

EXHIBIT 6
DATE 3-9-05
HB 521

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February 18, 2005

Montana House of Representatives
Attn: Representative Kevin Furey

Dear Representative Furey,

I am writing this letter to thank you for sponsoring HB 521, The Montana Food Preference Act.

Of course, Wheat Montana Farms & Bakery is supportive of this legislation. Furthermore, I am sure most, or all, of the other Montana food manufacturers would support it as well.

It pains us greatly to see bread products made in Washington or Utah served at our state institutions. HB521, if passed, will go a great distance in helping Montana based food companies compete for business within the boundaries of our great State.

Many grateful employees, of companies such as ours, will appreciate your efforts if you are successful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dean Folkvord".

Dean Folkvord, CEO

Highway 2 East
P.O. Box 478
Culbertson, MT 59218



Phone
(406) 787-6616
Fax
(406) 787-6362

To the Honored Committee members,

We would like to take this opportunity to support the effort of Ms. McMullan and her group. We feel it is important for Mt. agencies to promote Mt. made products where quality and availability are sufficient. Montola has benefited directly from the original program. We were asked to provide our high-quality Safflower oil for use in the commissary at the Univ. of Mt. at Missoula. Our product appears higher priced than typical cooking oils but due to it's healthy aspects and long life it is well worth the added cost. A strict cost cutting purchase program would have deprived the students and staff the healthy aspects of this product in their diet but by using the preferential program which promotes and mandates purchases of Mt. made products, our healthy oil was enjoyed by students and staff at the university. One comment I heard from the University dietician—"College kids will naturally eat French fries and by using Montola's oil we can provide them with healthy fries."

We at Montola, believe it is important to expand this program to give the purchasing departments reasonable incentives to secure the "best" products for our kids as well as the employees. With the proper incentive they will be able to spend a little more and reap the large benefits of quality products without criticism from "bottomliners".

Thank You for Your Support,
Neil Turnbull
Montola Growers Inc.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Neil Turnbull".

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Montana Natural Beef, LLC
Will Tusick- General Manager

I would like to express my support for HB 521, an act that establishes a state contract preference for food produced in Montana. As the General Manager for Montana Natural Beef LLC, a Montana beef producer owned company that provides a natural beef product to Montana markets, this bill is extremely important to me. Montana Natural Beef, LLC currently sells beef to the University of Montana and we work hard to meet the challenges of the competition and their prices. We and our agricultural community would benefit from the passage of this bill, which helps create a level playing field for Montana grown food businesses.

We appreciate your support and look forward to the passage of this very important bill.

Sincerely,

Will Tusick

ATT!
Kevin Fury

**Bausch Potatoes, Inc.**

33 Point of Rocks Rd. • Whitehall, MT 59759 • (406) 287-3490

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Attention: Representative Kevin Furey

Regarding Bill No. 521

February 15, 2005

Letter to legislature:

Bausch Potato Inc. is a family owned farm since 1947, located ten miles south of Whitehall. We take great pride in raising each generation of our children in this great agricultural atmosphere and teaching them the way of providing the state with our value-added fresh potato products. We process our potatoes into a fresh packed product of a variety of ways and sizes such as hashbrowns(coarse or fine shred), diced, sliced, wholepeeled and fresh fries. We have been value-added since 1979, and have been struggling with competing with larger, low quality out-of-state companies. We have a great reputation for personal customer service, quality products, guaranteed freshness and prompt weekly and biweekly deliveries. We fully support this House Bill No. 521 and the opportunity for small businesses like ourselves to be able to at least present Montana food institutions with high-quality, wholesome, fresh and nutritious value-added products grown in this area. What better way to feed the people of Montana, but by serving them Montana grown food, instead of food shipped in from other states, days and even weeks old with the loss of freshness and nutritional value to them. We need to feed the people foods that can benefit them and let it be known to them, that we care about the quality of food that they consume. We strongly ask that you pass this Bill to benefit the hard working growers and consumers of Montana.

From the owners and employees of Bausch Potato, Inc

DISTRIBUTION REQUESTEDBY Kevin Furey

Grow Montana

Building Montana's Food and Agricultural Economy

HB 521 by Rep Kevin Furey

- 1) encourages state institutions to support Montana growers & purchase food produced or processed in Montana.
- 2) Allows Montana producers a 10% bid preference.

🍏 **Montana growers can compete with the best with our fresh, high quality meat and produce.** current state procurement law requires state food service operations to accept the lowest bid. Many top-notch producers of Montana's value-added and whole food products do not have the volume to compete on price with the national food service distributors for state food contracts. **HB 521 will help Montana food producers** to sell to state institutions, where half of all food is consumed.

🍏 The primary concern about HB 521 is the reciprocal preference--Montana food producers will be penalized 10% when selling to state institutions in other states

🍏 With the exception of New York, HB 521 will create reciprocal penalties **only** for food producers selling directly to state institutions in other states. It will **not** affect food producers selling to distributors who then sell to state institutions. It will **not** affect non-food producers or service providers contracting with other state institutions.

🍏 Eighteen other states with reciprocal preferences maintain preferences for particular goods, products, or services.

🍏 Until 2001, there was a 3% preference on most Montana products. There were no complaints from food producers.

🍏 State institutions don't buy the raw commodities that Montana farmers & ranchers produce. **They buy the value added product.** They don't buy wheat--they buy bread. They don't buy cattle--they buy hamburger patties.

🍏 **There aren't enough Montana food processors to meet the institutional demand** in Montana, let alone other states where reciprocity penalties might be triggered.

🍏 **Producers support HB 521** Wheat Montana--Three Forks Montola Oil--Culbertson Cream of the West--Harlowton

🍏 HB 521 has the support of **Grain Growers, Farmer's Union & WIFE** (Women in Farm Economics).

🍏 When Montana's food manufacturing sector is vibrant enough to encounter reciprocity penalties in other states, HB 521 will have served its purpose and the preference can be removed.

🍏 Many urban people--even in Montana-- have forgotten where their food comes from--and the importance of Montana ranchers and farmers to their future and their health. Encouraging the local marketing and consumption of Montana-grown food helps reestablish that awareness among urban people.

🍏 This awareness is essential to gain urban support for the needs of ranchers and farmers.

🍏 **Food processing used to be Montana's number one employer and could be a significant one again!**

Linda Gryczan
Lobbyist for Grow Montana
431-3635
conlin@initco.net

Crissie McMullan
Researcher and Project Coordinator
Grow Montana
531-5162 crissiemc@yahoo.com

Grow Montana founding members include:
Alternative Energy Resources Organization (AERO)
Urban-Rural Alliance
Lake County Community Development Corporation
National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT)
Farmers and other individuals

Other organizations and individuals committed to building Montana's local food and agricultural economy are invited to join this new coalition. Contact Crissie McMullan (above).