

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5379

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FEBRUARY 18, 1993

Brief Description: Making major changes to milk and milk products regulations.

SPONSORS: Senators M. Rasmussen, Barr, Loveland, Hochstatter and Winsley; by request of Department of Agriculture

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5379 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators M. Rasmussen, Chairman; Loveland, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Barr, Bauer, Newhouse, and Snyder.

Staff: John Stuhlmiller (786-7446)

Hearing Dates: February 11, 1993; February 18, 1993

BACKGROUND:

The Washington State Department of Agriculture regulates the production of milk and milk products in the state to protect consumers from unsafe products. Currently, dairies and dairy products are regulated under Chapter 15.32 RCW and fluid milk is regulated under Chapter 15.36 RCW. These chapters are very similar in construction and each has a number of measures which are outdated or which have been superseded by federal law.

SUMMARY:

Chapters 15.32 RCW and 15.36 RCW are restructured into a single statute with a number of outdated provisions repealed.

Every milk producer, distributor, handler, and operator of a milk plant is required to obtain a Grade A milk license. Those operating a milk plant under a Grade A milk license must be inspected at least every three months.

A milk processing plant license is required of all milk processing plants, and the annual fee is increased from \$10 to \$25. Plants licensed under this provision are not required to obtain a milk vendor's license or a food processing plant license.

The director may suspend or revoke a license for violations of the act. The penalties for employing a sampler, weigher, grader, or pasteurizer that is not licensed by the department are raised from a range of \$25-\$100 to a range of \$250-\$1000.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

Numerous technical changes are made to clarify the bill and to include items unintentionally left out of the bill in the repeal and recodification effort. Also, changes are made to clearly exclude cheese making from the requirements of a grade A permit.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

The measure is needed to update and clarify current law to provide for succinct enforcement and to streamline the hearing and inspection process.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: The summary suspension proceedings outlined in the bill are a harsh penalty and need to be examined carefully.

TESTIFIED: Mike Schwisow, Verne Hedlund, Department of Agriculture (pro); Dan Coyne, Dairy Federation (pro); Tom Emerson, Darigold Farms (pro); Charles Krainick, milk producer (con)