

**No. R-360. House concurrent resolution celebrating the cultural and economic centrality of agriculture in the State of Vermont.**

(H.C.R.288)

Offered by: Committee on Agriculture and Forestry

Whereas, ever since Vermont's founding in the 18th century, agriculture has been a primary means of economic support and way of life for Vermonters, and

Whereas, in 21st century Vermont, agriculture and agriculturally related industries remain a vibrant and vital force in the State's economy and the daily lives of thousands of Vermonters, and

Whereas, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets has compiled a statistical synopsis documenting the importance of agriculture activities in our State, and

Whereas, combining all agricultural production and sales, the annual economic impact of agriculture in Vermont totals \$2.63 billion, of which \$2.2 billion is based on the dairy industry, and

Whereas, Vermont's annual agricultural sales at \$776 million are the largest of the six New England states, and

Whereas, 15 percent of the State's acreage is devoted to dairy farms and the fields that provide dairy cattle their feed, totaling 900,000 acres, and

Whereas, over 80 percent of all farmland in the State is devoted to dairy and crops used to feed dairy cattle, and

Whereas, 70 percent of Vermont's agricultural sales are derived from dairy, and

Whereas, the more than 750 Vermont dairy farms are home to over 128,000 dairy cows that produce over 321 million gallons of milk annually, and

Whereas, although Vermont's economy is only two-tenths of one percent of the nation's economy, the Green Mountain State is the source for more than one percent of the nation's dairy products, or five times the State's percentage contribution to the American economy, and

Whereas, at least 94 percent of Vermont's schools purchase locally produced food, and the State is home to over 75 farmers' markets, more per capita than any other state, and

Whereas, yesterday, March 20, 2018, was National Agricultural Day, and this week is an ideal time to salute the importance of agriculture in Vermont, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly celebrates the cultural and economic centrality of agriculture in the State of Vermont, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets and to the Vermont Farm Bureau.