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[Overreaching Food “Safety” Modernization Act Would Destroy Family Farmers](#)

Posted by [Matt Kibbe \(Profile\)](#)

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35 Comments

Yesterday, the Senate voted to take up consideration of S.510, the so-called Food Safety Modernization Act, which would grant the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) more control over our diets. The supposed intention behind the legislation is to protect consumers from food-borne illnesses. But will it really?

If passed, the misnamed Food Safety and Modernization Act would authorize the FDA to tell farmers how to grow their crops. Federal bureaucrats who likely know little to nothing about farming [will set the guidelines](#) on appropriate temperatures, what soil to use, how much water to use and what animals are allowed to be on certain fields.

A study by Senator Tom Coburn’s (R-OK) office [states](#) “on the whole this bill represents a weighty new regulatory structure on the food industry that will be particularly difficult for small producers and farms to comply with (with little evidence it will make food safer)”

Sen. Jon Tester has introduced the “Tester Amendment” which would allegedly prevent these harmful regulations from affecting small family farms. However, Campaign for Liberty says these regulations will still be imposed on whoever the FDA decides. It could even affect your home garden if you sell vegetables or fruits at a local farmers market.

President John Tate [states](#): “Don’t fall for their rhetoric about a few provisions that supposedly address concerns of small-scale farmers; the FDA still has all the power it needs to shut down family farms on a whim. In other words, it will be up to bureaucrats to decide whether or not local food production is decimated by federal regulations or shut down.”

The Congressional Budget Office has calculated that this overreaching bill would [cost \\$1.4 billion](#) between 2011 and 2015. To carry out these new rules, the federal government will hire over 17,000 new bureaucrats. Food producers will likely spend [hundreds of millions of dollars](#) annually complying with these unnecessary government regulations. This cost will be passed onto consumers in the form of higher food prices. Big agriculture is one of the largest proponents of the bill since it will likely destroy their competitors who cannot afford the high cost of these regulations.

Since the egg salmonella scare last summer, the misguided bill has gained momentum in the Senate. However, over-regulation—not a lack of regulation—is largely to blame for the recent outbreak of salmonella. According to the [Wall Street Journal](#), “USDA graders pointed to increasingly unsanitary conditions at Wright County Egg — but that the agriculture agency didn’t flag the problems to the FDA...”

Since the FDA is one of [15 agencies](#) that administer numerous laws related to food safety, overlapping and inconsistent oversight often occurs. According to a Government Accountability Office testimony, the FDA and USDA have 1,451 duplicative inspections of food-producing facilities annually. Shouldn’t we seek to get rid of waste and duplicative inspections—not add even more burdensome regulation? The bill would [increase](#) the number of inspections and tax food producers to do so.

Since 1996, The Heritage Foundation states that food-borne illnesses have reduced by [one third](#). The free market has provided technological advances that have made food much safer. But why does it seem that food-borne illnesses have increased within recent years? Cato Institute scholar Walter Olsen [states](#) "Despite the image that there are more food safety crises in recent years, the reality is that... we are just much better at identifying and tracking the crisis."

With the economy still suffering, we cannot afford even more burdensome job killing regulation. We must stop this dangerous bill that could destroy independent family farms that provide healthy food choices. [Please contact your representatives today](#) and tell to oppose this unconstitutional takeover of food producers!

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This is a terrible bill for multiple reasons

[runner12](#) Friday, November 19th at 3:48PM EST ([link](#))

and I think it has the potential to have a negative effect on the health of US citizens. Much of the organic produce that is made in this country is from small farms and producers. I remember watching a film on food production and while it did have somewhat of a Leftist bend, it did point out that the farmers who are doing things the old school way were being picked on for quote "being unsanitary" (which they were not) and large mass production plants were getting away with all sorts of unsanitary activities.

It would be a travesty if some of the small farms that are at my local farmer's market are shut down because of this ridiculous overreach of the government.

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ENOUGH!

[electroncollector](#) Friday, November 19th at 4:32PM EST ([link](#))

No more new laws.

It seems like every new law that is passed anymore was written by idiots and full of unintended consequences (at least I hope unintended is the right word).

We don't need more laws, there are more than enough to hang anyone in the country for about any reason.

REPLY TO THIS

Oh, no.....

[marshmom](#) Friday, November 19th at 5:20PM EST ([link](#))

Their consequences are always VERY much intended. They want all the power and control. Central control over every sector of the economy is what they desire—including agriculture.

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