

HB 779-FN - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

20Mar2025... 0647h

2025 SESSION

25-0813

08/09

HOUSE BILL

779-FN

AN ACT

allowing the sale of rabbit meat in intrastate commerce.

SPONSORS:

Rep. Verville, Rock. 2; Rep. Ammon, Hills. 42; Rep. J. Aron, Sull. 4; Rep. Comtois, Belk. 7; Rep. Creighton, Hills. 30; Sen. Murphy, Dist 16; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17

COMMITTEE:

Environment and Agriculture

ANALYSIS

This bill allows for the sale of uninspected rabbit meat in intrastate commerce.

Explanation:

Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.

Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT allowing the sale of rabbit meat in intrastate commerce.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Uninspected Rabbits; Sale at Farms, Farmstands, and Farmers Markets. Amend the
2 subdivision heading preceding RSA 143-A:14 to read as follows:

3 Sale of Uninspected Poultry and Rabbits to Restaurants ***and Sale of Uninspected Rabbits at New***
4 ***Hampshire Farms, Farmstands, and Farmers Markets***

5 2 Producer Requirements; Uninspected Rabbits. Amend RSA 143-A:16 to read as follows:
6 143-A:16 Producer Requirements.

7 I. A federally exempt poultry producer may, in a calendar year, sell to licensed restaurants
8 uninspected, processed whole poultry that the producer has raised in a quantity not to exceed the
9 federal limit established in 21 U.S.C. section 464 and an unlicensed rabbit producer may, in a
10 calendar year, sell to licensed restaurants up to 1,000 uninspected, processed whole rabbits that the
11 producer has raised, provided all of the following conditions are met:

12 (a) The producer is current with all educational requirements that are established by the
13 commissioner in consultation with the commissioner of agriculture, markets, and food relative to
14 proper methods of slaughtering, processing, packaging, and storing poultry or rabbit on the farm and
15 its subsequent transport to restaurants; and

16 (b) The producer has registered with the department of agriculture, markets, and food
17 by providing his or her name, the name and address of the farm, and phone number, to allow for
18 trace back in the event of disease outbreak. Such registry information shall be protected pursuant to
19 RSA 436:6-a.

20 II. ***An unlicensed rabbit producer may, in a calendar year, sell at his or her own***
21 ***farm, farmstand, or farmer's market up to 1,000 uninspected, processed whole rabbits that***
22 ***the producer has raised provided all of the following conditions are met:***

23 (a) ***The rabbits are raised, slaughtered, processed, packaged, and sold within***
24 ***the state of New Hampshire;***

25 (b) ***The producer has fulfilled all educational requirements that are established***
26 ***by the commissioner of the department of health and human services in consultation with***
27 ***the commissioner of the department of agriculture, markets, and food relative to proper***
28 ***methods of slaughtering, processing, packaging, and storing rabbit on the farm and its***
29 ***subsequent transport to farmstands or farmers markets; and***

30 (c) ***The producer has registered with the department of agriculture, markets,***
31 ***and food by providing his or her name, the name of the address of the farm, and his or her***

1 *phone number, to allow for trace back in the event of disease outbreak. Such information*
2 *shall be protected pursuant to RSA 436:6-a.*

3 *III.* The department may inspect these exempt products when the department has reason to
4 suspect an imminent health hazard as defined in RSA 143-A:3, IV-b.

5 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

**HB 779-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT allowing the sale of rabbit meat in intrastate commerce.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable (Less than \$10,000)	Indeterminable (Less than \$10,000)	Indeterminable (Less than \$10,000)
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	General Fund			
Expenditures*	\$0	Indeterminable	Indeterminable	Indeterminable
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

***Expenditure = Cost of bill**

***Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill**

METHODOLOGY:

This bill allows farms in New Hampshire raising 1,000 or fewer rabbits annually to sell whole rabbit carcasses directly to consumers, farm stands, farmers' markets, and licensed restaurants, provided they comply with specific slaughter, labeling, and record-keeping regulations. Rabbit meat exempt from inspection must include clear labeling with producer information, a disclaimer of inspection exemption, and safe handling instructions. Licensed restaurants purchasing uninspected rabbit must retain purchase records and disclose the exemption status on their menus.

The Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food states this bill appears to alter existing federal exemptions regarding the sale of uninspected rabbit meat. Under current federal regulations, producers processing fewer than 1,000 rabbits annually are exempt from inspection requirements, provided specific federal criteria are met. This bill seems to remove or modify those criteria from state law. At this time, the Department will not provide a fiscal note for legislation that appears to conflict with federal law.

The Department of Health and Human Services estimates an indeterminable fiscal impact of less than \$10,000 annually resulting from this bill. Currently, under RSA 143-A, the sale of uninspected rabbit meat to licensed restaurants in New Hampshire is permitted. The proposed legislation expands this allowance to include sales directly from producers at farm stands and

farmers' markets. This change may reduce the number of farms seeking food licensure, leading to a potential decrease in the annual license fees paid, which are deposited into the General Fund. As a result, the fiscal impact on state revenue from this decrease in licensure is indeterminable.

Additionally, the Department notes they do not have jurisdiction over the provisions in RSA 427 as well as the bill conflicts with existing regulations for the sale of uninspected rabbit meat in RSA 143-A:14, 143-A:15, 143-A:16, and 143-A:17.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food and Department of Health and Human Services