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Farmers, such as myself in Aroostook County, need the ability to sell individual meat cuts at retail price. Currently, I have to drive round trip 6 hours to drop off an animal at the closest State inspected facility, wait two weeks and drive another 6 hour round trip to pick the meat up. This added expense makes it impossible to sell the product at a competitive price. County farmers cannot wait until a “grant is given” to make one establishment in Aroostook County State inspected, a promise that the State has been telling us for years and never delivered. The Dept. of Agriculture will tell you that it's for “safety,” that meat cannot be sold individually when processed in a “custom slaughter facility.” What the State may not tell you is that you can legally give the meat away for free, you just can't sell it. So I ask, how is it safe when I give the meat away but not safe when I sell it? How does the safety change when the price tag gets put on? Hunters for the Hungry, a program run by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry will accept wild game and even “road kill” and the MDACF will pay these same “custom slaughterhouse facilities ” to process the meat for them and distribute the donations to food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters affiliated with The Emergency Food Assistance Program. In doing this, Hunters for the Hungry donated moose that was roadkill to feed hundreds of individuals without being “State Inspected.” So I ask you if the “custom slaughterhouses” are not safe to process a farmers cow and sell individual steaks to his neighbors, how are they safe enough for the MDACF to pay to process roadkill and give to hundreds of people? Is it because the people who receive food from food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters affiliated with The Emergency Food Assistance Program are poor and the State doesn't care if their food is safe? Or is it that “custom slaughterhouses” are safe and simply pose a threat to special interest groups who pay lobbyist to cry “public safety” in hopes to keep people out of the retail meat market?