

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

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Legislative Document

No. 939

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H.P. 694

House of Representatives, February 21, 2019

### **An Act Regarding the Regulation of Rabbit Production for Local Consumption**

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Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative DAUGHTRY of Brunswick.  
Cosponsored by Representatives: ACKLEY of Monmouth, HICKMAN of Winthrop,  
MADIGAN of Waterville, RYKERSON of Kittery, STEARNS of Guilford, TEPLER of  
Topsham.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §2511, sub-§40-A** is enacted to read:

3 **40-A. Rabbit producer.** "Rabbit producer" means a person that raises rabbits  
4 offered for sale.

5 **Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §2512, sub-§1, ¶A,** as amended by PL 2009, c. 354, §2, is  
6 further amended to read:

7 A. Require ante mortem and post mortem inspections, quarantine, segregation and  
8 reinspections with respect to the slaughter of livestock and poultry and the  
9 preparation of livestock products and poultry products at all establishments in this  
10 State, except those exempted under section 2517-C or 2517-E or exempted by the  
11 commissioner under subsection 2, paragraph K, at which livestock or poultry are  
12 slaughtered or livestock products or poultry products are prepared for human food  
13 solely for distribution in intrastate commerce;

14 **Sec. 3. 22 MRSA §2514-A, sub-§1, ¶C,** as amended by PL 2015, c. 329, Pt. A,  
15 §8, is further amended to read:

16 C. Poultry producer ~~who~~ that processes fewer than 1,000 birds annually under  
17 section 2517-C; ~~or~~

18 **Sec. 4. 22 MRSA §2514-A, sub-§1, ¶C-1** is enacted to read:

19 C-1. Rabbit producer that processes fewer than 1,000 rabbits annually under section  
20 2517-E; or

21 **Sec. 5. 22 MRSA §2517-E** is enacted to read:

22 **§2517-E. Slaughter and inspection; producer exemption for rabbits**

23 **1. Exemption for processing fewer than 1,000 rabbits annually.** Notwithstanding  
24 section 2512 and whether or not the rabbits are intended for human consumption,  
25 inspection is not required for the slaughter of rabbits or the preparation of rabbit products  
26 as long as the rabbits are slaughtered by the rabbit producer and the rabbit products are  
27 prepared on the farm where the rabbits were raised and:

28 A. Fewer than 1,000 rabbits are slaughtered annually on the farm;

29 B. No rabbits are offered for sale or transportation in interstate commerce;

30 C. Any rabbit products sold are sold only as whole rabbit carcasses;

31 D. The rabbit producer is registered under section 2514-A;

32 E. The rabbit producer assigns a lot number to all rabbit products sold and maintains  
33 a record of assigned lot numbers and the point of sale;

34 F. The rabbit products are sold in accordance with the restrictions in subsection 2;  
35 and

1           G. The rabbit products are labeled with:

2                   (1) The name of the farm, the name of the rabbit producer and the address of the  
3                   farm including the zip code;

4                   (2) The registration number issued to the rabbit producer in accordance with  
5                   section 2514-A and the lot number for the rabbit products pursuant to paragraph  
6                   E;

7                   (3) The statement "Exempt under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section  
8                   2517-E NOT INSPECTED." The statement must be prominently displayed with  
9                   such conspicuousness that it is likely to be read and understood; and

10                  (4) Safe handling and cooking instructions as follows: "SAFE HANDLING  
11                  INSTRUCTIONS: Keep refrigerated or frozen. Thaw in refrigerator or  
12                  microwave. Keep raw rabbit meat separate from other foods. Wash working  
13                  surfaces, including cutting boards, utensils and hands, after touching raw rabbit  
14                  meat. Cook thoroughly to an internal temperature of at least 160 degrees  
15                  Fahrenheit maintained for at least 15 seconds. Keep hot foods hot. Refrigerate  
16                  leftovers immediately or discard."

17                  **2. Restrictions on point of sale.** Rabbit products sold under this section may be  
18                  sold only by the rabbit producer and in the following locations or manner:

19                   A. At the farm on which the rabbits were raised;

20                   B. At a farmers' market as defined in Title 7, section 415, subsection 1, paragraph A;

21                   C. Delivered to a consumer's home by the rabbit producer whose name and  
22                   registration number appear on the label under subsection 1, paragraph G;

23                   D. Received by an individual who is a member of a community supported agriculture  
24                   farm that has a direct marketing relationship with the rabbit producer. For the  
25                   purposes of this paragraph, "community supported agriculture" means an  
26                   arrangement whereby individual consumers have agreements with a farmer to be  
27                   provided with food or other agricultural products produced on that farm;

28                   E. To a locally owned grocery store; or

29                   F. To a locally owned restaurant.

30                  **3. Rules.** The commissioner shall adopt rules to establish requirements for the  
31                  physical facilities and sanitary processes used by rabbit producers whose rabbit products  
32                  are exempt from inspection under this section. Rules adopted under this subsection are  
33                  major substantive rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

34                  **4. Enforcement.** The commissioner shall enforce the provisions of this section.

35                  **5. Violation; penalties.** A person that violates this section is subject to penalties  
36                  under section 2524.

37                  **Sec. 6. 22 MRSA §2518, sub-§1,** as repealed and replaced by PL 2015, c. 329,  
38                  Pt. A, §11, is amended to read:

