

Regarding Raw Milk Products Bill HB 1131

Representatives of the House Ag Committee,

I am writing this letter to show my support for HB 1131 the Raw Milk Products bill allowing for the sale of raw milk products from the farmer directly to the consumer. This is a wonderful bill - enhancing the Raw Milk sale bill that was passed in the last session.

Due to many circumstances our ND dairy farmers are struggling to stay in business. We want to support them and the other small farmers and homesteaders who milk a small number of animals and enjoy making cheeses, kefir, yogurt, butter and separate their cream. This bill will allow these North Dakotans the option to expand their herds, milk more animals and bring in a new source of income for their families. I believe that there is a demand for raw dairy products due to the health benefits they can provide.

By not cooking the milk to pasteurization temperatures, the products are able to retain many of the bioavailable vitamins, minerals, enzymes, beneficial bacteria, naturally occurring CLA, and Omega-3 fatty acids that dairy provides. Once pasteurization occurs much of the beneficial bacteria that aids in the digestion of dairy is destroyed. Many individuals who are lactose intolerant find that they are able to drink raw milk and feel great. That is due to the good bacteria that is still alive in raw milk but killed off in pasteurized milk.

Those who chose to buy raw milk and raw milk products have done their research and know the rare and uncommon risks associated with consuming it. They know that they will have to bear the full responsibility of getting sick if that should ever happen. So allowing the sale of these products will not become a public health risk. For centuries, Americans and North Dakotans grew up drinking raw milk right from the barn and eating the homemade cheese and butter that mom made from that milk. It is time we allow our citizens the choice to purchase these healthy products from trusted farmers who work within the safety guidelines set out by the USDA and ND health dept. The farmers test their milk for dangerous pathogens, they drink the milk themselves and feed it to their kids. So if it is safe enough for the farmers and their families, it is safe enough for the family in the city who wants to drive 20 miles out to visit the farm and purchase the products.

Thanks for your time and consideration. I urge you to pass this bill through the committee.

Lisa Pulkrabek

Mandan, Morton Co., ND