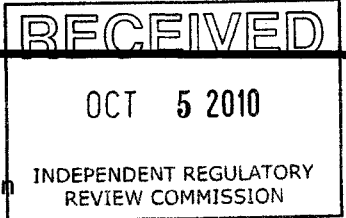


Shomper, Kris

2777



From: Lynn Eppard [lynn.eppard@verizon.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 05, 2010 12:01 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: REJECT #2777 Department of Agriculture 2-160: Milk Sanitation

To whom it may concern,

It is our understanding that the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has issued proposed dairy regulations that have the potential of severely impacting the ability of raw milk producers in the state to continue to make a living. We ask you to reject #2777 Department of Agriculture 2-160: Milk Sanitation.

With 136 licensed raw dairy farms in current operation and many others pending approval, Pennsylvania is viewed as "America's raw dairyland." As a Maryland resident we know all too well the difficulties associated with limited raw dairy options. We are active in making changes to the current laws that restrict the sale of raw dairy in our state and would see these new regulations as a setback to the momentum that is building around the country in support of raw milk and raw milk products.

In our opinion, onerous requirements that require additional machinery and separate areas for washing and storage would adversely impact small farmers. These steps seem to do little to increase public safety but instead could make it financially difficult to continue to provide a healthy product to local consumers.

In our experience, healthy small farms which facilitate a close relationship between the producer and the consumer provide the most immediate and efficient means to police any end food product. Food safety is no size neutral. As we have seen all too clearly, larger agribusinesses are more complex and difficult to regulate. The recent crisis with egg recalls reminds us that when profit is the only motive, animals and plants and the resultant food products suffer. And ultimately, the biggest loser in that equation is the American consumer left with limited choices and not only inadequate but unhealthy food. If there is a need for more regulation at either the state or federal level, it should be directed at these larger operations and be based on performance standards.

We urge you to reject the proposed regulation #2777 Department of Agriculture 2-160: Milk Sanitation.

Sincerely,
Lynn Eppard