

Valued Members of the House Standing Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources:

When I first learned about the goat check off bill; I was told that it was going to be pursued to see if Kansas goat producers were interested in a goat check off. It was also discussed to speak to sale barns who sold goats on regular bases, to see where they stood. After learning about this bill already being in the house, I contacted several major sale barns that sell goats and found out none were asked how they felt about this check off bill.

Why is KMGGA getting to decide everything when it does not even represent 1/8 of the goat producers in the state of Kansas? Rumors have been flying that KMGGA is on very shaky grounds and there is talk that it might disband within a year's time. With rumors spreading this does not give the majority of the goat producers a good feeling on how things will be ran with a goat check off.

It is public knowledge that half the board has or is resigning before the next annual meeting. Further this with ex members stating that KMGGA has had major issues for years furthers the need for this bill to be dropped.

I and numerous other goat producers are strongly opposing this bill.

I have enclosed information bellow that was given to KMGGA members at an April meeting.

Kansas Goat Producers have not been made aware of this bill until now and are upset at how this bill is written and not being informed that this was going to happen.

Below is the **only information** that KMGGA members have been given on the goat check off. As of February 7, 2011 it is still posted on the KMGGA website. In June KMGGA members were told that a committee had met and they were exploring what was needed. It was a very vague report and when asked it was stated that other goat producers had not been contacted yet. Looking back on minutes that are posted on the web, and personally attending every meeting in 2010: There has **NEVER BEEN** a KMGGA vote to let this go through the house or any information given that this was moving to the house.

When reading the current house bill it reads that this is not a voluntary check off, if one does not pay the goat check off they will be fined and could go to jail, (what part of voluntary is that?), it could be interpreted that someone will be paid for their goat knowledge, it is very vague as to where the check off funds are going, there is more than one four year college who have a goat program why is it just limited to just one college?, I can go on and on about how poorly this bill is written and how Kansas goat producers have been blindsided and violated with this goat check off bill.

Once again as a Kansas Goat Producer I strongly urge you to drop this bill.

Please read the below information so that you can better understand what was told to KMGGA members and know that they did not vote for this to be in the house.

Kansas Meat Goat Checkoff

The Kansas Meat Goat Association has received numerous funding requests for support in the Goat industry including shows, fairs, research etc. As most of you know that KMGGA does not have the funding available to support everything that was requested. In April the KMGGA membership voted to establish an exploratory committee to pursue a Meat Goat check off program in Kansas.

Kansas Meat Goat Association CANNOT and WILL NOT control the check off funds. Funds raised by the Meat Goat Check off would be controlled by a (goat commission) selected group once passed by the State Legislation.

Here are a few questions often asked.

Why a goat checkoff? As number of goats and goat raisers increases, the need for more and better information, along with increased research and promotion will be vital to ensure that the goat industry continues to flourish in Kansas.

How does checkoff work? As goats are sold at a sale barn the commission will be deducted at time of payment. The Sale Barn will then send the collected funds to the State and the State will see to that the commission will receive the funds.

What is a voluntary checkoff? A voluntary check off means = if you choose not to contribute the checkoff. You may request for a refund.

House Ag & Natural Resources
February 8, 2011
Attachment 9

How much will the voluntary checkoff be? KMGA is proposing \$.50 per head.

What will the check off monies be used for? The check off monies can only be used for purposes that fall within specific areas of **production, marketing, promotion and education.**

The Kansas Goat industry is growing. Sales of goats in Kansas have increased 483% since 2001. While the recession has impacted growers, the demand for goat meat will likely continue to support this relatively new industry in Kansas.

If you have a question concerning the goat check off please feel free to ask.

Contact jerry-miller@emypeople.net

A committee was set up by KMGA to pursue this. (KMGA members were led to believe that pursuing meant checking out what the goat producer was wanting.)

Only a select few committee members were told about any committee meetings. Thus committee members that were not informed of the meetings resigned and or thought that the check off bill was not moving forward at this time.

KMGA members were told that there would be more information given to them before this went to the house. I have attended every meeting and I have not heard that this was going to the house until this week, when it was already sent to the Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

I am furious that KMGA has gotten this past the house. KMGA does not even represent 1/8 of the goat producers in the state of Kansas. Don't get me wrong this could be a very useful check off if it was written the way that KMGA members were first told it would be written. Every Producer must be made aware of this bill though and it needs to be done in the original manner that it was intended for.

When this was talked about at the June KMGA meeting it was asked if youth could be exempt for the check off bill since they were trying to earn money. Jerry Miller stated that he would look into this and do everything he could to make them exempt. Reading the proposed bill it is clear that this was not considered.

I was a member and previous board member of KMGA my child was a member of KYMGA, but due to poor head leadership we are no longer a part this association.

Thank you for reading my testimony and helping other concerned Kansas Goat Producers by saying no to House Bill Number 2099.

Sincerely,

Heather Hoover