

September 21, 2021

Secretary Tom Vilsack  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

As organizations who advocate for fair and competitive markets for food and agriculture, we are writing to thank you for your announced plans to move forward with a set of three rulemakings to update and clarify aspects of the Packers and Stockyards Act (PSA) to address the treatment of livestock and poultry farmers by meatpackers, swine contractors and poultry companies. These reforms are long overdue, and it is critical that you move as expeditiously as possible to complete this rulemaking process.

Updating the PSA regulations is just one important step needed in building a more resilient food system to benefit farmers, workers and consumers.

Currently, a handful of corporations control our food from farm to fork. Over the past fifty years, control of our food system has consolidated under the control of fewer and fewer multinational agribusiness corporations.

Unchecked consolidation and vertical integration create a dramatic imbalance of power between producers and corporations, allowing corporations to manipulate the marketplace, push down the prices paid to farmers and ranchers, and drive them out of business.

It doesn't have to be this way; corporate consolidation and concentration in the food system is not inevitable. With enforcement of existing laws, rules and regulations, as well as new, forward-thinking policies, agencies can create open, transparent and competitive markets that benefit independent producers, rural communities, farm animals and eaters—not just corporate shareholders.

We look forward to working with you in support of meaningful reforms in the Packers and Stockyards Act regulations to ensure that our nation's livestock and poultry farmers have the opportunity to thrive in fair and competitive markets.

Sincerely,

## National Groups

Agricultural Justice Project  
American Grassfed Association  
American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals  
Campaign for Contract Agriculture Reform  
Campaign for Family Farms and the Environment  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Food Safety  
Earthjustice  
Family Agriculture Resource Management Services  
(F.A.R.M.S.)  
Family Farm Action Alliance  
Family Farm Defenders  
Farm Aid  
Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance  
Farm Forward  
Farm Women United  
Food & Water Watch  
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)  
Friends of the Earth  
Government Accountability Project Food Integrity Campaign  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future  
Mercy for Animals  
National Black Worker Center  
National Farmers Union  
National Family Farm Coalition  
National Organic Coalition  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Open Markets Institute  
Progressive Agriculture Organization  
Public Justice  
Rachel Carson Council  
R-CALF USA  
Revolving Door Project  
Rural Advancement Foundation International – USA  
Rural Coalition  
SEED: Strategies for Ethical and Environmental  
Development, Inc.  
Socially Responsible Agriculture Project  
The Humane League  
Transformation, a Project of Mercy for Animals

Union of Concerned Scientists

Regional, State and Local Groups

American Federation of Government Employees, L3354 (AFL-CIO)

Buffalo River Watershed Alliance (AR)

Catskill Mountainkeeper (NY)

Dakota Rural Action (SD)

Haw River Assembly (NC)

Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement

Land Stewardship Project

Missouri Coalition for the Environment

Missouri Rural Crisis Center

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

Northeast Organic Farming Association – Interstate Council

Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire

Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York

Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides

Treasure Valley Community Gardens Cooperative (ID)

Western Organization of Resource Councils