

STATE OF MAINE

 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND NINETEEN

 H.P. 694 - L.D. 939

An Act Regarding the Regulation of Rabbit Production for Local Consumption

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §2511, sub-§40-A is enacted to read:

40-A. Rabbit producer. "Rabbit producer" means a person that raises rabbits offered for sale.

Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §2512, sub-§1, ¶A, as amended by PL 2009, c. 354, §2, is further amended to read:

A. Require ante mortem and post mortem inspections, quarantine, segregation and reinspections with respect to the slaughter of livestock and poultry and the preparation of livestock products and poultry products at all establishments in this State, except those exempted under section 2517-C or 2517-E or exempted by the commissioner under subsection 2, paragraph K, at which livestock or poultry are slaughtered or livestock products or poultry products are prepared for human food solely for distribution in intrastate commerce;

Sec. 3. 22 MRSA §2514-A, sub-§1, ¶C, as amended by PL 2015, c. 329, Pt. A, §8, is further amended to read:

C. Poultry producer who that processes fewer than 1,000 birds annually under section 2517-C; or

Sec. 4. 22 MRSA §2514-A, sub-§1, ¶C-1 is enacted to read:

C-1. Rabbit producer that processes fewer than 1,000 rabbits annually under section 2517-E; or

Sec. 5. 22 MRSA §2517-E is enacted to read:

§2517-E. Slaughter and inspection; producer exemption for rabbits

1. Exemption for processing fewer than 1,000 rabbits annually. Notwithstanding section 2512 and whether or not the rabbits are intended for human consumption, inspection is not required for the slaughter of rabbits or the preparation of rabbit products as long as the rabbits are slaughtered by the rabbit producer and the rabbit products are prepared on the farm where the rabbits were raised and:

- A. Fewer than 1,000 rabbits are slaughtered annually on the farm;
- B. No rabbits are offered for sale or transportation in interstate commerce;
- C. Any rabbit products sold are sold only as whole rabbit carcasses;
- D. The rabbit producer is registered under section 2514-A;
- E. The rabbit producer assigns a lot number to all rabbit products sold and maintains a record of assigned lot numbers and the point of sale;
- F. The rabbit products are sold in accordance with the restrictions in subsection 2; and
- G. The rabbit products are labeled with:
 - (1) The name of the farm, the name of the rabbit producer and the address of the farm including the zip code;
 - (2) The registration number issued to the rabbit producer in accordance with section 2514-A and the lot number for the rabbit products pursuant to paragraph E;
 - (3) The statement "Exempt under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 2517-E NOT INSPECTED." The statement must be prominently displayed with such conspicuousness that it is likely to be read and understood; and
 - (4) Safe handling and cooking instructions as follows: "SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS: Keep refrigerated or frozen. Thaw in refrigerator or microwave. Keep raw rabbit meat separate from other foods. Wash working surfaces, including cutting boards, utensils and hands, after touching raw rabbit meat. Cook thoroughly to an internal temperature of at least 160 degrees Fahrenheit maintained for at least 15 seconds. Keep hot foods hot. Refrigerate leftovers immediately or discard."

2. Restrictions on point of sale. Rabbit products sold under this section may be sold only by the rabbit producer and in the following locations or manner:

- A. At the farm on which the rabbits were raised;
- B. At a farmers' market as defined in Title 7, section 415, subsection 1, paragraph A;
- C. Delivered to a consumer's home by the rabbit producer whose name and registration number appear on the label under subsection 1, paragraph G;
- D. Received by an individual who is a member of a community supported agriculture farm that has a direct marketing relationship with the rabbit producer. For the purposes of this paragraph, "community supported agriculture" means an

arrangement whereby individual consumers have agreements with a farmer to be provided with food or other agricultural products produced on that farm;

E. To a locally owned grocery store; or

F. To a locally owned restaurant.

3. Rules. The commissioner shall adopt rules to establish requirements for the physical facilities and sanitary processes used by rabbit producers whose rabbit products are exempt from inspection under this section. Rules adopted under this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

4. Enforcement. The commissioner shall enforce the provisions of this section.

5. Violation; penalties. A person that violates this section is subject to penalties under section 2524.

Sec. 6. 22 MRSA §2518, sub-§1, as repealed and replaced by PL 2015, c. 329, Pt. A, §11, is amended to read:

1. Review by inspector. The commissioner may require establishments that are required to be licensed under section 2514 or registered under section 2514-A but are exempt from inspection under section 2512, subsection 2, paragraph K to be periodically reviewed by inspectors to ensure that the provisions of this chapter and the rules adopted under this chapter are satisfied and that the public health, safety and welfare are protected. The commissioner shall require establishments that are required to be licensed under section 2514 or registered under section 2514-A but are exempt from inspection under section 2517-C or 2517-E to be reviewed annually by inspectors to ensure that the provisions of this chapter and the rules adopted under this chapter are satisfied and that the public health, safety and welfare are protected.