

Notes

ABC Room – Abattoirs

Panel:

Bob Passmore, Organic Beef Farmer

John Cook, Abattoir Owner, Walnut Hill Farm

John Shute, OMAFRA

Kevin McCombe, Sheep Farmer, Mitchell

This meeting was mediated by the Perth Oxford National Farmer's Union
"Without small abattoirs, we won't have local meat."

Bob

- ❑ Farm is located near St. Mary's
- ❑ He is a producer of certified, organic beef
- ❑ It is very challenging to find a suitable, small abattoir because contaminations issues are very critical.
- ❑ Using a local abattoir produces a better quality product because less transportation means less stress on the animals.

Kevin

- ❑ Has a farm near Mitchell
- ❑ Producer of certified, organic sheep
- ❑ Without small abattoirs, locally grown meat may not be available anymore.
- ❑ He prefers dealing with local chefs and supplier because orders can be tailored to suit individual needs.
- ❑ Most small abattoirs are family run.
- ❑ Loss of small abattoirs could potentially force the local food industry underground which could risk food safety.

John Cook

- ❑ Operates a small abattoir in Perth East
- ❑ Today's regulations are very strict and involve multitudes of paperwork.
- ❑ He is drowned in paperwork and regulations. Temperatures have to be extremely precise, everything is logged. After cleaning is complete, a separate contracted company comes in to sanitize the plant.
- ❑ Extremely strict regulations if contamination is found.
- ❑ Inspectors show up very regularly, sometimes 4 times a week.
- ❑ Inspectors regularly visit on slaughter days and stay throughout the entire procedure until the animal is dressed.
- ❑ Very strict guidelines on ingredients and allergens in prepared foods such as sausages and cured meats (especially fermented products).
- ❑ If a problem is found, an auditor will rate the issue and assign a timeline for it to be remedied.

John Shute

- ❑ His role is to work with food producers.
- ❑ Ontario has an outstanding record of food safety.
- ❑ Recognizes that small abattoirs are important to the unique cuisine of Perth County and important to culinary tourism.
- ❑ There are various rural, economic development programs to assist communities and local abattoirs. This includes grants and various financial assistance (Agribusiness, Cab)
- ❑ He wants to work cooperatively with small producers and abattoirs.

What can producers do to help small abattoirs in jeopardy?

- ❑ Find out why it is closing.
- ❑ Is it an upgrading/ size issue? There is funding available.

What can we do to help save our small abattoirs?

- ❑ Contact your local politicians
- ❑ Buy local meat, increase the demand
- ❑ Be willing to pay a fair price to small producers for food