

The "Food Safety" Bill Will End Small Farms

Please Call Your Senators Now to Stop HR2749 or S510, the Senate Version

HR2749, the so called "food safety" bill that has passed the U.S. House and goes now to the Senate, is "an enabling statute." The sole purpose of this bill is to authorize (enable) the USDA and FDA to write certain regulations. The new regulations will effect the growing, processing and distribution of ALL food in this country.

SEC. 107. TRACEABILITY OF FOOD. (3) REGULATION.—“(A) IN GENERAL...the Secretary shall issue regulations establishing a tracing system that enables the Secretary to identify each person who grows, produces, manufactures, processes, packs, transports, holds, or sells such food in as short a timeframe as practicable but no longer than 2 business days.

This puts in place an NAIS type traceability program for all food.

This bill will not increase food safety.

The USDA admits that food safety is most threatened by consolidated production, consolidated processing and long distance transportation. This bill will make all of those problems worse, by creating regulations that only the largest, most consolidated production units will be able to meet.

Most importantly, the regulations for food safety that are already on the books, ARE NOT ENFORCED. Most contamination happens at the processing plant and these are not affected by this bill. The USDA and FDA already have in place everything the need to protect the industrial food chain, but they don't. The only purpose of this entire 160-page bill is to allow the agencies to treat U.S. domestic food as captive for the export market and write regulations using international standards and guidelines. They can require, among other things, that every person who comes on a farm be documented.

This traceability section is followed by "exemptions" for farms and direct sales, but many farms will still be under the recordkeeping rules, yet to be written, which will put them under international standards and guidelines that will include the traceability requirements cited above.

Further, they say the Secretary will take into account the impact on farmers. But if farmers will be exempted, why would the regulations impact them? Obviously, they will not be exempted.

This bill will "amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve the safety of food in the global market, and for other purposes." So first and foremost this bill is about the global marketing of American produced food. It's also supposed to be about "food safety." So their way of killing two birds with one stones is to simply treat food generated in this country as being for a global market.

This is accomplished in a single sentence:

SEC. 109. CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION,“(E) CONSISTENCY WITH INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.—The Secretary shall apply this paragraph consistently with United States obligations under international agreements." [p. 81]

According to the World Trade Organization Sanitary Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) Agreement (a non-Constitutional arrangement signed by a U.S. President, without consent, awareness or approval of Congress), that the regulations must adhere to, the U.S. cannot impose on imports what it does not impose domestically. Imports, in this case, being food produced in a "facility" owned by an American corporation or individual but located in another country. Therefore, it obligates the U.S. to treat all domestic food under the same international standards it imposes on imports. These international obligations will most likely, in the end, supersede any possible exemptions and exceptions listed in the bill for farms or farmers.

PLEASE CALL YOUR SENATORS.

ASK THEM TO STOP THIS BILL OR S510, THE SENATE VERSION

Contact your Senator: www.Senate.gov or (202) 224-3121

For Virginia: Webb: (202) 224-4024 Warner: (202) 224-2023

For more information see www.NICFA.org

Letter from the August 2009 VICFA Meeting

by Anne Buteau

The August, 2009 VICFA meeting, a board meeting, was held at Kathryn Russell's Majesty Farm in North Garden. On a suffocatingly hot day we were grateful for breezy shade in the grassy area where we met and ate. Abundant, delicious fresh summer fare included marinated cucumbers, fresh fruit salads, corn on the cob, fresh tangy cole slaw, roasted cubed, seasoned potatoes, grass-fed meat balls, ice cream (that got very, very soft...) and more.

Old Business

- Report from Kathryn Russell on Farm Food Voices 2009. Very successful with 61 new members, attendance between 700 and 800 people, not 250 as reported in the Daily Progress, they were there early. Final count on costs and intake not in yet. No Treasurer's report.
- Minutes: Lorna Lutz moved to approve last month's minutes, Willard seconded, motion passed.

New Business

- NICFA: Debbie Stockton gave an update on HR2749, generating much discussion over its complexity and interpretation. Kathryn Russell said "why make more regulations when the bureaucrats can't enforce the food safety laws that exist?"
- Meat Processing Bill: Pres. Wayne Bolton talked of getting a bill together for General Assembly 2010 to legalize the right of a farmer to sell meat by the pound if processed in a "custom" slaughterhouse (as opposed to a USDA facility). This would save on transportation and processing costs, as there are many more of these in the state than USDA inspected slaughterhouses.
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) Board Meeting: Lois Smith,

John Coles and Pearce Gardner attended the recent quarterly VDACS board meeting. Lois spoke, mentioning that 1/2 million acres of farmland has been lost to development in the last 5 years, and that local food shopping can stimulate the local economy, amongst other things. Pearce spoke about the fact that he had to travel 10 hours total to get a pig slaughtered and processed at a USDA facility. Pearce also introduced Todd Haymore to WAPF. Maybe he'll encourage a raw milk or a pickle bill soon!

Coming Events (see "Coming Events" this issue).

Other discussion:

- Suggestion made that VICFA obtain an enclosed trailer for storage of VICFA event materials. Discussed and options will be explored. If you can donate one, please contact Kathryn Russell: 434.760.5514.
- Pop-up tent: VICFA needs one for the various events we attend, as cover is not always available. Choices will be reviewed at the next meeting. Donated tent in good condition welcome!
- Thanks to Ty Cooper/Eco laundry for help with FFV publicity material. Also to Jon Hasenfuss for photography at FFV. Also to the maintenance crew at the Monticello High School who went beyond the call of duty!

Debbie moved the meeting be adjourned at 3.50pm, Lorna Lutz seconded, motion passed.

Coming Events

To help with an event, please contact Lois Smith: 804.366.6051

SEPTEMBER 12 Saturday Southern Exposure Seed Exchange Heritage Harvest Festival Monticello. VICFA booth. <http://heritageharvestfestival.com/>

SEPTEMBER 24 – OCTOBER 4 Virginia State Fair, I-95 exit 98 next to Kings Dominion (Doswell) VICFA booth <http://www.statefair.com/>

OCTOBER 10 & 11 Sat/Sun Virginia Wine and Garlic Festival, just north of Amherst on Rt. 29, 10 am - 5 pm VICFA booth <http://www.rebecwinery.com/page10.html>

OCTOBER 24 Saturday Fourth Annual Legislators on the Farm Day. Details in October issue.

NOVEMBER 7 Saturday Book signing, David Gumpert, and Joel Salatin Charlottesville. David's book, "The Raw Milk Revolution," to be published this fall, Chelsea Green.

Farm Food Voices Virginia, 2009

An awesome feast for 800 People, and welcome to 62 new members!

by Deborah Stockton

In the eight years I've been writing this newsletter, awesome is a word I've seldom used, but I use it now: This year's Farm Food Voices was awesome. When you go to an art gallery and look closely at a magnificent painting or sculpture, the closer you look the more you see how carefully the artist has tended to every detail, that the entire work comprises numerous details of masterwork.

So, too, with this feast of love. Exhaustive labors from a few, and the generous contributions of many individuals, businesses, restaurants, caterers, artists, artisans, photographers, farmers, gardeners, chefs, musicians, milk-share owners, moms, dads, kids, made the day a brilliant success. Stone soup never had it so good.

The new setting this year, Monticello High School's bright spacious conference facility, enhanced the event. Its multiple rooms—including a theatre—created separate, but connecting, areas for the silent auction, movie, food tables and later panel discussion, and even an outdoor pavilion where children chalked sidewalks, watched a juggler and enjoyed the food and atmosphere.

This year's theme was on the impact on local economies of local food. The afternoon opened with remarks from U.S. Congressman, District 5, Tom Perriello, who encouraged us not only by his presence, but by his commitment to stay with us and help protect what we cherish. Keynote speaker, writer Richard Morris followed, author of "A Life Unburdened, Getting Over Weight and On With Life." Liz Reitzig, NICFA Secretary, gave a short talk on HR2749, the so called "food safety" bill that recently passed the U.S. House, then State Senator, and gubernatorial candidate, Creigh Deeds spoke about farm viability. Creigh recounted how Christine Solem practically camped in his office as he was getting the Home Kitchen Bill through the General Assembly. Thank you Creigh! (and Christine!). VICFA Treasurer, and Virginia Friends of Farmers founder, Carroll Ann Friedmann talked about Food, Fun, and Festivals, followed by local radio personality Rob Schilling announcing the raffle winners. Pork producer hero and former VICFA President Richard Bean concluded the speakers with a poignant recollection of his challenges in beginning a new life as a farmer in Virginia after he moved from Massachusetts. He reminded us that, hey, it is not easy being a farmer, but with relentless hard work and persistence one can make it work. After the speakers, attendees enjoyed a screening of the movie FRESH!

Before and after the movie folks perused the silent auction, finding treasures, bargains and a mutually

beneficial way to support VICFA. So many silent auction prizes! From Kathryn Russell's homemade baklava—with local walnuts, honey and butter, to beautiful hand made pottery, art works, food baskets, many gift certificates including some for massages, acupuncture treatments, raw honey baskets, personal care baskets, fine handcrafts, and much more. Three sumptuous "get away" packages comprised the raffle prizes, and Bill McCaskill was the fortunate winner of the Grand Prize, a Bed and Breakfast, restaurant and Blackfriar Tickets Staunton weekend.

Then, of course, was the mouth watering, soul satisfying, local economy supporting DELICIOUS food!!!! Tables and tables covered with the most delectable repast you can imagine. Beef, goat, chicken, lamb, an entire roast pig—the centerpiece of the main food table—spit roasted by Chef Eric Johnson, who drove down from Springfield the day before and got up that morning at dawn and to roast the pig with the help of Bill McCaskill. Fresh garden salads of every kind, Richard Bean and Jean Rindaldi's tender cole slaw, fruit and vegetable dishes from local gardens; breads, fresh butter, cheeses, cheeses and more cheeses, with crackers, by themselves, with fruit, fresh milk, juices and tables of beverages, old fashioned ice cream from local cream...and there was food leftover!! 800 people and food leftover! Wow.

During and after dinner enough time allowed for mingling, fellowship, conversation, patronizing the vendor, information and book tables, and blessedly just visiting with folks. What a delightful time.

The dessert reception followed and we all revealed our true nature. There was no actual violence, but the stampede to the dessert table and subsequent rapid disappearance of the delicacies was instructive....

The evening concluded with a panel discussion focusing on HR2749.

Folks, the reality is that if that bill, or one like it, passes the Senate, Farm Food Voices will become a memory, not an event to look forward to every year. There will be no small farms to supply restaurants because the regulations—like having to document every person who comes on your farm, in all likelihood, since they will follow international guidelines and standards for export foods—will put all but the largest concentrated operations out of business.

Please, please, please call your Senator and tell them NOT to vote for this bill.

Let us protect what we love with everything we have.

Contact your Senator:

www.Senate.gov or (202) 224-3121

From Home and Farm Directly to You!

Thank You

to Kathryn Russell and the entire Russell family, who labored relentlessly to make Farm Food Voices such a superb event. The entire family of Kathryn and Wayne, children Holly, Lynn, Emily, Laura, Charlottes, Beth, Hannah and Caleb, 4 grandchildren, and maternal and paternal grandparents, participated and attended.

Special thanks to Laura Russell and Lois Smith, who, with Kathryn, were the engine that made this work so beautifully.

We thank Rowena Morrell, Editor of In the Kitchen Magazine, for running a Farm Food Voices ad in three issues, gratis.

Thank you also to our Gold Sponsors:

In the Kitchen Magazine (Virginia)
 Flavor Magazine (Virginia)
 C & O Restaurant (Charlottesville)
 Awesome Party Supplies and Event Rentals (Farmville)

On behalf of all of VICFA, we salute you and express our very deep gratitude.

Doreen Hannes Addresses the NIAA

by Deborah Stockton

The National Institute of Animal Agriculture, a co-creator of the NAIS, held its annual conference in Kansas City on August 26. Conference leaders had asked Nancy Rasmussen, a small diversified livestock producer, to speak on the small producer point of view about “Opportunities for Enhancing Animal Identification.” But her lack of familiarity with NAIS and a family situation caused her to seek a replacement. In an amazing grace series of events, she was guided to Doreen Hannes and asked her to step in. For those unaware, Doreen Hannes is a leading activist in the fight against NAIS. She probably knows more about NAIS and traceability—including HR2749 and the other “food safety bills”—than anyone out there.

Because she was well known to conference organizers, Doreen did not advertise the substitution, but showed up shortly before she was to speak. The organizers had mild heart attacks and conferred in consternation, then at 1:25, five minutes before she was to speak, they said, well, you can speak, but you can’t talk about NAIS. Doreen, who is honorable and quick on her feet, said okay, proceeding with her prepared talk, careful to not call anything NAIS. The NAIS pushers no longer use the term “NAIS” because they know NAIS won’t fly, so now they use “animal identification” and “traceability,” but it is still the same program.

She did speak on animal identification and traceability, and also about sustainability—what it means to us; about what a large force small producers are in this country and that most want to sell directly to final consumers; about the deeply held religious objection many have to RFID tagging; how we are most definitely not interested in the global market.; and more.

Sustainability means individuals practicing responsible stewardship and husbandry, it does not mean an army of auditors, certifiers, inspectors and enforcers. In fact, bureaucracy is the exact opposite of sustainability.

Doreen’s talk was so well received that before she could get off the stage, audience members surrounded her, wanting to talk. She even received respectful words from conference organizers.

Doreen sensed a subtle but discernible shift in the mood from the last conference—they don’t seem quite so cocksure.

First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they get mad, then you win.

They aren’t laughing at us anymore.

Thank you, Doreen, for your courageous action and representation on all our behalf.

To read Doreen’s prepared talk,

From Home and Farm Directly to You!

please see www.NICFA.org

Welcome New VICFA Members!

Thank you for becoming part of VICFA. Here is a look at what your association has been doing for the past two years (for a further archive, please see www.VICFA.org and click on "About Us"), Your membership nurtures local food from family farms, protects livestock owners, and provides for all of us to benefit from the bounty of the land.

We are especially proud of the Home Kitchen bill that became law in March, 2008.

HOME KITCHEN BILL: March, 2008 a bill VICFA fought long and hard for was made law, restoring the legality of the right to make baked goods, jams and jellies in a home (uninspected) kitchen to sell to final consumers..

September 2007:

- Members Richard Bean and Jean Rinaldi arrested for selling their pork. VICFA updates generate member/community support
- VICFA booth. State Fair, Richmond—new members join, 1,000 sample newsletters distributed, hundreds of anti-NAIS postcards for legislators signed.
- VICFA opposes VDACS' proposed NAIS scrapie regs
- VICFA receives its first bequest from the estate of past member Richard Crocker.

October 2007:

- 2nd Annual Legislators on the Farm Day, Polyface Farm. Speakers Senaotr Creigh Deeds and Delegate Chris Saxman
- National Independent Consumers and Farmers Association (NICFA) created as an umbrella organization, Deborah Stockton Exec. Director
- VICFA/NICFA support Greg Niewendorp's resistance to NAIS in Michigan with national Action Alerts, national radio interviews, and investigative writing

November 2007:

- John Coles represents VICFA, Virginia Agritourism Conference, Charlottesville
- Kathryn Russell speaks, Weston A. Price Foundation Conference, Washington, DC
- Former VICFA Secretary Larisa Sparrlowhawk starts the Oregon Consumers and Farmers Association (OCFA)

December 2007

- VICFA present in force to oppose scrapie regs, VDACS Board meeting, Richmond
- VICFA/NICFA booth, ACRES USA Conference. Louisville, KY

- Debbie Stockton and Kathryn Russell meet with Delegate Chris Saxman to discuss the Home Kitchen Bill in preparation for General Assembly
- VICFA creates a permanent library under the stewardship of the VICFA Secretary
- Richard and Jean's trial. The judge tells them to get the law changed, because he has had their pork at the Ivy Inn and it's delicious!
- Kathryn Russell's barn burns down. VICFA sends out alert generating member/community support

Jan/Feb 2008

- Michigan and Pennsylvania ICFA's form
- VICFA attends Joint Commission on Administrative Rules (JCAR) meeting, Richmond, that VICFA requested to oppose the scrapie regs. JCAR expresses support, but tells us to seek a legislative fix
- Creigh Deeds introduces the Home Kitchen Bill in the General Assembly
- Third Annual VICFA Day and Legislative Reception (local food feast), General Assembly, Richmond
- Deborah Stockton represents VICFA/NICFA, Michigan Real Food Conference, Gaylord, MI

March 2008

- Home Kitchen Bill signed into law
- NICFA's Second Annual National Small Farm and Ranch Lobby Day DC, VICFA is a huge support. We meet with Bruce Knight, USDA Undersecretary for Marketing and Regulatory Affairs
- VICFA booth, Health, Heart, Home Expo, Charlottesville
- VICFA pledges \$750 to help send Doreen Hannes and Sharon Zecchenelli to the National Institute of Animal Agriculture—one of the creators of NAIS--conference. They agree to send a detailed report.

April 2008

- VICFA sends a letter about the Home Kitchen Bill to all Virginia farm markets
- VICFA underwrites Wayne Bolton's weekly Farmers Market radio report out of Farmville
- Members of Missouri, Maryland, Virginia, and Michigan ICFA's testify at a California state hearing on raw milk legislation and regulations
- Joel Salatin testifies before a Congressional Committee and cites NICFA
- VICFA Vice-President Wayne Bolton addresses the SW Virginia Dietetic Association's meeting, "Cultivating the Relationship between Local Food Growers and Effective Nutrition Therapists for a Healthier Community" McBryde Hall, Virginia Tech

- VICFA requests a meeting with Gov. Kaine on the scrapie regs

June 2008

- Maryland ICFA President Liz Reitzig filmed for the raw milk segment of The Food Network
- VICFA member Scott Wilson and his family and farm featured in HamptonRoad.com and VirginianPilot Online

July 2008

- VICFA members meet with VDACS officials about scrapie regs, Richmond
- VICFA/NICFA booth, Polyface Farm Field Day
- VICFA members Kathy Rash and Joe Jones lead successful effort to protect farm land use tax in Albemarle County
- Lois and Jay Smith represent VICFA. Center for Rural Culture's seminar "Is Your Meat Safe to Eat," Goochland

August 2008

- Deborah Stockton invited to represent VICFA as a "stakeholder" at a series of meetings on Land Use in Albemarle County –Weldon Cooper Center of the University of Virginia
- Pennsylvania ICFA holds "Freedom and Liberty" raw milk seminar
- VICFA asks Senator Wagner to put scrapie regs on agenda for September 11 JCAR meeting
- Christine meets with Senator Creigh Deeds aide about our scrapie bill for General Assembly 2009

September 2008

- VICFA booth, State Fair, Richmond
- Wyoming Ag Coalition affiliates with NICFA

October 2008

- Third annual Legislators on the Farm Day, Polyface Farm
- Kathryn Russell, backed by Christine Solem, files a notice of appeal with the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture and Consumers Services against the scrapie regs
- VICFA represented. Mid-Atlantic Dairy Grazing Conference, Harrisonburg
- VICFA forms regional chapters based on U.S. Congressional Districts
- VICFA issues a powerful press release responding to the persecution of Blue Ridge Meats by Virginia Department of Taxation, catalyzing numerous legislators to write bills protecting abattoirs and other types of operations from retail sales tax for cutting things up.

November 2008

- Georgia ICFA forms
- VICFA votes to publish a member directory

December 2008

VICFA Voice
Editor: Deborah Stockton

- VICFA representatives testify on scrapie regs. VDACS Board meeting. Richmond
- Christine Solem represents VICFA. scrapie regs hearing before Courts and Justice Committee, Richmond
- VICFA/NICFA booth. ACRES USA Conference, St. Louis, MO

January 2009

- Fourth Annual VICFA Day. General Assembly, Richmond, lobbying and food gifts to legislators

February 2009

- VICFA booth. Virginia Association of Biological Farmers Conference, Richmond
- VDACS tries to undermine Home Kitchen Bill by giving out false information. Christine Solem straightens them out
- Carroll Anne Friedmann announces formation of Virginia Friends of Farmers service organization to support Virginia farmers

March 2009:

- John Coles and Christine Solem represent VICFA, Extension sponsored two-day food-based businesses workshop, Charlottesville

April 2009

- VICFA represented by many members at Perriello Town Hall meeting, Charlottesville
- Third annual National Small Farm and Ranch Lobby Day and Legislative Reception (local food feast), DC, VICFA a strong presence and support
- VICFA booth, "Keep Nelson Beautiful" Earth Day event, Nelson County
- Liz Reitzig, NICFA Secretary, represents all state ICFAs at NAIS roundtable hosted by USDA Secretary Vilsack. Washington, D.C.

May 2009

- President Willard Lutz attends Harvey Ussery's 2-day Homesteading presentation at Airlie near Warrenton
- Deb Naylor mauled by sows. VICFA sends ALERT generating member/community support

June 2009

- VICFA booth, Summer Solstice Festival, Amherst
- VICFA representatives speak at North Carolina NAIS Listening Session

July 2009

- Deborah Stockton and Kathryn Russell are guests on "Virginia Farming" television program
- VICFA sends letter opposing VDACS on yet more proposed NAIS regs for sheep and goats

August 2009

- Fifth Annual Farm Food Voices Virginia, biggest and best yet!

Editor@vicfa.net

AD RATES

Non-members add \$5.00
 Classifieds: \$5/25 words.
 \$5 each 1-25 word increment
VICFA E-GROUP
 Members only.

Please come to VICFA Meetings. *Please bring a dish and your enthusiasm to share.* September Meeting: Sunday Sept. 13, 1:00 – 4:00

Wayne Bolton's Green Bay. From the North:

- From I-64 take Rt. 20 South 30 miles to Rt. 15
- Turn right (south) on Rt. 15, go 25 miles to Rt. 460
- Cloverleaf east onto Rt. 460
- Go about 8 miles on Rt. 460 to Rt. 696
- Turn right on Rt. 696, which is Green Bay Road
- Go about 11 miles on Rt. 696 then you'll go around a sharp 20 mph curve
- After curve, turn left immediately onto Rt. 623, which is Tower Rd.
- In a block or so. cross Rt. 360, then you'll be on Twin Bridges Road (still Rt. 623)

To join, email Pearce Gardner:
 pearcegardner@gmail.com

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- After crossing two wooden RR bridges, go 3/4 m., then turn right into Bolton Farm Market



The Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello is a free, family friendly, educational event that brings together a regional community of organic and sustainable gardening proponents, experts, heirloom plant preservationists and seed savers. This year's event will offer food tastings, a seed swap, workshops, demonstrations and hands-on activities for kids and adults.

Come out and support the Festival while enjoying great local music and local food on Saturday, Aug. 8 at Monticello's new Visitor Center. Tickets are \$25 to see Virginia singer-songwriter Devon Sproule and Grammy nominee Adrienne Young and her band, The Old Faithful, while tasting offerings from several local chefs.



You can also lend your support by visiting the Charlottesville Whole Foods from 5 to 7 PM each Friday throughout the month of August. For a \$5 donation Festival organizers will help you sample five different types of great wine paired with delicious food.

For more information including a complete event schedule and workshop descriptions go to:
www.HeritageHarvestFestival.com

QuickTime™ and a TIFF (LZW) decompressor are needed to see this picture.

VICFA

Virginia Independent
Consumers and Farmers Association
P.O Box 915
Charlottesville, VA 22902

We're on the Web!
www.VICFA.net

VICFA Membership Form

Please print:

Name _____

Address _____

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Email _____

How did you learn of VICFA? _____

Annual membership is \$25.00. Please make check payable to VICFA and sent to:

VICFA
P.O. Box 915
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*If you would like VICFA to post information about your products on our website,
Please email editor@vicfa.net.*

Mission Statement and Goals:

Our purpose is to promote and preserve unregulated direct farmer-to-consumer trade that fosters availability of locally grown or home produced food products.

From Home and Farm Directly to You!