

Approved: 4-3-08
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Taddiken at 8:30 a.m. on February 27, 2008 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:
Steve Morris- excused

Committee staff present:
Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Emalene Correll, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jason Thompson, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Matt Todd, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Judy Seitz, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:
Donn Teske, President, Kansas Farmers Union
Diana Endicott, Good Natured Family Farm Alliance
Mary Prewitt, State Director, Humane Society of the U.S.
David Lawrence, Kansas City Food Circle
Devrin Forte, Manager, Topeka Natural Food Co-op
Mary Fund, Kansas Rural Center
Elisabeth Suter
Nancy O'Connor, Director of Education and Outreach, Community Mercantile
Robert Shatto, Dairy Farmer
Craig Volland, Kansas Chapter Sierra Club
Lynn Van Buren, President of Board, Topeka Natural Food Co-op
John Donley, Assistant General Counsel, Kansas Livestock Association (KLA)

Others attending:
See attached list.

Chairman Taddiken noted the Committee had received copies of a memo from Dr. Fred Cholick, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director, K-State Research and Extension, stating K-State's response to the Committee's question regarding the relationship between K-State Research and Extension and the Land Institute in Salina ([Attachment 1](#)).

The hearing continued on **SB 595–Agricultural products; labeling requirements**. The proponents for **SB 595** spoke yesterday.

Donn Teske, President, Kansas Farmers Union, spoke in opposition to **SB 595** ([Attachment 2](#)). He said the Farmers Union believes the bill is arrogant, morally wrong and the facts do not follow the proposed need for this law.

Diana Endicott, Rainbow Organic Farms/Good Natured Family Farm Alliance, testified in opposition to **SB 595** ([Attachment 3](#)). She said there is considerable consumer demand for milk from cows not treated with rBGH and rBST and asks the state not ban the truthful labeling of milk products.

Mary Prewitt, State Director, Humane Society of the United States, offered testimony opposing **SB 595** ([Attachment 4](#)). She said this bill reaches far beyond hormone-free labels. She also said that such an overly broad prohibition infringes upon the free rights of producers who want to inform the public about their agricultural practices.

David Lawrence, read testimony from Lee Quaintance, Soaring Eagle Farm, in opposition to **SB 595** ([Attachment 5](#)). Mr. Quaintance's testimony stated that consumers have a right to know what's in their food and how it's produced and as a farmer he has the right and duty to tell them.

Devrin Forte, Manager, Topeka Natural Food Co-op, spoke in opposition to **SB 595** ([Attachment 6](#)). He said his customers want to know how and where their food is produced. He feels that he is doing a real service to customers by providing foods that are either organic or at least raised locally or without pesticides.

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Mary Fund, Kansas Rural Center,(KRC), offered testimony in opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 7). Many of the concerns expressed by other conferees was also expressed by Ms. Fund. She also said that the KRC is concerned about the bill's impact on other terms used by small to modest sized farm operations as they develop local or regional markets for vegetables and fruit and small poultry, pork and beef operations.

Mary Fund also spoke for Edward Reznicek, General Manager, Kansas Organic Producers, and expressed opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 8). Mr. Reznicek's testimony said the Kansas Organic Producers are interested in having an open, informed, and diverse market place which overrides any concern they may have about competing for market share.

Elisabeth Suter presented testimony in opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 9). She said this bill violates her rights and standards as a citizen and consumer; and harms her ability to feed and take care of her family and friends for the best of their health.

Nancy O'Connor, Director of Education and Outreach for Community Mercantile Co-op, Lawrence, testified in opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 10). She said this bill is very clearly about consumers right to know what is in the foods they choose to purchase. She also said this bill seeks to limit information that consumers have a right to know.

Robert Shatto, Dairy Farmer, spoke in opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 11). He said he would like any legislation that is considered to state that all new packaging would need to be in compliance with any new law that is passed and any existing packaging would be grandfathered.

Norm Oeding, Spring Creek Ranch and Little Red Hen Bakery, appeared in opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 12). He said that every consumer has a right to know what is in or absent from their food.

Craig Volland, Sierra Club, spoke against **SB 595** (Attachment 13). He said this bill threatens the livelihood of small farmer's in Kansas who sell their products directly to consumers who have every right to know how their food is produced.

Lynn Van Buren, President of the Board, Topeka Natural Food Co-op, testified in opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 14). He said it is important to their customers to know how the farmers raise the food they sell.

John Donley, Assistant General Counsel, Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), spoke in opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 15). He said the language is too broad and could affect the source-verified and natural beef programs which use affidavits to prove the manner by which those cattle were raised.

Constantine Cotsoradis, Deputy Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA), presented written testimony in opposition to **SB 595** (Attachment 16). Mr. Cotsoradis also handed copies of a memo from George Blush, KDA, which clarifies the terms used regarding hormones discussed used in testimony presented on **SB 595** (Attachment 17).

Mr. Blush answered questions from the Committee.

Written testimony in opposition to **SB 595** was submitted by;

Marjorie Van Buren (Attachment 18)

Jerry Slominski, International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) (Attachment 19)

John Bays, President, Dillons and Brendon Cull, Director, Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs, The Kroger Company, (Attachment 20)

Janey Coble (Attachment 21)

Conferees stood for questions

The meeting was adjourned.

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