

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office

March 7, 2000

LB 1092

community rather than having people buy meat from an unknown source. Currently, if you buy Hormel bacon the pork may have been raised in Kansas, Iowa, or any other state, which is fine too. Federally inspected meat may be from any other state. Likewise, our Nebraska pork or other...other meats get shipped out of Nebraska before we have a chance to buy from our farmers first. Why should we be importing meat from other states when our local farmers are going out of business? Currently, state inspected meat cannot be shipped between states, but Representative Mac Thornberry of Texas, whose press release, if you look at the handout, is the salmon sheet here, has introduced legislation at the federal level that would allow state inspected meat to be shipped across state lines. That would mean Nebraska would be behind the curve in terms of directing...in terms of direct marketing to the states near us. We are surrounded by Kansas, Iowa, and South Dakota. All of those states have state meat inspection programs. I think that our national reputation for beef and pork is fantastic. It would be a great asset to our farmers to be able to direct market their private label--"Sandhills Beef" or "Table Rock". In fact, that is one of the reasons that...Minnesota stated for going ahead and getting their state meat inspection program started. They don't want to be left out when the federal government allows this meat to be shipped interstate. Kansas State Meat Inspection Program, a farmer with a...can help a farmer with a custom label when...within four to five days. That type of niche marketing will provide new sales opportunities for farmers. One of the major reasons for the federal government...why the federal government is leaning toward allowing interstate shipping of state inspected meat is because state programs are required to be equal to the federal programs. They must have the same level of sanitation, the same degree of handling and...the same degree of care and handling of the food, and the same safety precautions that the federal program has. The program that I...this pilot program that I am suggesting would be voluntary. The state would still allow custom-exempt plants. Those plants could still process meat for the owners of the animals, and those plants would still only receive the sanitary inspections. They would not be required to be equal to the federal program, but if they chose to be state inspected then they will meet the same standards of the federal program. this has made the government...the federal government