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From: David Meyers [dgmeyers@epix.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2009 2:56 PM
To: phoge@state.pa.us
Cc: IRRC
Subject: New Milk Sanitation Regulations

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

TO: Paul Hoge

FROM: David G. Meyers

Dear Mr. Hoge:

I am writing in support of the letter to you from Brian Snyder, PASA Director, dated Sept 9, 2009 outlining the comments and questions regarding the proposed new milk sanitation regulations. I am particularly concerned about the impact any increased regulation will have on the small family farms so vital to the health and diversity of the Pennsylvania farming community. My intent here is not to discuss the details of the regulations, which have been so well presented by Brian Snyder, but to express my strong feelings about the recent rapid growth in the relationship between the consumer and the farmers and the dangers that increased regulations will have on this desirable phenomenon.

I am writing primarily as a consumer who is extremely concerned about the direction of the mainstream food supply in this country and how it has been so adulterated by the large agribusiness corporations to the point that we must avoid processed foods whenever possible. To this end, since the health of my family is very important to me, we go to great efforts to find alternatives to the products of an industry that has put cost and profits above quality.

We have accomplished this by taking several steps over the past decade:

1. Consume fresh produce whenever possible:
 - Grow vegetables in our own organic garden
 - Buy directly from local farms or farmer's markets when in season
 - Buy organic produce when available.
2. Buy poultry, eggs, beef, and pork (organic or grass fed) directly from farmers
3. Buy value added dairy (cheese) and meat (ground beef and sausage) directly from farmers.
4. Processed foods are organic or carefully selected according to ingredients.

As you can see, this is a time consuming and costly process necessary to **minimize** the possibility that our food supply will be adulterated with antibiotics, hormones, pesticides and herbicides. It also minimizes the possibility that it is contaminated with the harmful bacteria so prevalent in supermarket commingled ground meat (as evidenced by the frequent nationwide massive recalls of thousands of tons of ground meat). We also avoid the artificial colorants, flavors, and preservatives in addition to the excess salt and sugar in processed foods.

We feel this has been a successful strategy for maintaining our family's health and are concerned that increased regulation of the family farms will jeopardize the survival of some of our present local sources of fresh produce, dairy and meat products. We have already seen a reduction in the number of local farms providing direct sales of organic or grass fed products. The failure to survive is often the result of the economics of meeting regulations.

It is imperative that the small family farmer not be burdened with meeting the same regulations and permit requirements being placed on the large factory farm. The small farmer who sells mostly directly to the consumer or

a small number of resellers should not be made accountable for the record keeping and testing that results from increased regulations. Traceability is not a problem in such operations.

I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion on this very important subject and thank you for your consideration of my concerns about the quality of our food supply.

Yours Sincerely,

David G. Meyers