

# Weekly Market Bulletin

State of New Hampshire  
**Chris Sununu**  
*Governor*

Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food  
**Shawn N. Jasper**  
*Commissioner*

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## From Your Commissioner

### House Bills

One bill of concern to anyone who uses an employee leasing company was HB 227, which would have limited the lease period to 120 days. That could have caused a huge problem for many employers, but thankfully the sponsor did not like how the bill was drafted and apparently didn't see an easy way to fix it, so the bill will go to the full House with a recommendation that it be killed.

I attended the committee work session on HB 476. No opposition to the bill was voiced by committee members, but several technical and definitional issues were raised. I worked with the sponsors of the bill on those issues and I am hopeful that by the time that you read this, the bill will have been voted out of committee with a recommendation that it ought to pass with an amendment.

Earlier this week a hearing was held on HB 646, which was primarily about the use of bee toxic pesticides. On Monday the Pesticide Control Board met and agreed to send a letter to the committee in opposition to the bill. I believe that we all care about the health of our pollinators, but this bill is not the most responsible way to help our bee population. There should be a lot of good science behind any bill like this and science does not support this radical solution. We believe that the committee will listen to the experts and kill the bill. It is unfortunate that the sponsors did not approach the department, before filing the bill.

HB 549 is the industrial hemp pilot program. This department has received many inquiries about the legality of growing hemp, which was legalized by the Federal Farm Bill. More accurately the Farm Bill took hemp off the controlled substance list and allowed states to determine how to regulate it. In NH the law on the books authorized UNH to conduct research on it, but no money was ever put into it. As no report was ever brought to the legislature, hemp remains illegal to grow in our state. This bill in our opinion is not ready to be passed and given the deadlines in the House, can't be amended in such a way to make it workable this year. It will be our recommendation, when the bill is heard, to retain it for work over the summer and fall. HB 481 is the cannabis legalization bill, but it has a small section in it dealing with hemp. It is our understanding that this section of the bill will be removed.

Last week, one of the more controversial bills, HB688, also known as the pet vending bill, was heard. It was standing room only in the double committee room. We had placed a price tag of nearly 1.5 million dollars on the bill, but that was not the full cost. We could not spend the time necessary to come up with the full cost of a bill that was unlikely to move forward. Our recommendation was to study this bill. The bottom line for us is, that until we have a database that allows us to track, health certificates, rabies vaccinations and dog registrations, we cannot accomplish the basic things required by the bill. Again, I am hopeful that by the time you read this, that the bill will have been retained by the committee for further study.

**Shawn N. Jasper – Commissioner**