

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6088

As Passed Senate, January 15, 1996

Title: An act relating to the degrade of dairy farm or milk processing plant licenses.

Brief Description: Degrading certain dairy licenses.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, A. Anderson and Loveland; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development: 1/9/96 [DP].
Passed Senate, 1/15/96, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & AGRICULTURAL TRADE & DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; A. Anderson, Bauer, Morton, Newhouse and Snyder.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The Department of Agriculture inspects each dairy farm at least once every six months and each milk processing plant at least once every three months. Inspections are conducted to determine compliance with the federal Pasteurized Milk Ordinance. The ordinance contains some elements that directly affect the quality of milk and other elements that are minor and do not affect the quality of milk.

Under current state law, if a dairy farm has a repeat major or minor violation, the department is required to immediately degrade the milk. The requirement to immediately degrade the milk does not allow sufficient time for the operator to repair minor violations. Degrading means that the milk cannot be sold as fluid milk or other Grade A milk products. This milk is either sold for a lower price or is dumped. Other states do not require the immediate degrading of milk in this fashion.

Summary of Bill: The requirement that milk produced in facilities that have repeat violations be immediately degraded is deleted.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Requiring the immediate degrading of milk due to a repeat violation of the federal pasteurized milk ordinance means that the milk cannot be sold as Grade A milk. This means that the milk has to be used for making a non-grade A product or, if this option is not available, that the milk has to be dumped. The department needs increased flexibility to determine when a repeat violation is not of a serious enough nature to warrant a degrade so that additional time will be provided to correct the deficiency.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Jim Jesernig, Mary Beth Lang, Department of Agriculture (pro); Mike Schwisow, ORE-WA Dairy Processors (pro); Bill Stauffacher, WA State Dairy Federation (pro).