

APPROVED  
OCTOBER 31, 2017  
BY GOVERNOR

CHAPTER  
314  
PUBLIC LAW

STATE OF MAINE

—  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND AND SEVENTEEN

—  
S.P. 605 - L.D. 1648

**An Act To Amend the Law Recognizing Local Control Regarding Food  
Systems and Require Compliance with Federal and State Food Safety  
Regulations**

**Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** in the First Regular Session of the 128th Legislature, the Legislature enacted "An Act To Recognize Local Control Regarding Food Systems," which the Governor, on June 16, 2017, signed and which became Public Law 2017, chapter 215, effective November 1, 2017; and

**Whereas,** under provisions of the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Federal Poultry Products Inspection Act, the United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service has questioned the State's authority under Public Law 2017, chapter 215 to enforce the requirements of the State's meat and poultry products inspection and licensing program set forth in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, chapter 562-A in a manner that is at least equal to the standards imposed and enforced under the federal acts; and

**Whereas,** the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States has notified the Governor that, on or after November 1, 2017, Maine will become a so-called designated state for federal inspection of all the State's licensed or registered slaughtering and processing establishments, which would threaten the meat and poultry processing infrastructure of our State and potentially cause grave harm to the State's rural economies; and

**Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. 7 MRSA c. 8-F is enacted to read:

**CHAPTER 8-F**

**MAINE FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ACT**

**§281. Short title**

This chapter may be known and cited as "the Maine Food Sovereignty Act."

**§282. Definitions**

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

**1. Direct producer-to-consumer transaction.** "Direct producer-to-consumer transaction" means a face-to-face transaction involving food or food products at the site of production of those food or food products.

**2. Food or food products.** "Food or food products" means food or food products intended for human consumption, including, but not limited to, milk or milk products, meat or meat products, poultry or poultry products, fish or fish products, seafood or seafood products, cider or juice, acidified foods or canned fruits or vegetables.

**3. State food law.** "State food law" means any provision of this Title or Title 22 that regulates direct producer-to-consumer transactions.

**§283. Statement of policy; local control and rural economic development**

It is the policy of this State to encourage food self-sufficiency for its citizens. The department shall support policies that:

**1. Local control.** Through local control, preserve the ability of communities to produce, process, sell, purchase and consume locally produced foods;

**2. Small-scale farming and food production.** Ensure the preservation of family farms and traditional foodways through small-scale farming and food production;

**3. Improved health and well-being.** Improve the health and well-being of citizens of this State by reducing hunger and increasing food security through improved access to wholesome, nutritious foods by supporting family farms and encouraging sustainable farming and fishing;

**4. Self-reliance and personal responsibility.** Promote self-reliance and personal responsibility by ensuring the ability of individuals, families and other entities to prepare, process, advertise and sell foods directly to customers intended solely for consumption by the customers or their families; and

**5. Rural economic development.** Enhance rural economic development and the environmental and social wealth of rural communities.

#### **§284. Home rule authority**

Pursuant to the home rule authority granted to municipalities by Title 30-A, section 3001 and by the Constitution of Maine, Article VIII, Part Second, and notwithstanding any provision of state food law to the contrary, except as contained in section 285, a municipality may adopt ordinances regarding direct producer-to-consumer transactions and the State shall recognize such ordinances by not enforcing those state food laws with respect to those direct producer-to-consumer transactions that are governed by the ordinance.

#### **§285. Departmental authority; livestock and poultry**

Notwithstanding any provision in this chapter to the contrary, the department shall implement and enforce all provisions of Title 22, chapter 562-A and the rules adopted thereunder that are necessary to ensure that the requirements of the State's meat and poultry products inspection and licensing program are at least equal to the applicable requirements specified under applicable federal acts, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture or other federal agencies, without exception.

#### **§286. Compliance with food safety regulations**

An individual who grows, produces, processes or prepares food or food products for purposes other than direct producer-to-consumer transactions in a municipality that adopts or amends an ordinance pursuant to section 284 shall grow, produce, process or prepare the food or food products in compliance with all applicable state and federal food safety laws, rules and regulations.

**Sec. 2. 7-A MRSA §101, sub-§2-A**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 405, Pt. A, §7, is repealed.

**Sec. 3. 7-A MRSA §101, sub-§2-B**, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 215, §1, is repealed.

**Sec. 4. 7-A MRSA §201-A**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 405, Pt. A, §8, is repealed.

**Sec. 5. 7-A MRSA §201-B**, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 215, §2, is repealed.

**Sec. 6. Authority to report a bill.** The Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry may report out a bill relating to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 7, chapter 8-F to the Second Regular Session of the 128th Legislature.

**Sec. 7. Effective date.** Those sections of this Act that repeal the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 7-A, section 101, subsection 2-B and Title 7-A, section 201-B take effect November 1, 2017.

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved, except as otherwise indicated.