Washington County Board of Supervisors Agricultural Advisory Committee

View on Raw Milk and Uninspected Meat.

- Virginia's dairy industry plays an important part in the Virginia and Washington county economy
  - In 2014 alone the dairy industry contributed $3.2 billion directly and indirectly to the State of Virginia in industry output.
  - Employees 13,819 people
  - Washington County is ranked 7th in the state for dairy cattle
- Playing such a critical role in our economy, the industry strives to be proactive in dealing with issues that concern the public and may jeopardize the industry itself.
- One of these recent issues is the sale of raw milk.
  - This is not an issue of personal privilege, but one of public safety.
  - Pasteurization is considered one of the most monumental health achievements of the last century.
    - Pasteurization kills harmful bacteria such as listeria, salmonella, and e coli, which can be naturally present in milk even with the dairy industry's many food safety standards in place.
    - Pasteurization does not change the nutritional value of milk in any meaningful way.
    - Drinking unpasteurized milk has not been proven to cure asthma, lactose intolerance or any other health problems.
    - Unpasteurized milk has been proven to cause illness. In recent years, 81% of unpasteurized milk-related illnesses occurred in states where the sale of raw milk is legal in some form.
    - Unpasteurized milk is 150 times more likely to cause foodborne illness.
  - A food safety outbreak would be devastating to our industry and the state's economy.
    - In the US the top 14 food pathogens cost $14 billion in medical treatment and other related costs.
  - Public blame and distrust after a raw milk related illness is usually not confined to the raw milk industry but to the entire dairy industry
- Milk is a product that, no matter what procedures are in place, can potentially carry foodborne illness because it is such a good medium for bacterial growth. Louis Pasteur's simple process of heating milk up and cooling it down is proven to kill any naturally occurring, harmful bacteria and makes it possible for America to have the most bountiful, safest food supply in the world.

Sources:

- Virginia State Dairymen's Association, www.vsdaonline.com
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/21/1/14-0447_article

The following organizations OPPOSE Regulations which would allow for the UNREGULATED and UNINSPECTED sale of *Potentially Hazardous Foods*.

American Academy of Pediatrics – Virginia Chapter

Center for Food Safety and Regulatory Solutions

Consumer Federation of America

Cooperative Milk Producers Association

Dairy Farmers of America

Md. & Va. Milk Producers Cooperative Association

Medical Society of Virginia

Shellfish Growers of Virginia

Virginia Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Virginia Agribusiness Council

Virginia Cattlemen's Association

Virginia Citizens Consumer Council

Virginia Farm Bureau

Virginia Food and Beverage Association

Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association

Virginia State Dairymen's Association

Virginia Poultry Federation

Virginia Restaurant Association

Virginia Retail Federation

Virginia Retail Merchants Association

Virginia Seafood Council

Virginia Veterinary Medical Association

Virginia Wholesalers and Distributers Association