



February 14, 2014

Cort Jensen,
Montana Department of Agriculture
302 N Roberts
Helena, MT 59601
cojensen@mt.gov

RE: House Bill 630 public Comments

Dear Mr. Jensen,

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Missoula City-County Health Department concerning HB 630. Missoula County contains about ten percent of Montana's population and currently has eight City or County approved Farmers Markets. Our Department is a strong supporter of healthy foods and locally grown foods. As a public health department our overriding responsibility is to ensure that the public is not exposed to significant unnecessary risks from the preparation and distribution of foods to the public. We believe that all of these goals can be accomplished with modifications to MCA Title 50 and associated rules.

With that background given, we support the "Guiding Principles" document already submitted to you by MEHA and the attached document entitled "Recommended Structure and Contents of Montana's Cottage Foods Program." This document is based on a similar AFDO document but has been modified to parallel the MEHA Guiding Principles and Montana's special circumstances. It has been drafted by our staff and reviewed and modified to its present form based on comments from the Northwest Sanitarians group as well as other members of MEHA. We intend that it provide more guidance for the preparation of possible changes to State law and State regulations on this subject.

Thank you for your efforts in carrying out the public input process concerning HB 630.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Carlson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'J' and 'C'.

Jim Carlson, R.S.
Director of Environmental Health

Enclosure: Recommended Structure and Contents of Montana's Cottage Foods Program