

September 24, 2023

LL.M. Program in Agricultural and Food Law  
1045 W. Maple St.  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, AR 72701

RE: The State of Sustainable Meat Processing - What Laws and Policies Make a Difference?:  
SARE Research and Education Grant Proposal

To Whom it May Concern:

From 2015 until March 2023, I was actively involved in a pasture-based livestock partnership that direct marketed grass-fed beef, lamb, goat, and poultry to the NW Arkansas community. In my off-farm capacity, I have been an adjunct professor at the University of Arkansas, where I obtained an LL.M. (Masters of Law) degree in food and agriculture law and policy.

Currently, I am the Associate Director of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit Food System 6, which focuses on developing more patient and flexible capital options for sustainable/regenerative/organic agriculture. This work is aimed at removing capital-related barriers to the adoption and scaling of sustainable agriculture systems, which often included identifying pathways to broaden access to local meat processing infrastructure. Through all of my work, I routinely interact with producers to better understand their legal/policy-related challenges.

There is a significant need for this research because many entities are actively working to address processing bottlenecks. As small-scale, sustainable producers explore alternative channels to process their livestock, understanding which policies work and do not work will be critical to ensuring an efficient and appropriately tailored processing landscape for a diverse array of processors.

Food System 6 commits to participating in and supporting “The State of Sustainable Meat Processing - What Laws and Policies Make a Difference?” application to Southern SARE Research and Education Grant Proposal. I commit to actively participating in this three-year project from April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2027. I will support the project by: assisting with the development of surveys, analyzing survey responses and related research, and drafting the final report summarizing our findings. I believe (1) my experience as an attorney focused on food/ag law and policy, (2) my experience in the agriculture finance space, and (3) my experience as a small-scale livestock producer who accessed processing facilities will contribute significantly to this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ *Lauren Manning*

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