

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

## **HB 217-RAW MILK SALES; FOOD EXEMPT FROM REGS**

### **Sponsor Statement**

Across the country a food freedom movement is increasing market access for farmers and options for consumers. Food freedom policies aim to increase direct producer to consumer sales thereby opening up opportunities for start-up farmers and supporting small businesses.

The purpose of the legislation is to allow for the sale and consumption of homemade foods, and to encourage the expansion of agricultural sales by farmers markets, ranches, farms and home based producers.

Wyoming was the first to pass a bill in 2015 that included definitions for home consumption, homemade, and informed end consumers to expand what products can be sold for personal use. Since the passage of the legislation Wyoming has seen a huge increase in local food production, sales, access to local foods and economic development.

A bill in Colorado passed that made it easier for small-time chicken farmers to sell directly to consumers and to allow home cooks who make almost anything that doesn't need refrigeration to sell directly to consumers.

Utah passed a bill that also included increased access for raw milk sales. Bills are under consideration in California, Montana, and others.

House Bill 217 will give "Food Freedom" in Alaska by allowing direct producer to consumer sales with appropriate labeling. With labeling consumers are informed of any risks associated with consumption of the product and are empowered to make the choice that is right for them and their families.

Let's keep the momentum going and provide more opportunities for the hard working small business owners across our state that are working to provide locally grown and produced food products to Alaskans.

I ask for your support of House Bill 217.