

1 H.205

2 Introduced by Representatives Graham of Williamstown, Surprenant of
3 Barnard, Bartley of Fairfax, Beck of St. Johnsbury, Branagan of
4 Georgia, Clifford of Rutland City, Cole of Hartford, Goslant of
5 Northfield, Higley of Lowell, Labor of Morgan, Leavitt of
6 Grand Isle, Lipsky of Stowe, Maguire of Rutland City, Mattos
7 of Milton, McFaun of Barre Town, Morgan of Milton,
8 Morrissey of Bennington, Noyes of Wolcott, O'Brien of
9 Tunbridge, Oliver of Sheldon, Pajala of Londonderry, Parsons
10 of Newbury, Pearl of Danville, Peterson of Clarendon, Rice of
11 Dorset, Sammis of Castleton, Sims of Craftsbury, Small of
12 Winooski, Smith of Derby, Templeman of Brownington,
13 Whitman of Bennington, Williams of Granby, and Wilson of
14 Lyndon

15 Referred to Committee on

16 Date:

17 Subject: Agriculture; small farms; financial assistance; diversification;
18 transition

19 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish the
20 Small Farm Diversification and Transition Program at the Agency of
21 Agriculture, Food and Markets to provide small farms in Vermont with State

1 financial assistance to diversify production on a farm or to transition from one
2 form of farming to another.

3 An act relating to establishing the Small Farm Diversification and
4 Transition Program

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

6 Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. chapter 207, subchapter 4 is added to read:

7 Subchapter 4. Small Farm Diversification and Transition Program

8 § 4631. Small Farm Diversification and Transition Program

9 (a) The Small Farm Diversification and Transition Program is created at
10 the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to provide small farms in
11 Vermont with State financial assistance to diversify production on a farm or to
12 transition from one form of farming to another. Assistance under the Program
13 shall be in the form of grants. Small Farm Diversification and Transition
14 Program grants shall be used for costs of:

- 15 (1) diversifying the agricultural commodities produced on a small farm;
16 (2) transitioning a small farm from one form of farming to another;
17 (3) on-farm processing of agricultural commodities on a small farm; and
18 (4) development of accessory on-farm businesses on a small farm.

19 (b) An applicant for a Small Farm Diversification and Transition Program
20 grant shall demonstrate to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets:

1 (1) that they are a small farm as defined under the Required Agricultural
2 Practices;

3 (2) potential from the proposed diversification or transition to create
4 additional income for the farm; and

5 (3) a proposed plan for diversification or transition that includes
6 possible markets for the proposed product and probable income.

7 (c)(1) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall issue Small
8 Farm Diversification and Transition Program grants under this section when
9 funds are available for the Program on a first-come, first-served basis until all
10 funds are expended.

11 (2) Applications shall be processed in the order received, but an
12 application shall not be ready for evaluation until the Secretary determines that
13 the application is administratively complete and includes all required
14 documentation required by the Secretary.

15 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION

16 In addition to any other funds appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture,
17 Food and Markets in fiscal year 2024, \$250,000.00 is appropriated from the
18 General Fund to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for purposes of
19 the Small Farm Diversification and Transition Program.

20 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

21 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.