

California lawmakers looking at rewriting food policies

By Torey Van Oot, Sacramento Bee

From artisanal breads and homemade jams to gluten-free goods, some of the year's most buzzworthy food movements are sprouting under the Capitol dome.

State lawmakers are set to consider a handful of food policy proposals that could shape what goods Californians keep in their pantries and what they know about what's on their plates.

California is no stranger to major food policy measures, including a ban on foie gras that is set to go into effect later this year. But heightened interest in food issues, including the farm-to-table movement and demands for increased disclosure, are driving more proposed changes.

"I think in recent years, there's been an awareness that buying local is good for you and also good for the environment," said Assemblyman Mike Gatto, who is carrying a bill that would lift restrictions on selling homemade prepared foods. "I think that as families have realized that, certainly the Legislature has heard from our constituents."

The Los Angeles Democrat has introduced one of two bills that would allow the sale of "cottage food products," such as mixed nuts, granolas, roasted coffee, baking mixes, baked goods and preserves made out of the home.

Read the whole story