



SHIMP FOR PRESIDENT 2028

DRAFT FEDERAL LEGISLATION

AMERICAN FAMILY FARM AND LOCAL MEAT FREEDOM ACT OF 2029

A Bill to Expand Local Meat Processing, Strengthen Family Farms,
Increase Competition, and Reduce Consumer Food Costs

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Campaign legislative proposal. This draft creates a federal pathway for qualifying small and local processors to serve local markets while maintaining enforceable sanitation, humane-handling, traceability, labeling, and food-safety requirements.

A BILL

AMERICAN FAMILY FARM AND LOCAL MEAT FREEDOM ACT OF 2029

To expand lawful market access for American family farmers and ranchers, strengthen independent meat processors, increase competition in local meat markets, improve consumer access to American-raised meat, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “American Family Farm and Local Meat Freedom Act of 2029.”

SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are to—

- (1) expand practical slaughter and processing options for small and independent American livestock producers;
- (2) permit qualifying locally processed meat to reach consumers, restaurants, retailers, schools, institutions, and other local purchasers under a clear food-safety framework;
- (3) strengthen independent processors and reduce barriers to entry and expansion;
- (4) increase competition and consumer choice in meat markets;
- (5) promote transparent identification of meat that is born, raised, slaughtered, and processed in the United States; and
- (6) reduce unnecessary supply-chain costs while preserving public-health protections.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

- (1) “Qualifying local processor” means a State-inspected or federally recognized small or very small slaughter or processing establishment, or another establishment approved under the program established by section 4, that satisfies the food-safety requirements of this Act.
- (2) “Local market” means lawful sales occurring within the State in which processing occurs, including direct sales and sales to restaurants, grocery stores, butcher shops, schools, institutions, farmers markets, and other retail or food-service establishments.
- (3) “American-raised livestock” means cattle, swine, sheep, goats, or other covered livestock born and raised in the United States, subject to rules preventing deceptive origin claims.
- (4) “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

SEC. 4. LOCAL MEAT MARKET ACCESS PROGRAM.

- (a) The Secretary shall establish a Local Meat Market Access Program permitting meat processed by a qualifying local processor to be sold within the processor’s State when the establishment complies with this Act and applicable State requirements.
- (b) Eligibility shall not be denied solely because an establishment does not participate in the conventional continuous Federal inspection model if it satisfies an approved alternative inspection and verification system providing equivalent public-health protections.
- (c) Participating States may administer approved inspection programs through agreements with the Department of Agriculture.
- (d) The Secretary shall create a streamlined application process proportionate to the size and risk profile of small and very small establishments.

SEC. 5. FOOD SAFETY AND HUMANE HANDLING.

- (a) Nothing in this Act authorizes the sale of adulterated or misbranded meat.
- (b) Qualifying processors shall maintain sanitation controls, temperature controls, traceability records, appropriate hazard-control procedures, humane-handling practices, and testing or verification reasonably necessary to protect public health.

- (c) The Secretary may suspend participation where an establishment presents an imminent public-health risk, subject to notice and an opportunity for prompt review.
- (d) Regulations under this Act shall be risk-based and shall avoid imposing requirements on small establishments that are unnecessary to achieve the applicable food-safety objective.

SEC. 6. SALES TO LOCAL CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES.

Meat lawfully processed under section 4 may, subject to State law and this Act, be sold within the State to individual consumers and to restaurants, grocery stores, independent butcher shops, farmers markets, schools, hospitals, correctional facilities, food banks, and other institutional or commercial purchasers.

SEC. 7. AMERICAN ORIGIN TRANSPARENCY.

- (a) A voluntary label stating “Born, Raised, Slaughtered, and Processed in the USA” may be used only when each stated production step occurred in the United States.
- (b) The Secretary shall establish auditable recordkeeping standards for such claims and penalties for knowing or repeated deceptive origin labeling.
- (c) Nothing in this section shall prohibit additional truthful geographic or farm-of-origin information.

SEC. 8. SMALL PROCESSOR EXPANSION.

- (a) The Secretary shall establish a competitive grant and loan-guarantee program for independently owned small and very small meat processors for refrigeration, sanitary equipment, wastewater systems, mobile processing units, facility expansion, workforce training, and compliance improvements.
- (b) Priority shall be given to projects that add processing capacity in underserved rural areas, create new market access for independent producers, or demonstrably increase local competition.
- (c) No grant under this section may be awarded to a processor controlled by a dominant national meatpacking enterprise as defined by the Secretary through rulemaking.

SEC. 9. COMPETITION AND PRODUCER PROTECTION.

- (a) The Secretary of Agriculture, in coordination with the Attorney General and the Federal Trade Commission as authorized by law, shall identify anticompetitive barriers affecting independent livestock producers and processors and enforce applicable competition and fair-market laws.
- (b) USDA shall establish a confidential process through which producers and processors may report retaliation, coercive contracting practices, discriminatory market access, or other potentially unlawful conduct.
- (c) Nothing in this section creates a presumption that market size or market share alone constitutes unlawful conduct.

SEC. 10. FEDERAL PROCUREMENT OF AMERICAN MEAT.

To the maximum extent permitted by Federal procurement law and applicable international obligations, executive agencies purchasing meat for domestic Federal food programs shall give preference to competitively priced meat produced from livestock born and raised in the United States and processed in the United States, with reasonable opportunities for small and independent producers and processors to compete.

SEC. 11. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ONE-STOP COMPLIANCE.

USDA shall maintain a one-stop technical-assistance program for small producers and processors seeking inspection approval, grants, financing, labeling approval, facility guidance, or entry into Federal and institutional procurement markets. Technical assistance shall be available without charge.

SEC. 12. PRICE AND COMPETITION REPORTING.

Beginning one year after enactment and annually thereafter for five years, the Secretary shall report to Congress on new local processing capacity, participating establishments, producer market access, regional processing concentration, retail meat-price trends, program food-safety outcomes, grants and loans awarded, and recommended statutory changes.

SEC. 13. RULEMAKING.

Not later than 180 days after enactment, the Secretary shall issue interim final regulations necessary to implement this Act. The Secretary shall consult State agriculture and public-health officials, family farmers and ranchers, independent processors, food-safety experts, retailers, restaurants, and consumers.

SEC. 14. RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW.

Nothing in this Act prevents a State from imposing or enforcing food-safety requirements that are consistent with Federal law. Nothing in this Act requires a State to permit a category of intrastate sale that the State otherwise lawfully prohibits.

SEC. 15. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act, with priority given to inspection capacity, technical assistance, and expansion of independently owned processing capacity.

SEC. 16. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, or its application to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the remainder of this Act and its application to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

SEC. 17. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided, this Act shall take effect 180 days after enactment. The Secretary may implement grants, technical assistance, rulemaking, and administrative preparation immediately upon enactment.

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