Priority 4: Evaluate **LIVESTOCK PROCESSING REGULATIONS AND POLICY** for impact on small farms

**207 out of 584 respondents (35%) ranked this topic as highest priority. Of those, 148 provided justification as follows:**

* 40 respondents (or 27%) commented that current regulations do not address the unique characteristics or needs of small livestock producers and instead favor large scale producers.

*“Many of the regulations are confusing; they often don't seem to make sense for small scale production. Many small farmers cannot pay the inspection and/or certification fees that are now being mandated and they often do not make sense for the backyard farmer at all. The same laws shouldn't apply to a 5,000 animal farm as a 5 animal farm.”*

* 34 respondents (or 23%) commented that current regulations create a number of barriers to entry for small livestock producers, including costs, tracking, paperwork, inspections, and minimum number of animals for slaughter dates.

*“The restrictions on processing make selling to the local consumer difficult and time / energy consuming for the local farmer”*

* 12 respondents (or 8%) commented that the current regulations are too confusing and interpreted differently by different regulatory and enforcement agencies.

*“Existing regulations hamper the ability of farms to efficiently navigate this aspect of farm production. Many regulations seem to be enforced or interpreted differently per situation.”*

* 8 respondents (or 5%) commented that mobile and on-farm slaughter regulations should be reviewed for small farm producers.

*“I would like to see the day when a farmer calls up the inspector, makes an appointment for him/her to come to the farm where he; observes the kill, the gutting and skinning, inspects the carcass and approves the carcass with the USDA stamp. The farms have to have an approved minimal facility.”*

* 7 respondents (or 5%) commented that the impact of regulations on small farms is not clear and should be studied to understand if the regulations have any negative impacts.

*“There continues to be noise about the demand for such facilities and/or regulation changes. Based on previous 'research' the cost benefit of a facility is questionable. Looking at the regulations should put the subject to bed, for now.”*