

**FINAL BILL REPORT**

**SSB 6393**

**C 160 L 92**

**SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED**

**Brief Description:** Instituting fees on dairy handlers and food processors to support WSDA food safety inspection program.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Agriculture & Water Resources (originally sponsored by Senator Bailey; by request of Department of Agriculture)

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & WATER RESOURCES**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**BACKGROUND:**

Currently, the dairy and food inspection program is funded primarily through appropriations from the state general fund. The current fee for obtaining a food processor's license is \$25 per year.

The frequency of inspections is largely dependent upon the amount of funds available to the program. There is concern that the amount of general funds available to the program does not provide a sufficient frequency of inspection to assure that only quality food products are provided to consumers.

**SUMMARY:**

A fee is established for dairy processors of up to one half cent per hundredweight to be set by rule by the Department of Agriculture. This provision takes effect on July 1, 1992 and terminates on June 30, 1994.

A dairy inspection program advisory committee composed of four producers, four handlers and a producer-handler is created. The committee is to provide the Director of Agriculture with recommendations that are consistent with the pasteurized milk ordinance. The committee is to review and evaluate various aspects of the program, including the efficiency of administration, the adequacy of inspection staff, and the ratio of inspectors to management employees. The committee is also to consider alternatives to the state program such as privatization of various elements of the inspection program. The committee recommendations are to be reported to the

agriculture committees of the House and Senate by December 1, 1992.

The license fee for food processing plants is increased. The fee schedule is based on the gross annual sales for the preceding year. The fees range from a minimum of \$50 for smaller processors to \$750 for large processors.

Monies collected from dairy fees and food processing fees are deposited into the agricultural local fund.

**VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:**

Senate	43	3	
House	60	38	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House			(House refused to recede)
Senate	44	1	(Senate concurred)

**EFFECTIVE:** June 11, 1992