

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1957

C 137 L 91
Synopsis As Enacted

Brief Description: Requiring licensing of food processing plants.

By House Committee on Agriculture & Rural Development
(originally sponsored by Representatives Rayburn, Nealey, McLean, Chandler, Roland, Franklin and Rasmussen; by request of Department of Agriculture).

House Committee on Agriculture & Rural Development
Senate Committee on Agriculture & Water Resources

Background: The state's Food Processing Act requires establishments which process food for distribution or sale by others to be licensed and regulated by the Department of Agriculture. Establishments in operation prior to June 30, 1967 were "grandfathered" into the licensing program with minimum qualifications. A person's first violation of the act is a misdemeanor; each subsequent violation within a period of five years is a gross misdemeanor.

Summary:

Civil Penalties: The director of the Department of Agriculture is empowered to impose civil penalties for violations of the state's Food Processing Act. The maximum civil penalty is \$1,000 per violation per day. A civil penalty may be imposed for a violation only if criminal penalties have not been imposed for the violation under the act.

Facilities Which Must Be Licensed: The types of facilities which must be licensed for operation under the state's Food Processing Act are broadened to include a facility which processes food for retail sale but is not regulated under a permit, license, or inspection of a local health authority. Ice is expressly added as a food the processing of which is regulated under the act.

Limitations: If a person desires to process a type of food product other than the type specified in the application supporting a person's current license, the person may have to amend the license accordingly before processing this new type of food product. The amendment is necessary if processing that type of food product would require a major

addition to or modification of the licensee's facilities or would have a high potential for harm. No person may resell in intrastate commerce any food processed in an unlicensed processing plant once the person has been notified by the director that the plant is unlicensed.

Suspensions: If the director finds that an establishment is operating under conditions which constitute an immediate danger to public health, the director may summarily suspend the establishment's license and its food processing operations must immediately cease. This suspension authority also applies if the licensee or an employee of the licensee, during an on-site inspection, actively prevents the director or the director's representative from determining whether a dangerous condition exists. An opportunity for a prompt hearing must be provided to the licensee.

Other: Employees of the department are empowered to take verified statements in enforcing the act. A schedule of dates for renewing food processing licenses is to be provided by rule. Provisions of the act are repealed which "grandfathered" into the licensing program food processing plants which were in operation prior to June 30, 1967.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	96	0	
Senate	38	0	(Senate amended)
House	93	0	(House concurred)

Effective: July 28, 1991