

Munch ON THIS



Silly Laws

*By Marcia Rae
February 24, 2010*

My grandmother used to have a saying – you can't get there from here.

Sometimes it seems like you can't get there from here in the legal world of local food. Did you know that Oregon makes it impossible to have a licensed mobile USDA meat and/or poultry slaughter house? Such units exist. Washington has them. California has them. But not in Oregon. They are against state law. Now, I ask you, why is that?

And if you use a state licensed unit, you cannot cut the product up into individual pieces. It has to be sold by the quarter or half. Now why is that?

A pork producer that I know says you can tell by looking at the meat whether an animal was under stress when it was butchered as the meat will have small red star shapes which you can see. The growers who really care about their animals prefer to process them on site so that the animal has a good life and a good death. As a consumer and a meat eater, this seems important to me.

When did we start letting our laws work against us? When did we make it impossible to eat the food grown by conscientious, knowledgeable farmers who are also our neighbors? Why can't I bring this food to our farmers market? What is this costing our local economy? How is this affecting our health?

If you have the personal fortitude for it, watch Food, Inc. I know a lot about these issues, but seeing the inhumane way we treat factory-farmed animals made me bawl. Changing these laws could certainly make this part of our food system more honorable.

Munch on this – How's your relationship with your state legislator? Next time he stops by ask him, why is this?

Marcia Rae can be reached at marcia-rae@hotmail.com or 714-325-4213.