

I. Food Safety and Food Labeling

Moderator: Leah Wilkinson, AFIA

- a. Food Sovereignty, *Representative Maggie O'Neil, Maine*
- b. Truth in Labeling, Milk, *Marge Kilkelly*
- c. Truth in Labeling, Beef, *Representative Jay Houghton, Missouri*
- d. Truth in Labeling, Beef and Rice, *Senator Francis Thompson, Louisiana*
- e. Impact of FSMA on Growers in My District, *Representative Lynn DeCoite, Hawaii*

Truth in Labeling, Milk

Maggie O'Neil – Representative - Maine

Traditional, small-scale, diversified farming with traditional exchanges that are locally organized and unregulated is common in Maine. Grassroots movements developed a shared facility that federal rule did not allow, and raw milk was banned; this is what really motivated the community. These issues resulted in self-governing ordinances being passed in communities, and Maine passing a Food Sovereignty Bill during the last legislature. The legislation gives communities the option to opt in and adopt their own policy. Milk, fish, juice, can fruit and vegetables are included in what can be sold; otherwise state law applies. It creates pathways for extra income. There have been no reports of food related illnesses related to the Food Sovereignty Law. Check out <http://localfoodrules.org/>, and if you want to read sample ordinances contact Maggie.

Truth in Labeling, Beef and Rice

Francis Thompson, Senator, Louisiana

A Louisiana Senate committee and House passed a package with the purpose of prohibiting misleading and false labeling of food. It included beef, shrimp, swine, rabbit, turtle, rice, etc. The milk commission and dairy industry created a milk bill that will need to be passed federally. Illinois, New York, and California are working against the bill. Having delicious and healthy options like soymilk and cauliflower rice is great; they just shouldn't be able to build on the names of milk and rice.

Truth in Labeling, Beef

Jay Houghton – Representative, Missouri

Missouri House Bill 2607 and Senate Bill 977 which ban calling meat alternatives meat, both passed in the same year they were introduced. Some advertising has gone so far as having pictures of animals on packaging of meat alternative foods. There is concern that there are groups trying to eliminate animal agriculture.

Impact of FSMA on Growers in My District

Lynn DeCoite – Representative – Hawaii

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) has had an impact in Hawaii, where there have been challenges and successes. Barge services are used for the transport of product but the service is not food safety certified. Wildlife fencing can be expensive. There are some that try to label their sweet potatoes organic when they are not certified. There is a long worm from compost issue. On the other hand, funds have been available to provide farmers incentive to

obtain certification then get a partial refund, and small-scale farms have been supported in expansion.

Discussion Points

What has the interaction been between the states and federal government?

- Hawaii sees the federal government send rules and provide education, but the state is left to provide the funding.
- Missouri has more concern with USDA than the federal government.
- Louisiana is pleased with the support from both the FDA and USDA.
- Maine noted the federal government maintains that local governments must comply with federal law in regards to meat and poultry production and sale.

In Louisiana, it is the packagers not the storeowners that can be fined for selling food labelled for example cauliflower rice.

Labelling dairy is not effective in all states, as there are competing agriculture economies, such as almond and regular dairy milk. Businesses have been given a year to prepare before implementation.

The soybean association is in favor of the bill even though they make soy burgers.

Federal government is required to help with multi-state labelling issues.

When there have been issues with ordinances across town lines in Maine, default back to state law.

Raw milk is permissible in Maine.