

Senate Miscellaneous Ag Bill

Section	Explanation and Suggestions
Section 1, Page 4 Line 8	Insert "Accessory On-Farm Business" (AOFB) in definition of "Farm Structure"
Section 3, Page 8, Lines 12-14	There are contradictory definitions of "Qualifying Products" for AOFBs in statute and in this bill. Section 6 below fixes that.
Section 4	Strike exemption of net farm income under \$10,000. Strike exemptions for transfers to family members. Keep exemption for 10 year employee. This enhances farm successions and protects existing farm operations.
Section 5	Strike exemption for family members. Keep exemption for 10 year employee. The 10 year exemption is a minor expansion; most transfers will be between family members.
Section 6	The language in this bill simplifies and clarifies how much ingredients from outside the farm can be included in a "qualified product" of an AOFB. The three current measures of ingredients that appear in various statutes and in other sections of this bill are ambiguous, conflicting, very difficult to measure, therefore difficult to enforce. The new limit of \$250K was chosen to reflect a small farm business. Farms that invest in value adding equipment for their produce need to be able to purchase other farmers' produce if they experience losses from floods, droughts, late frosts, hail, etc.
Section 7	Vermont farmers are generous people. Allowing the value of crops they donate to a <i>legal non-profit</i> should count towards their farm output.
Section 8	This section creates a new category of food operation, a "farm kitchen." This is meant to allow for small scale food processing to occur on farms or AOFBs. Currently, a kitchen would be classified as a "commercial caterer" requiring significant and expensive upgrades to wastewater systems. Again, it is important to harmonize the definition of "qualifying products" to reflect changes suggested in Section 6 of this bill by striking Page 14, line 16 "goods grown or raised on the farm."
Section 21,	Requiring a "farmer" to meet two of the three criteria in this section will exclude new, young farmers, farmers who must work outside jobs to get by, and retired people who want to take up farming.
Section 25	There is much confusion and controversy about floor drains, and a study would clarify whether floor drains should be allowed in "farm kitchens" that have been inspected and licensed by the Vermont Department of Health.