

I am writing in support of HB 1515 (with a suggested change.) As a small farmer, I have seen the great need for consumers to get back to knowing their local farmers. Our food supply is currently so distant from our local communities. Our local dairies MUST be allowed to sell their milk in its purest form to their local customers. We have close to 40 Grade A dairies, and numerous smaller Herdshare Dairies across our state.

Last year, my husband and I bought an old farmstead. 30 years ago, this was a thriving dairy operation that fully supported the family who lived there. It was sad to see the old dairy barn deserted and empty. The small and too often now abandoned dairies scattered all around our state were once the life blood of their small communities. We would love to see life breathed back into these small farms. We need to allow dairies be able to provide fresh milk directly to their local neighbors. This could potentially allow more dairy farmers to price their excess fresh milk competitively with a direct to consumer sales model. This would benefit our local farmers.

Raw milk has many health benefits and many people are looking for the option to have that nutrient dense food available to them. Pasteurized Dairy is unfortunately the number one food intolerance. Yet, I have personally talked to MANY people with this dairy intolerance who can drink raw unpasteurized milk with no problems. People want this option.

As a farmer who has a small herdshare operation, I have seen the demand for raw milk at an all time high. I am not able to keep up with the number of people in my community who are looking for high quality raw milk for their families. I hear personal testimonies from my members who have seen their family's health improve by adding raw milk into their diets.

We need to allow the farmers and consumers to make the choice that is best for them. By allowing dairies to sell their product on farm, we allow the farmers the option of an alternative revenue source. Farmers are such a vital part of supplying our communities with necessary food sources. Please allow this option. We absolutely need more local food sources and this would be such a great option for our state

I recommend a DO PASS on HB 1515 after changing the wording in line 7. The sale of raw milk should not just be limited to Grade A dairies. Of course a Grade A dairy should absolutely be able to sell their milk directly off their farm. However, I do not think it should be limited to the Grade A dairies. Looking at our surrounding states, we can see similar laws, which allow for the sale of raw milk on farm. (South Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska for example without the Grade A permit requirement.)

Recommended Changes to HB 1515:

**Sale of raw milk directly to a consumer - Sale to retailer prohibited.**

7 A dairy farm, ~~producing and selling grade A raw milk under a grade A permit,~~ may sell raw  
8 milk directly to a consumer for personal consumption. A sale under this section must occur at  
9 the location of the dairy farm. A dairy farm may not sell raw milk to a wholesaler or retail store  
10 for mass consumption under this chapter. The commissioner may adopt rules imposing other  
11 standards in the interest of public safety, wholesomeness of product, consumer interest,  
12 sanitation, adequate supply, saleability, and labeling and promotion of raw milk for personal  
13 consumption.

Grace Deal  
Berthold, ND  
District 38.