



Friends of Family Farmers ♦ PO Box 751 ♦ Junction City, OR 97448

503-581-7124 ♦ www.FriendsofFamilyFarmers.org

Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens, and members of the committee,

Oregon's dairy regulations and raw milk standards are out of date. House Bill 2616 helps solve a number of problems and ambiguities in our existing law. HB 2616 will:

(1) Allow small, licensed-exempt dairies to sell their products off-site. A simple fix that allows more flexibility for small farmers to go to their consumers, instead of requiring that the consumers come to them.

(2) Expand retail sale of raw milk to include cows. Right now, in Oregon, current law allows for the retail sale of raw goats or raw sheep's milk. To repeat: consumers in Oregon can legally purchase raw goat's milk and raw sheep's milk from retail stores, but they cannot purchase raw cow's milk.

(3) Enhance the regulations for all raw milk producers. Oregon's raw milk safety and testing standards are not aligned with what other states are doing, and with what the research says is safe and effective. HB 2616 increases the testing, risk management and training standards for all licensed producers who wish to engage in raw milk sales.

The last component of this bill is especially important and something I would like to further address, for the record. In opposition to this bill, your committee has heard testimony citing the dangers of raw milk. It is critical to clarify the distinction **between raw milk intended for human consumption and raw milk intended for pasteurization**. These products do not undergo the same processing standards and therefore, the data about these products cannot be cited interchangeably. The citation of dangerous bacteria found in raw milk intended for pasteurization provides misleading, inaccurate information that does not apply to raw milk intended to be consumed raw. For an example of test results for coliform bacteria counts in raw milk produced under the standards proposed in this bill, you can visit this page on Cast Iron Farm's website, where they publicly post their safety information: <http://castironfarm.com/test-results/>.

It is true that milk intended to undergo a heat-treated pasteurization process is not always considered safe to drink raw, due to the unsanitary conditions under which it was originally processed. Bacteria is often present in pre-pasteurized milk, as commercial producers know that any potentially harmful bacteria will later be killed through pasteurization.

If milk is intended to be consumed raw, there are strict sanitation processes and testing standards available to modern-day producers that ensure their milk is free from harmful bacteria and safe to drink raw. HB 2616 makes this critical distinction and puts these safety protocols in place for any licensed dairy intending to sell *unpasteurized fluid milk for human consumption*, whether it's from cows, sheep or goats.

HB 2616 would require clear guidelines for producers whose milk is intended to be consumed raw. These nationally-recognized safety standards have been [submitted as written testimony](#) for the committee to review. It's time that we include cows in Oregon's retail raw milk market and it's time that we bring goats and sheep up to these standards, as well.

Friends of Family Farmers support these important, incremental upgrades to Oregon's dairy regulations and we ask for your support of HB 2616.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alice Morrison".

Alice Morrison
Co-Director
Friends of Family Farmers