

# Governor Pillen and Senators Introduce Legislation to Benefit Nebraska Agriculture

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**LINCOLN, NE** – Today, Governor Jim Pillen and state senators presented three bills critical to preserving and protecting agriculture in Nebraska.

“As the first farmer-governor in more than 100 years, I know how important it is that we take steps to preserve our way of life, for the benefit of those who consume our products,” said Gov. Pillen. “We feed the world and save the planet. To ensure that we can do that for generations to come, we need to take steps that protect our water supply, the data that farmers use to improve their yields and their profits and that we keep extremists from introducing unproven meat products from being sold to consumers.”

### Lab-Grown Meat

Senator Barry DeKay is bringing legislation to keep lab-grown meat from being manufactured, distributed, or sold in Nebraska. The bill defines “cultivated food protein” and requires those products to be labeled “adulterated food products” under the Pure Food Act.

“There are clear, recognized benefits of meat as a source of protein. It is uncertain whether manufactured meat protein is a substitute for natural meat sources as essential dietary needs. I question elevating lab meat to a level of equivalency with real meat,” said Sen. DeKay. “Until or unless there are clear labeling rules that adequately disclose that cultured meat is not real meat, its sale allows lab meats to unfairly benefit from industry investments in marketing and production. What’s more, this industry is supported by organizations that want to do away with animal production in Nebraska and the United States. This is part of the process that we’re going to go through to make sure our way of life, our livestock, and our product that we can put on the dinner table stays intact going forward.”

Gov. Pillen added, “It’s important we get on the offense so that Nebraska farmers and ranchers are not undermined. Our job is to protect consumers, grow agriculture and defend agriculture. Most of us want government out of our hair, but there are places where government needs to step in and protect us.”

### Merging NDEE & DNR

At the request of the Governor, Senator Tom Brandt is bringing a bill to merge the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. Policies and programs focused on water quality and quantity will now be under the same leadership. This will improve long-range planning for water and natural resource management issues such as nitrogen management and soil health. Related to nitrogen management, the Governor also announced the formation of his Task Force on Water Quality and Quantity.

Speaking on the merger, Sen. Brandt said, “By merging the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Environment and Energy, we are streamlining government operations to better address our state’s critical water needs. This legislation represents an

opportunity to enhance efficiency, strengthen resource management, and ensure a sustainable future for Nebraska."

### **Agricultural Data Privacy**

Another emerging issue for the agricultural community is producer data privacy. Senator Mike Jacobson's planned bill will keep the ownership of producer generated data with the farm or the producer where it was created. It prohibits sale of that information to other agricultural corporations. In this regard, it would be similar to the recently adopted Consumer Data Privacy Act. If passed, Nebraska would be a national leader by being the first state to have a law restricting the sale of agricultural data.

"Nebraska farmers and ranchers are increasingly concerned about the variety of new ag data products that are arriving on the market," said Sen. Jacobson. "They want to know what happens to their data once they provide it to ag tech providers. They have a lot of questions about how the data is used, if they can retrieve it and should they trust the providers?"

"It's important we not only defend agriculture but go on the offensive," said Gov. Pillen. "The better agriculture does, the better our economy does. I'm eager to work with the legislature this year to lead the nation and protect and grow our agriculture industry."

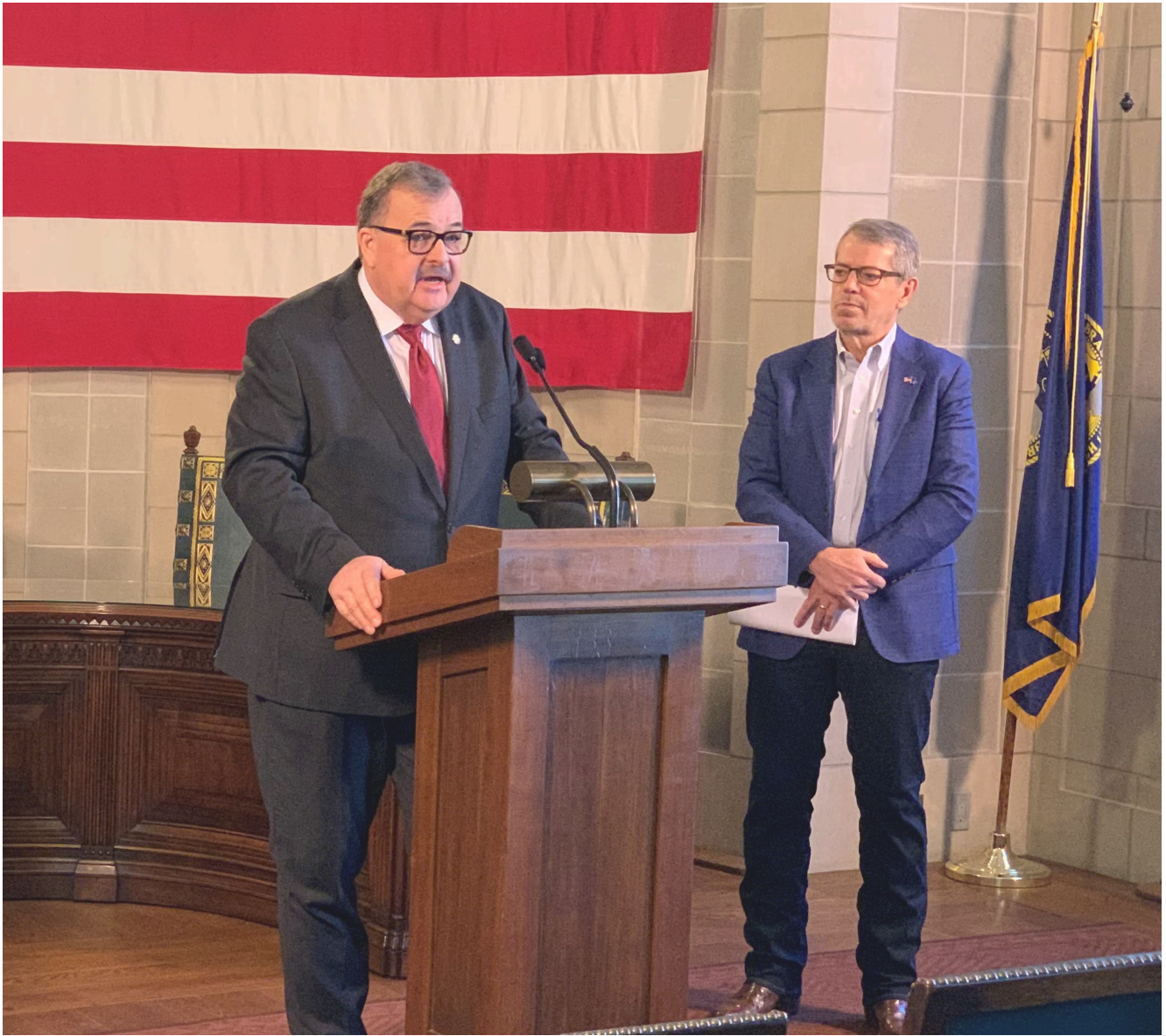


Governor Jim Pillen at the podium





Senator Barry DeKay at the podium



Senator Mike Jacobson at the podium