

WORC

Western Organization of Resource Councils

Briefing to U.S. Senators on S. 510 amendments:

Consumers, small farmers and ranchers, and local food producers that have serious concerns over pending food safety legislation, specifically S.510, the Food Safety Modernization Act. We urge you to support amendments to address the serious flaws in this bill.

Food safety is a priority shared by all. The growing trend toward healthy, fresh, **locally sourced** vegetables, fruit, dairy, and value-added products improves food safety by providing the opportunity for consumers to know their farmers and processors, to choose products on the basis of that relationship, and to readily trace any problems should they occur.

The food safety problems in the industrial food system, with its long, multi-sourced food supply chains that extend across thousands of miles and even international borders, can and should be addressed without harming the local food systems that provide an alternative for consumers.

Although the Committee-passed bill included some provisions for flexibility for small and diversified producers, S. 510 still would establish new hazardous analysis and risk-based preventive controls for all facilities and authorize FDA to dictate growing and harvesting practices for produce. These new requirements will impose significant expenses and burdens on individuals and small businesses.

Farmers and processors who sell directly to consumers and end users have a direct relationship with their customers that ensures quality, safety, transparency and accountability. In addition, small-scale food producers are already regulated by local and state authorities, and their impact on consumers is inherently limited by their size. For these farmers and processors, new federal requirements are unnecessary.

We therefore request that you support amendments to exempt small and direct-marketing farms and facilities from the bill's facility requirements and produce standards.

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