

SENATE BILL NO. 544
INTRODUCED BY K. HANSEN

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT CREATING A MONTANA-CERTIFIED NATURAL BEEF MARKETING PROGRAM TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE BOARD OF LIVESTOCK; PROVIDING QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF MONTANA NATURAL BEEF AND MONTANA-CERTIFIED NATURAL GRASS-FED BEEF; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Montana-certified natural beef marketing program. (1) The department and the board of livestock shall administer a program to qualify and market beef from Montana that has been certified as natural.

(2) To qualify as Montana-certified natural beef, the beef must be from cattle that have been born, raised, and finished in Montana. The cattle must be:

- (a) raised in an environmentally prudent manner that is consistent with Montana's best grazing standards;
- (b) raised pursuant to beef quality assurance standards or similar guidelines;
- (c) raised without subtherapeutic antibiotics, synthetic hormones, synthetic growth promotants, and ionophores; and
- (d) fed only natural feeds that contain no drugs, chemicals, animal byproducts, or artificial additives.

(3) To qualify as Montana-certified natural grass-fed beef, the beef must be from cattle that meet the requirements of subsection (2) and that also have been finished on grass.

(4) A producer who desires natural beef certification shall maintain records of the birth of the cattle by month and keep health records for the cattle, including vaccine lot numbers, the vaccine manufacturer, and dates of vaccination.

(5) To ensure compliance, the department and the board of livestock shall jointly adopt rules requiring at least one inspection of the ranch of origin of the cattle as well as development of the necessary protocols for recordkeeping and verification for the certification of natural and natural grass-fed beef.

(6) The department shall include the promotion of Montana-certified natural beef in its agricultural product marketing programs.

NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 80, chapter 11, and the provisions of Title 80, chapter 11, apply to [section 1].

NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

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