



September 22, 2009

For Immediate Release

Contact: Beth Anne Mumford  
309-256-0755  
bethanne@cmakc.com

### **American Veal Association says Michigan housing legislation unfair to veal farmers**

*H5127 disregards veal industry plan to transition to group housing by 2017*

Meshoppen, PA--The American Veal Association (AVA) urges Michigan Senators to oppose H5127 which unfairly requires that Michigan veal producers transition to group housing within 12 months while giving Michigan pork and poultry producers ten-years to make the transition.

"In 2007, the AVA Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution calling for an industry-wide transition to group housing by 2017", said Chip Lines-Burgess, AVA President. "Today, we estimate that 30% of the industry has already moved in that direction. The one-year time frame contained in the Michigan legislation for veal producers is unfair and completely disregards the leadership shown by the veal industry which is working within a more aggressive timeframe than any other livestock group to move to group housing."

HB 5127 passed the Michigan House of Representatives on September 16 and has been referred to the Senate Agriculture Committee. The bill prohibits the use of stalls or cages for pork, egg and veal producers while providing a transition period for producers to meet the prohibition.

Todd Haynes, a Michigan veal producer says the legislation caught him by surprise.

"It seems to me that if pork and egg producers have ten-years to make changes on their farms, veal producers should get the same amount of time to make changes," argues Haynes.

The AVA calls for state senators to remove veal from the bill completely or amend the transition period so that veal producers are given the same consideration as pork and egg producers to make the transition in a reasonable timeframe.

"During these difficult economic times, this legislation, as written, will do nothing more than put Michigan veal producers like Todd Haynes out of business and eliminate the market for male dairy calves," says Lines-Burgess. "We believe that veal producers are best able to determine how to make

the transition to group housing within the time frame developed by the AVA and not be forced out of business by an arbitrary and unfair deadlines."

###

The American Veal Association represents 1,000 producers, processors and others involved in the \$1.5 billion U.S. veal industry. Veal producers purchase calves at 100 pounds raising them until they reach a market weight of 475-500 pounds. Veal producers contribute \$350 million to the dairy industry through purchase of dairy by-products and male calves. The veal industry purchases 5.5 percent of all the milk solids produced in the United States.