

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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N I N E T Y - F I R S T L E G I S L A T U R E

Legislative Document

No. 708

H. P. 1221

House of Representatives, February 24, 1943.

Referred to Committee on Legal Affairs. Sent up for concurrence and
750 ordered printed.

HARVEY R. PEASE, Clerk.

Presented by Mr. Denny of Damariscotta.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
FORTY-THREE

AN ACT Relating to Slaughterhouses.

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

Sec. 1. Licenses for slaughterhouses and meat processing plants. No person, firm, partnership, or corporation shall operate a slaughterhouse, abattoir, or other place or establishment where animals are slaughtered or where meat or meat products are prepared or processed for food within the state unless such person, firm, partnership, or corporation be licensed by the commissioner of agriculture. An application for a license shall be made upon a form prescribed by the commissioner of agriculture on or before the 1st day of June each year for the license commencing upon the following 1st day of July. With the application, there shall be paid to the commissioner of agriculture a license fee of \$5. Each such license shall cover 1 group of buildings constituting a slaughterhouse and/or meat or meat products processing plant in 1 location. Said license shall run for 1 year from the 1st day of July in each year, and unless sooner revoked as herein provided, shall be renewed annually thereafter.

Sec. 2. Revocation and suspension of license; appeals; hearing. The

commissioner of agriculture shall have the power to revoke or suspend any license issued under the provisions of this act whenever it is determined by himself or any of his deputies that any of said provisions have been violated. Any person, firm, partnership, corporation, association, or society whose license has been revoked or suspended shall discontinue slaughtering, butchering, operating, and processing until the provisions of this act have been complied with and a new license issued or the suspension removed. The commissioner of agriculture may revoke or suspend such license temporarily until there is a compliance with the provisions of this act as hereinafter provided, or permanently for the unexpired period of such license. Before revoking or suspending any license, the commissioner of agriculture shall give written notice to the licensee affected stating that he contemplates the revocation or suspension of the same and giving his reasons therefor; such notice shall appoint a time for hearing before said commissioner. On the date of hearing the licensee may present such evidence to the commissioner as he deems fit, and after hearing all the testimony, the said commissioner shall decide as to whether the license shall be revoked or not. Any licensee who feels aggrieved or dissatisfied with the decision of the commissioner may appeal from said decision within 10 days to the superior court.

Sec. 3. Definition. The term "slaughterhouse" shall be held to include any establishment wherein animals or fowl are slaughtered for human consumption; or where meat or meat products for human food are processed or prepared; provided, however, that the provisions of this act requiring a license shall not apply to any bona fide farmer who butchers his own domestic animals or fowl on his own farm as incidental to and in the general conduct of his business of farming.

Sec. 4. Commissioner of agriculture to inspect; make rules. The commissioner of agriculture shall by adequate inspection see that animals are slaughtered and the licensed slaughterhouses are maintained and operated in conformity with the general requirements of the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the laws of this state and the provisions of this act. He shall make uniform rules and regulations for carrying out the provisions of this act, and shall fix standards of quality for the meat and meat products prepared in licensed slaughterhouses and meat processing plants and for the sanitation of said slaughterhouses and meat processing plants.

Sec. 5. Inspectors and authority. The commissioner of agriculture shall have authority to employ inspectors in sufficient numbers so that adequate inspection can be performed. The compensation of the inspectors

shall be fixed by said commissioner, and it shall be the duty of said inspectors to inspect all slaughterhouses and processing plants where meat and meat products are manufactured and prepared for food, and for this purpose the commissioner of agriculture and all of his inspectors and agents shall have free access, ingress, and egress, at all reasonable hours to any slaughterhouse or meat processing plant.

Sec. 6. Appropriation; disposition of fees. For carrying out the provisions of this act, there shall be appropriated the sum of \$8,000 for the year 1943 and \$8,000 for the year 1944. All license fees and all money received under the provisions of this act, and all fines which shall be collected in any proceeding or proceedings to enforce the provisions of this act, shall be paid over to the commissioner of agriculture or his agent, and by him deposited with the treasurer of state; and the same are hereby appropriated for carrying out the provisions of this act.

Sec. 7. Penalty. Any person, firm, partnership, corporation, association, or society who shall conduct, operate, or manage a slaughterhouse, or slaughter animals in a slaughterhouse in the state of Maine without the license provided for in this act, or who shall violate any of the provisions of this act, or neglect or refuse to comply with any of the provisions hereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$100 for the 1st offense and not more than \$200 for each subsequent offense. Whoever hinders, obstructs, or in any way interferes with the commissioner of agriculture, or his agents or assistants in the performance of his or their duty by refusing entrance to any slaughterhouse or meat processing plant or any place where he is authorized to enter, or access to any place, or by refusing to deliver to him, or his agents or assistants a sample of meat or meat products if the value thereof is tendered, or in any other manner hinders, obstructs, or interferes with said commissioner, or his agents or assistants in the performance of any of said duties, shall be punished by a fine of \$100 for the 1st offense and \$200 for each subsequent offense.

Sec. 8. Jurisdiction. Trial justices shall have original jurisdiction concurrent with municipal courts and the superior court of actions brought for the recovery of penalties imposed by this act and all prosecutions for violations hereof.