

BARNYARD WEED



WARRIORS

Mary Powell

584 Road 29A
785-531-0331

Longton KS 67352
barnyardweedwarriors@yahoo.com

To the State of Kansas Senate Agriculture & Natural Resource Committee

RE: SB 300 Ban of on-farm Raw Milk Sales

I have a Bachelor's of Science Degree with emphasis in Livestock Production Management from Kansas State University and I have over 30 years experience in the beef, dairy, meat goat and game birds industries. I am also a consumer of raw milk and raw milk products. So, not only am I a consumer, I am also reasonably well educated in the dairy industry and my friends in the dairy industry keep me updated on the news, research and issues concerning the industry.

For years, dairy farmers in Kansas and the rest of the country have suffered at the hands of processors who manipulate the milk market prices of raw milk. I have watched as generational family dairies are forced out of business because the milk prices they received would not cover the cost of production. This not only kills small dairies, but it is the reason the number of suicides in agriculture is on the rise. Some dairies, instead of selling out, turn to selling raw milk and raw milk products, where the price for their milk more than covers the cost of production. In fact, those farms who do turn to raw milk sales are more often than not, able to save the family farm and become more diversified with value-added farm products. A ban of on-farm raw milk and raw milk products legislation would have the greatest impact on the small producer, whose bottom line is much smaller than the large and corporate farms that use the economy of scale to pull profits. This legislation is therefore anti-small farm legislation, plain and simple.

The milk goat industry in Kansas is a fledgling industry and this ban would deliberately kill this industry. So much for those small producers who provide milk for those who cannot drink cow's milk. With any ban on things, a black market will develop. We look only to the prohibition of alcohol to see just how far things could go in the wrong direction and we don't want to go there.

This proposed ban is a violation of every American's God-Given Rights to Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness. It is a violation of a Producer's Right to produce that is sought out by the consumer. The sale of on-farm raw milk hurts no other individuals. The Consumer's God-Given rights to choose what products they want to consume is infringed upon by this proposal. In some cases, the Consumer cannot choose but must have raw milk instead of processed milk due to health issues, such as lactose intolerance to processed milk. Consumers of raw milk are not uneducated individuals. They do their research on raw milk and understand the benefits of consuming raw milk as well as the risks. Should the State take that Consumer's Rights to choose away? I think not.

For centuries, humans have consumed raw milk and raw milk products. When modern technologies were introduced, many chose the processed milk over raw milk but many still chose to drink raw milk. I do not believe the State should dictate to the consumer what kind of milk they should consume. Nor do I believe that companies should push legislation to ban a product in favor of their own.