

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5350

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to special permits for poultry slaughter, preparation, and sale.

Brief Description: Changing special permit provisions for poultry slaughter, preparation, and care.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Ranker and Hatfield).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 3/13/09, 3/20/09 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Expands the coverage provided under a special permit issued by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) to slaughter, prepare, and sell 1,000 or fewer chickens in a calendar year directly to the ultimate consumer at the producer's farm to include all poultry.
- Provides that a special permit will expire on December 31 of the year it was issued.
- Directs the WSDA to adopt requirements for special permits based on the Department of Health's temporary food service establishment requirements, but tailor them specifically to the slaughter, preparation, and sale of poultry.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Jacks, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Smith, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Grant-Herriot, Kretz, Liias, McCoy, Nelson, Ormsby, Pearson and Warnick.

Staff: Anna Jackson (786-7190)

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Special Temporary Permits for Slaughtering Pastured Chickens.

Currently, an agricultural producer of pastured chickens (Producer) is required to obtain a special, temporary permit (Special Permit) from the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) to slaughter and prepare 1,000 or fewer chickens in a calendar year in order to sell the whole, raw chickens directly to the ultimate consumer at the Producer's farm. The Producer is exempt from other licensing requirements if he or she has a Special Permit.

As directed by law, the WSDA developed requirements for Special Permits for slaughtering pastured chickens generally patterned after the Department of Health's (DOH) temporary food service establishment requirements. These requirements concern a number of activities related to slaughtering pastured chickens, such as when a Special Permit is necessary and how to obtain one, as well as applicable cooling procedures, sanitary facilities, equipment, hygienic practices, waste, and wastewater disposal. Special Permits cost \$75 and are valid for the calendar year in which the permit was issued. The WSDA has the authority to conduct inspections as are reasonably necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Special Permit.

Chicken vs. Poultry.

In the context of the requirements for a Special Permit for slaughtering pastured chickens, "chicken" means the species *Gallus domesticus*. "Poultry," on the other hand, is not defined in statute but is defined in the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary as domesticated birds kept for eggs or meat.

Summary of Bill:

The coverage provided under a Special Permit to slaughter, prepare, and sell 1,000 or fewer chickens in a calendar year directly to the ultimate consumer at the Producer's farm is expanded to include all poultry.

The WSDA is required to develop requirements for the Special Permit, which must be generally patterned after the DOH's temporary food service establishment requirements but specifically tailored to the slaughter, preparation, and sale of poultry. A Special Permit expires on December 31 of the year it is issued.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Producers of ducks and turkeys are not currently eligible for a Special Permit because it is limited to chickens. Many Producers would like to expand their operations to include other poultry, like ducks and turkeys. Special Permits are more convenient and significantly less costly than standard poultry slaughter permits. By expanding the coverage provided under a Special Permit to include other poultry, this bill will help more people enter the agricultural industry at a minimum cost, help local Producers market their poultry to the public, and provide more flexibility to small Producers.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Laura Faley, Hidden Meadow Ranch; Jake Fowler, Northwest Agriculture Business Center; Melissa Barker, Homegrown Pastures; Kirsten Workman, Washington State University Extension; and Mary Beth Lang and Claudia Coles, Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.