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**Tester to introduce ‘common sense’ amendments to food safety bill**  
*Senator works to tailor bill to needs of small producers by cutting regulations and red tape*

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Citing unique issues that face family food producers, Senator Jon Tester will introduce amendments to the upcoming *Food Safety Modernization Act* to exempt small-scale businesses from expensive federal regulations and red tape.

The Senate is expected to debate the *Food Safety Modernization Act* next week. The bill aims to prevent food-borne illnesses by cracking down on food processing plants, requiring better inspection, recordkeeping, and testing.

As written, however, the bill would add a new layer of regulation to even the smallest food producers. The same rules that would apply to large, corporate food companies would also apply to family food producers across Montana and rural America, which are already regulated at the state and local level.

“When you buy some vegetables or a jar of jam from your local farmers’ market, you’re buying the cleanest, freshest, healthiest food available, directly from the producer,” Tester said. “Family farms and ranches have enough hurdles to jump over just trying to make a living. They don’t need expensive, redundant regulation that could put them out of business.”

Tester today announced two amendments he plans to introduce to the *Food Safety Modernization Act*, to make sure the following food producers will only be subject to state and local regulation—not new expensive federal regulations designed for industrial food factories:

- Producers that add value to food through processing and whose adjusted gross income is less than \$500,000 per year;
- Producers who sell their food directly to market (such as farmers’ markets).

Tester today praised the goals of the overall bill, but warned against over-regulation of small, local producers.

“Let’s face it, dangerous food-borne outbreaks don’t start with family agriculture,” Tester said. “Food produced on that scale shouldn’t be subject to the same expensive federal regulations as some big factory that mass produces food for the entire country.”

The text of Tester’s amendments are available [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

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### **What Montanans are saying about Tester's amendments...**

- “The folks we sell to are our neighbors. They know exactly where the food comes from, and over the years, we’ve developed a lot of trust. We all support safer food from big corporate producers, but we applaud Senator Tester for taking the lead to protect small producers so we can remain a vibrant part of our communities.”
  - *Dena Hoff, owner of a small farm from Glendive*
- “The family farmers and ranchers we buy from know their customers on a first-name basis. This well-intentioned bill applies a ‘one-size fits all’ approach to food safety. Thankfully, Senator Tester recognizes the differences between mega-farms and small family farms, and we appreciate his work to make this a better bill.”
  - *Perry McNeese, general manager of the Good Earth Market in Billings*

-30-

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