

REDRAFT OF S.160 Section 1 v2

An act relating to agricultural development

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

* * * Strategic Plan * * *

Sec. 1. STRATEGIC PLAN TO STABILIZE AND REVITALIZE THE VERMONT
AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD INDUSTRY

(a) On or before January 15, 2020, pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 330 the Vermont Farm to Plate Investment Program, in partnership with the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets and industry stakeholders shall submit to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry a report that shall serve as the basis for an update to the Farm to Plate Strategic Plan. series of farm and food sector and market specific summaries of trends and viability strategies across Vermont's agricultural and food industry. These agricultural industry highlights After additional industry stakeholder engagement, this report shall be then lead to the development of a prioritized into a strategic plan for the stabilization, diversification, and revitalization of the agricultural and food industry in Vermont by ~~June 30~~August 31, 2020.

(b) The ~~report sector and market channel summaries shall be facilitated by the Vermont Farm to Plate Investment Program and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets and be comprised of research conducted by various industry subject matter experts, partners, and stakeholders. The industry highlights shall:~~

- (1) summarize current conditions within ~~a~~ particular sub-sectors, product categories and/or market channels that comprise Vermont's food system, including most recent

Commented [EK1]: Note that H.275 which will reauthorize this program for another 10 years modifies existing statute language to make it clear that updates to the Strategic Plan are encouraged ... thus, this section of the bill clarifies that such an update is being requested by the Legislature and it will be led by VSJF through its Farm to Plate Investment Program, in partnership with VAAFM. Not sure if formal bill writing protocol should name Sustainable Jobs Fund Program rather than Vermont Farm to Plate Investment Program ... will leave that for Mike to decide

data synthesis, research, reports and expert documentation of challenges and opportunities for growth;

- (2) recommend State investment in research and development by universities or other qualified organization to establish new markets, products, or ingredients;
- (3) recommend methods for improving the marketing of Vermont agricultural products outside the State, outside the region, and outside the country;

(c) The resultant strategic plan shall outline prioritized next steps and opportunities to assist in stabilizing, diversifying, and revitalizing Vermont's food system. The plan may include recommendations related to:

- (1) technical assistance resources and capital availability to farmers to assist in the diversification of agricultural products produced on the farm;
- (2) alternatives or methods for encouraging, maintaining, or increasing the amount of land in agricultural production in the State;
- (3) ~~recommended~~ resources ~~of for~~ financing ~~for~~ research and development by universities and businesses ~~of which promote~~ innovative methods for managing and commoditizing manure to mitigate the environmental concerns raised by current manure management techniques;
- (4) ~~proposed~~ techniques or systems for improving the ecological footprint and environmental sustainability of farming in the State;
- (5) ~~an assessment of~~ the potential to increase the amount of Vermont agricultural products that are purchased by school nutrition program in the State; ~~and~~
- (6) approaches for improving transparency in the agricultural industry so that the public is educated and aware of the need for and effort of certain dairy practices;

(7) approaches for improving agricultural and food literacy among Vermonters so that they are better informed about where their food comes from and how it is produced; and-

~~(6)~~(8) The level of state, private and philanthropic investment needed over the next 10 years in order to stabilize, diversify, and revitalize Vermont's food system

(d) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets ~~in partnership with shall consult with~~ the Vermont Farm to Plate Investment Program, ~~and other interested parties in developing the industry summaries required under subsection (b) of this section and~~ shall hold at least four public hearings around the State to receive public input on priorities for stabilizing and revitalizing the agricultural industries in Vermont to be included in the strategic plan required under subsection (c) of this section.

(e) If at least \$100,000.00 in funding is not made available for the purpose of this section, the Sustainable Jobs Fund Program and Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets are encouraged but no longer required to fulfill the provisions of this section.

Commented [EK2]: Or should this say Vermont Farm to Plate Investment Program?