or to a food restaurant licensed by the
6 commissioner of health, or are for personal use.

7 (c) All poultry sold at a farmers' market or to a restaurant pursuant to the
8 exemption in subsection (b) of this section shall be labeled with the following
9 information:

10 (1) Name of farm and name of producer;

11 (2) Address of farm including zip code;

12 (3) "Exempt per 6 V.S.A. § 3312(b): NOT INSPECTED." This
13 statement shall be prominently displayed with such conspicuousness (as
14 compared with other words or statements, designs, or devices in the labeling)
15 as to render it likely to be read and understood under customary conditions of
16 purchase and use.

17 (4) Safe handling and cooking instructions as follows:

18 "SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS:

19 Keep refrigerated or frozen. Thaw in refrigerator or microwave.

20 Keep raw poultry separate from other foods.

1 Wash working surfaces, including cutting boards, utensils, and hands
2 after touching raw poultry.

3 Cook thoroughly to an internal temperature of at least 165 degrees
4 Fahrenheit maintained for at least 15 seconds.

5 Keep hot foods hot. Refrigerate leftovers immediately or discard.”

6 (d) Any menu item that includes poultry that is exempt under this section
7 shall clearly state the name of the farm from which the poultry was purchased
8 and shall prominently display the words “poultry processed on the farm and
9 not inspected” on the menu in proximity to the menu item. Poultry sold to
10 food restaurants under the exemption in this section shall include a label
11 alerting the purchaser to these labeling requirements.

12 (e) The poultry producer, upon first selling poultry to a food restaurant,
13 must procure a signed statement from the food restaurant stating that the food
14 restaurant is aware that the poultry is exempted from inspection under
15 subsection (b) of this section, and that the menu of the food restaurant must
16 have the information required by subsection (d) of this section. The poultry
17 producer must keep the signed statement on file as long as the producer is
18 selling poultry to the food restaurant under this section. The poultry producer
19 must have a signed statement on file from each food restaurant to which
20 poultry is sold under this section and an exact copy of each statement,

1 including the name of the producer and the name of the purchasing restaurant
2 shall be forwarded to the department of health.

3 (f) Inspection shall not be required for the slaughtering by any person of
4 livestock which he or she has raised or contracted to raise if:

5 (1) less than eight livestock are slaughtered annually; and

6 (2) the meat products are exclusively for use by him or her and members
7 of his or her household and his or her nonpaying guests and employees.

8 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

9 This act shall take effect on passage.