

Testimony HB 1131

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the House Agriculture Committee,

I am writing in support of HB 1131 to allow for the sale of raw milk products direct from farm to consumer.

My name is Amy Gieser and I am a producer of raw milk. I have been selling to the Bismarck/ Mandan area for just over a year now. Initially we began with a single dairy cow for our own family's needs. After a year of enjoying the benefits of raw milk ourselves, we tentatively began selling our extra in January 2024. We were amazed at the interest in raw milk. We soon purchased a second cow to fill the demand. After a successful year of selling our milk to our friends and neighbors in the community, I can attest to the interest of the people of North Dakota in sourcing good quality local foods and precisely in consuming fresh raw milk that still contains all of the natural enzymes, vitamins and minerals. This is a product that cannot be found in any grocery store. There is a large subset of the population who cannot consume and digest pasteurized milk due to the lack of enzymes that have been lost in the pasteurization process. I personally provide milk to several families in our area whose children were not able to tolerate any type of pasteurized milk but who are able to digest and thrive on our raw milk. We naturally take great pride and responsibility in providing this health nourishing food. We have maintained excellent safety standards following all recommended guidelines in sanitizing, cleaning equipment, testing and handling of a raw food product. I am happy to say we have had zero complaints or issues concerning the safety of our milk.

I understand the concern and care that must be taken in providing food to the general public as do most producers of cottage foods. Allowing for the sale of raw milk products will enhance the benefits of the consumer and boost the cottage food industry that is already going strong in our communities. We have been enjoying the butter, yogurt and cheese made from our own milk and would love to begin providing these to our customers who have long sought to buy them. Not everyone has the time to produce their own byproducts from the milk they buy even though some of these are quite simple. It is simply another step of sanitizing equipment to separate cream, make butter, kefir or yogurt. For the benefit of the people of North Dakota, I urge you to give this bill a "Do Pass".

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Amy Gieser

Mandan, Morton Co., ND