

**Act No. 39 (H.484). Agriculture; water quality financing; weights and measures; drug residue testing; unpasteurized milk**

**An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects**

The act amends multiple programs within the jurisdiction of the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (AAFM). The act amends the requirements for AAFM financial assistance for agricultural water quality projects, including: authorizing State assistance for costs of inspecting waste storage facilities; requiring farmers to be in good standing with the AAFM in order to receive assistance; authorizing the AAFM to designate other types of domestic fowl or livestock on a farm that may require a large farm or medium farm permit; and clarifying that waste storage facilities and nutrient management plans for large and medium farms need to meet federal standards. The act also renames the Vermont Agricultural Buffer Program the Vermont Seeding and Filter Strip Program.

The act provides that the AAFM shall only provide refunds for overpayments on licenses, permits, or registrations when the overpayment is \$25.00 or more. The act amends the requirements in statute regarding the testing of milk for drug residues. The act adopts by reference the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) requirements for unit pricing. The act authorizes the Vermont Economic Development Authority to issue grants to AAFM and the Agency of Natural Resources for water quality initiatives. The act also consolidates the Working Lands Enterprise Board and the Agricultural and Forest Products Development Board. The act establishes an Animal Shelter Working Group to review the statutory requirements for sheltering dogs outdoors.

In addition, the act amends the requirements for the sale of unpasteurized milk. The act eliminates the mandatory farm visit by a customer prior to sale of unpasteurized milk. The act lifts the cap on Tier II producers from 280 gallons a week to 350 gallons. The act amends the requirements for testing raw milk for coliform, somatic cell, and total bacteria. Similarly, the act amends the brucellosis and tuberculosis testing requirements for dairy animals owned by unpasteurized milk producers.

Multiple effective dates beginning on May 28, 2015.