

On October 4, 2008 at the Annual Meeting of Oregon Rural Action, the members duly adopted the following resolution on increasing access to local food.

Oregon Rural Action Resolution on Increasing Access to Local Food
Oregon Rural Action Resolution 7.2

Whereas, a viable agricultural sector in Oregon represents part of a secure regional food supply, which leads to food security, energy and economic efficiencies, and

Whereas, the general public is increasingly interested in locally produced food, and

Whereas, livestock raised on-farm for meat, dairy, and eggs offers profit potential and economic opportunity for Oregon producers, and

Whereas meat, dairy and eggs from livestock raised on Oregon farms and ranches has an excellent reputation for quality and flavor, and

Whereas, in recent years, there has been increasing interest in locally producing and processing of animals for use by households, restaurants, and public institutions for economic, health, ethnic, and humane reasons, and

Whereas, there are limited options for livestock and dairy processing in northeastern Oregon, and

Whereas, currently school lunch programs are only able to access meat, dairy and eggs from unknown sources, and

Whereas, historically, meat, dairy products, and eggs raised on Oregon farms and ranches have been safe and healthy; Oregon slaughtering and processing practices have excellent safety records, and

Whereas, the sustainability of Oregon local food systems depends on the relationship between the producer and the consumer. Key aspects of such successful relationships include the producer's integrity and the consumer's interest in and knowledge of how the food is raised, harvested, and processed, and

Whereas, community-supported agriculture, buying clubs, farmers markets and producer-consumer cooperatives can serve as models for meat producers interested in marketing directly to consumers, and

Whereas, raising meat, dairy, eggs fruits, and vegetables as close as possible to the kitchens of the end-user minimizes the carbon footprint of the entire food system and increases our food security;

Now therefore be it resolved that Oregon Rural Action will work to advance policies that:

- (1) Assure the continuance of a safe, local food supply.
- (2) Establish the Oregon meat inspection service's "at least equal to" status with the federal government's USDA food safety inspection service.
- (3) Provide options for direct marketing between consumers and livestock producers and processors;
- (4) Make transparent and appropriate rules for small scale operations to build and license slaughter, processing, and dairy facilities in Oregon.
- (5) Determine ways to build cost-effective slaughter, processing, and dairy facilities with the possibility of cooperative ownership.
- (6) Provide more opportunities for Oregon livestock farmers and ranchers and the supporting slaughter and processing industry to meet the growing demand for animals to be slaughtered and processed by ethnic and religious groups in accordance with their practices and beliefs.
- (7) Promote and encourage growth in the Oregon livestock industry and the production of meat, dairy and egg products for local consumption by allowing for more on-farm slaughter and processing of livestock and dairy products, creating opportunity for the development of more commercial slaughter, processing and dairy facilities, and by supporting those currently in the industry.
- (8) Continue to support and promote community-supported agriculture, buying clubs, producer-consumer cooperatives, and farmers' markets in Oregon.
- (9) Enhance public awareness of how and where food is grown through food and agricultural literacy programs.
- (10) Support and promote farm to school programs in our communities.