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H.828

Introduced by Representatives Zagar of Barnard, Bartholomew of Hartland,
Eastman of Orwell, Grad of Moretown, Johnson of South Hero,
Lawrence of Lyndon, Partridge of Windham, Ram of
Burlington, Sheldon of Middlebury, Smith of New Haven, and
Toll of Danville

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Agriculture; education; farm to school

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to make multiple
amendments to the requirements of the Rozo McLaughlin Farm-to-School
Program (Program), including specifying the purpose and State goal of the
Program.

An act relating to the Rozo McLaughlin Farm-to-School Program

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. chapter 211 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 211. THE ROZO MCLAUGHLIN
FARM-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM

1 § 4719. PURPOSE AND STATE GOAL

2 (a) Purpose. It is the purpose of this chapter to establish a farm-to-school
3 program to:

4 (1) encourage Vermont residents in developing healthy and lifelong
5 habits of eating nutritious local foods;

6 (2) maximize use by Vermont schools of fresh and locally grown,
7 produced, or processed food;

8 (3) establish a nutrition education program that educates Vermont
9 students regarding healthy eating habits through the use of educational
10 materials, classes, and hands-on techniques that inform students of the
11 connections between farming and the foods that students consume;

12 (4) increase the size and stability of direct sales markets available to
13 farmers; and

14 (5) increase participation of Vermont students in school meal programs
15 by increasing the selection of available foods.

16 (b) State goal. It is the goal of the Farm-to-School Program to establish a
17 food system that by 2025:

18 (1) engages 75 percent of Vermont schools in an integrated education
19 program that incorporates community-based learning; and

20 (2) purchases 50 percent of food from local or regional food sources.

1 § 4720. DEFINITIONS

2 As used in this chapter, “Farm-to-School Program” means an integrated
3 education program that utilizes community-based learning opportunities to
4 connect schools with nearby farms to provide students with locally produced
5 fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy and protein products, and other nutritious,
6 locally produced foods in school breakfasts, lunches, and snacks; help children
7 develop healthy eating habits; provide nutritional and agricultural education in
8 the classroom, cafeteria, and school garden; and improve farmers’ incomes and
9 direct access to markets.

10 § 4721. LOCAL FOODS GRANT PROGRAM

11 (a) There is created in the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets the
12 Rozo McLaughlin Farm-to-School Program to award local grants for the
13 purpose of helping Vermont schools develop and sustain relationships with
14 local farmers and producers, enrich the educational experience of students,
15 improve the health of Vermont children, and enhance Vermont’s agricultural
16 economy.

17 (b) A school, a school district, a consortium of schools, or a consortium of
18 school districts may apply to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets
19 for a grant award to:

20 (1) fund equipment, resources, training, and materials that will help to
21 increase use of local foods in the School Food Service Program;

1 (2) fund items, including local ~~farm~~ food products, gardening supplies,
2 field trips to farms, and stipends to visiting farmers, that will help teachers to
3 use hands-on educational techniques to teach children about nutrition and
4 farm-to-school connections; and

5 (3) ~~provide~~ fund professional development and technical assistance, in
6 partnership with the Agency of Education and farm-to-school technical service
7 providers, to help teachers and members of the farm-to-school community
8 educate students about nutrition and farm-to-school connections and assist
9 schools in developing a farm-to-school program.

10 (c) The Secretaries of Agriculture, Food and Markets and of Education and
11 the Commissioner of Health, in consultation with farmers, food service
12 workers, ~~and~~ educators, and farm-to-school technical service providers jointly
13 shall ~~jointly~~ adopt rules relating to the content of the grant application and the
14 criteria for making awards.

15 (d) The Secretary shall determine that there is significant interest in the
16 school community before making an award and shall give priority
17 consideration to schools and school districts that are developing farm-to-school
18 connections and education and that are making progress toward the
19 implementation of the Vermont ~~nutrition and fitness policy guidelines~~ School
20 Wellness Policy Guidelines developed by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and

1 Markets, the Agency of Education, and the Department of Health, ~~dated~~
2 ~~November 2005~~ updated in June 2015 or of the successor of these guidelines.

3 (e) No award shall be greater than \$15,000.00.

4 § 4722. FARM ASSISTANCE; SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD
5 AND MARKETS

6 (a) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall work with
7 existing programs and organizations to develop and implement educational
8 opportunities for farmers to help them to increase their markets through selling
9 their products to schools and State government agencies and participating in
10 the federal food commodities program, including the federal Department of
11 Defense Fresh Program, and selling to regulated child care programs
12 participating in the ~~Adult and Child~~ and Adult Care Food Program.

13 (b) The Secretaries of Agriculture, Food and Markets and of Education
14 shall work with distributors that sell products to schools and State government
15 agencies to increase the availability of local products.

16 (c) For the purposes of this section and section 4723 of this title, the
17 Secretary may provide funds to:

18 (1) one or more technical assistance providers to provide farm-to-school
19 education and teacher training to more school districts and to assist the
20 Secretaries of Agriculture, Food and Markets and of Education to carry out
21 farmer and food service worker training; or

1 (2) farmers in the State who demonstrate the need to increase production
2 capacity for the purpose of supplying products to schools in the State that:

3 (A) are participating in the Rozo McLaughlin Farm-to-School
4 Program under this chapter; and

5 (B) plan to increase the amount of fresh local food used in the
6 school's nutritional program.

7 § 4723. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FOOD SERVICE
8 PERSONNEL

9 (a) The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of
10 Agriculture, Food and Markets and the Commissioner of Health, shall offer
11 expanded regional training sessions for public school food service personnel
12 and child care resource development specialists ~~as funds are made available~~.
13 Training shall include information about strategies for ~~purchasing~~ procuring,
14 processing, and serving locally grown foods, especially with regard to federal
15 procurement program requirements, as well as information about nutrition,
16 obesity prevention, coping with severe food allergies, and food service
17 operations. The Secretary of Education may use a portion of the funds
18 appropriated for this training session to pay a portion of or all expenses for
19 attendees and to develop manuals or other materials to help in the training.

20 (b) The Secretary of Education shall ~~train people as funds are made~~
21 ~~available to~~ provide training related to procurement and technical assistance to

1 school food service personnel and use a portion of the funds appropriated for
2 this purpose to enable the trained people to provide technical assistance at the
3 school and school district levels.

4 (c) Training provided under this section shall promote the policies
5 established in the Vermont ~~nutrition and fitness policy guidelines~~ School
6 Wellness Policy Guidelines developed by the Agencies of Agriculture, Food
7 and Markets and of Education and the Department of Health, ~~dated November~~
8 2005 updated in June 2015, or the guidelines' successor.

9 § 4724. ~~LOCAL FOODS COORDINATOR~~ FOOD SYSTEMS

10 ADMINISTRATOR

11 (a) The position of ~~local food coordinator~~ Food Systems Administrator is
12 established in the ~~agency of agriculture, food and markets~~ Agency of
13 Agriculture, Food and Markets for the purpose of assisting Vermont producers
14 ~~to increase~~ in increasing their access to commercial markets and institutions,
15 including schools, ~~state~~ State and municipal governments, and hospitals.

16 (b) The duties of the ~~local foods coordinator~~ Food Systems Administrator
17 shall include:

18 (1) working with institutions, distributors, producers, commercial
19 markets, and others to create matchmaking opportunities that increase the
20 number of Vermont institutions that purchase foods grown or produced in
21 Vermont;

1 (2) coordinating funding and providing support to the farm-to-school
2 and farm-to-institutions programs within the ~~agency of agriculture, food and~~
3 ~~markets~~ Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and coordinating with
4 interested parties to create matchmaking opportunities across the supply chain
5 that increase participation in those programs;

6 (3) encouraging and facilitating ~~the enrollment of state employees~~ State
7 employee access and awareness of opportunities for purchasing local food,
8 including: enrolling in a local community supported agriculture (CSA)
9 organization, purchasing from local farm stands, and participating in a
10 downtown farmers' market;

11 (4) developing a database of producers and potential purchasers and
12 enhancing the ~~agency's website~~ Agency and partners' ability to improve and
13 support local foods coordination through the use of information
14 technology; and

15 (5) providing technical support to local communities with their food
16 security efforts.

17 (c) The ~~local foods coordinator~~ Food Systems Administrator, working with
18 the ~~commissioner of buildings and general services~~ Commissioner of
19 Buildings and General Services pursuant to rules adopted under 29 V.S.A.
20 § 152(14), shall:

1 (1) encourage and facilitate ~~CSA enrollment~~ awareness of and
2 opportunities to procure healthy local foods by ~~state~~ State employees through
3 the use of approved advertisements and solicitations on ~~state-owned~~
4 State-owned property; and

5 (2) implement guidelines for the appropriate use of ~~state~~ State property
6 for employee participation in CSA organizations, including reasonable
7 restrictions on the time, place, and manner of solicitations, advertisements,
8 deliveries, and related activities to ensure the safety and welfare of ~~state~~ State
9 property and its occupants.

10 (d) The ~~local foods coordinator~~ Food Systems Administrator shall
11 administer a local foods grant program, the purpose of which shall be to
12 provide grants to allow Vermont producers to increase their access to
13 commercial and institutional markets.

14 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

15 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2016.