

John O'Meara
New Sweden

Dear Committee Members:

I am a livestock farmer from New Sweden. For over thirty years I have dedicated my life to humane and environmentally sustainable agriculture. As I'm sure you know, farming can be a hard way to earn a living. Margins are slim and farmers are sometimes at the mercy of irresistible natural forces. However, it is a good way to live and raise children. The benefits of having a vibrant agricultural sector in the great state of Maine are too long to list. Farming is at the core of our culture and contributes significantly to our economy.

For a livestock farmer in Aroostook right now, the biggest obstacle to success is the lack of state inspected slaughterhouses. I currently drive over three hours each way to access a state inspected slaughterhouse. Including the trip I make to collect the meat, that's over twelve hours of driving for each small trailer-load of animals. Given that labor and time are always in short supply on any family-sized farm, the current situation is a hardship.

I encourage you to do whatever you can to facilitate state inspected slaughterhouses in Aroostook County.

Thank you for your service to our state and for acting as stewards to Maine's future.

Best Regards,
John F. O'Meara Sr.
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