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NEWS

# California Farm Bureau praises Bill Signing to Help Local Meat Producers

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California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson recently praised Gov. Gavin Newsom for signing Assembly Bill 888 to help small meat producers gain access to markets and provide safe and reliable food to California residents.

“The governor’s signing of this important legislation builds community resilience by supporting local meat production,” Johansson said. “While consumer meat preferences continue to change, this bill provides greater flexibility for California’s livestock ranchers who provide fresh, locally-grown and raised products to those Californians preferring a different animal meat product.”

AB 888, by Assembly Member Marc Levine, D-San Rafael, will provide an exemption from animal slaughter inspections for mobile operations that provide services for owners of sheep, goats or swine. The measure was sponsored by the Farm Bureau.

A recent report by the Food Systems Lab at the University of California, Davis, found that small and midsize meat producers face a lack of access to slaughtering services. The study said that factor, combined with market concentration favoring major meat companies, makes it hard for small producers to stay in business.

The availability of mobile slaughter operations will also help address systemic weaknesses in the food supply chain for California and the nation, which have been exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, Johansson said.

“This bill is not a vehicle for replacing any of California’s brick-and-mortar slaughter operations,” Johansson said. “AB 888 will help address meat processing bottlenecks by providing more options to safely slaughter goats, sheep and swine locally. By allowing for diversification in ranch revenue streams, this bill ensures that small ranchers can stay on the land, bringing down fuel loads while feeding families. We thank Assembly Member Levine for his leadership in helping ranchers and shepherding this bill to passage.”

The California Farm Bureau works to protect family farms and ranches on behalf of nearly 32,000 members statewide and as part of a nationwide network of nearly 5.6 million Farm Bureau members.

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