

S.160

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 INDUSTRY

(a) On or before January 15, 2020, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall submit to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry a strategic plan for the stabilization, diversification, and revitalization of the agricultural industry in Vermont. The strategic plan shall:

(1) recommend new markets, products, or ingredients for farmers, including recommended State investment in research and development by universities or other qualified organizations to establish new markets, products, or ingredients;

(2) recommend methods, products, or incentives available to farmers to assist in the diversification of agricultural products produced on the farm;

(3) recommend methods for improving the marketing of Vermont agricultural products outside the State, outside the region, and outside the country;

(4) recommend alternatives or methods for encouraging maintaining or increasing the amount of land in agricultural production in the State;

(5) evaluate whether State programs that fund farming and existing exemptions in law for farming are the most effective means for supporting the agricultural industry in Vermont;

(6) recommend sources of financing for research and development by universities and businesses of innovative methods for managing and commoditizing manure to mitigate the environmental concerns raised by current manure management techniques;

(7) propose techniques or systems for improving the ecological footprint and environmental sustainability of farming in the State;

(8) after consultation with the Northeast Organic Farming Association and Vermont FEED, provide an assessment of the potential to increase the amount of Vermont agricultural products that are purchased by school nutrition programs in the State, including an inventory of agricultural products, such as beef, eggs, or cheese, where demand from schools would create a viable market for Vermont farmers; and

(9) approaches for improving transparency in the agricultural industry so that the public is educated and aware of the need for and effect of certain dairy practices.

(b) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall consult with interested parties in developing the strategic plan required under subsection (a) of this section and shall hold at least four public hearings around the State to

receive public input on alternatives for stabilizing and revitalizing the agricultural industry in Vermont.

* * * Feasibility Analysis of Dairy Processing Plant * * *

Sec. 2. DAIRY PROCESSING PLANT; REPORT

On or before January 15, 2020, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall report to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry regarding the development of a dairy processing plant in the State for the purpose of increasing the access of Vermont dairy products to major metropolitan markets in New England and the Northeast. The report shall:

(1) recommend whether the State should facilitate the development of a dairy processing plant in the State;

(2) if the Secretary recommends that the State facilitate development of a dairy processing plant under subdivision (1) of this subsection, summarize how the State could facilitate development of a dairy processing plant through public-private partnerships, joint ventures, or other economic incentives;

(3) identify existing funding sources or economic incentives that could be utilized to fund the development of a dairy processing plant; and

(4) include any other information that the Secretary deems necessary for review of the feasibility of developing a dairy processing plant in Vermont.

* * * Soil Conservation Practices * * *

Sec. 3. FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SOIL
CONSERVATION PRACTICES

(a) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall convene a Soil Conservation Practice Working Group to recommend financial incentives designed to encourage farmers in Vermont to implement agricultural practices that exceed the requirements of 6 V.S.A. chapter 215 and that improve soil health productivity, enhance crop resilience, and reduce agricultural runoff to waters. The Working Group shall:

(1) identify agricultural standards or practices that farmers can implement that improve soil health productivity, enhance crop resilience, and reduce agricultural runoff to waters;

(2) recommend existing financial incentives available to farmers that could be modified or amended to incentivize implementation of the agricultural standards identified under subdivision (1) of this subsection or incentivize the reclamation or preservation of wetlands;

(3) propose new financial incentives, including a source of revenue, for implementation of the agricultural standards identified under subdivision (1) of this subsection if existing financial incentives are inadequate or if the goal of implementation of the agricultural standards would be better served by a new financial incentive; and

(4) recommend legislative changes that may be required to implement any financial incentive recommended or proposed in the report.

(b) The Soil Conservation Practice Working Group shall consist of persons with knowledge or expertise in agricultural water quality, soil health, economic development, or agricultural financing, and, at a minimum, the Working Group shall include:

(1) the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee;

(2) a representative of the Farm and Forest Viability Program of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board;

(3) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee;

(4) a representative of the Dairy Water Collaborative, appointed by the Collaborative;

(5) a representative of at least two Farmer's Watershed Alliances, appointed by the Alliances;

(6) a representative of the Natural Resources Conservation Council, appointed by the Council; and

(7) at least two members of the Agricultural Water Quality Partnership, appointed by the Partnership.

(c) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee shall be the chair of the Working Group, and the representative of the Farm and Forest Viability Program shall be the vice chair.

(d) On or before January 15, 2020, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall submit to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry the findings and recommendations of the Soil Conservation Practice Working Group regarding financial incentives designed to encourage farmers in Vermont to implement agricultural practices that improve soil health productivity, enhance crop resilience, and reduce agricultural runoff to waters.

* * * Clean Water Affinity Card * * *

Sec. 4. 32 V.S.A. § 584 is amended to read:

§ 584. VERMONT CLEAN WATER ~~VERMONT STATE SPONSORED~~
AFFINITY CARD PROGRAM

(a) The State Treasurer is hereby authorized to sponsor and participate in an Affinity Card Program for the benefit of water quality improvement in the ~~residents of~~ this State upon his or her determination that such a Program is feasible and may be procured at rates and terms in the best ~~interest~~ interests of the cardholders. ~~In selecting an affinity card issuer, the Treasurer shall consider the issuer's record of investments in the State and shall take into consideration program features which will enhance the promotion of the State sponsored affinity card, including consumer friendly terms, favorable interest rates, annual fees, and other fees for using the card.~~

(b) In selecting an affinity card issuer, the Treasurer shall consider the issuer's record of investments in the State and shall take into consideration program features that will enhance the promotion of the State-sponsored affinity card, including consumer-friendly terms, favorable interest rates, annual fees, and other fees for using the card. The Treasurer shall consult with other State agencies about potential public purpose projects to be designated for the Program and shall allow cardholders to designate that funds be used either to support sustainable agricultural programs, renewable energy programs, State parks and forestland programs, or any combination of these. The net proceeds of the State fees or royalties generated by this program shall be transmitted to the State and shall be deposited in a State-sponsored Affinity Card Fund and subsequently transferred to the designated State programs and purposes as selected by the cardholders. The funds received shall be held by the Treasurer until transferred for the purposes directed by participating State-sponsored affinity cardholders in accordance with the trust fund provisions of section 462 of this title.

(c) The net proceeds of the State fees or royalties generated by the Vermont Clean Water Affinity Card Program shall be transmitted to the State and shall be deposited into the Clean Water Fund under 10 V.S.A. § 1388 to provide financial incentives to encourage farmers in Vermont to implement agricultural practices that improve soil health productivity, enhance crop resilience, or

~~reduce agricultural runoff to waters. All program balances at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward and shall not revert to the General Fund. Interest earned shall remain in the program.~~

(d) The State shall not assume any liability for lost or stolen credit cards nor any other legal debt owed to the financial institutions.

(e) The State Treasurer is authorized to adopt such rules as may be necessary to implement the Vermont Clean Water State-sponsored Affinity Card Program.

Sec. 5. FUNDING; REPORT ON FUNDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE;

AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES; SOIL HEALTH PRODUCTIVITY

Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 584, requiring deposit of proceeds from the Vermont Clean Water Affinity Card into the Clean Water Fund, in fiscal year 2020 and 2021:

(1) one-half of the proceeds from the Vermont Clean Water Affinity Card that were generated in fiscal year 2020 and 2021 shall be deposited into the General Fund for use to complete the dairy processing plant feasibility analysis required under Sec. 2 of this act; and

(2) one-half of the proceeds from the Vermont Clean Water Affinity Card that were generated in fiscal year 2020 and 2021 shall be deposited into the General Fund for use to complete the report required under Sec. 3 of this act regarding financial incentives designed to encourage farmers in Vermont to

implement agricultural practices that improve soil health productivity, enhance crop resilience, or reduce agricultural runoff to waters.

* * * On-Farm Slaughter * * *

Sec. 6. REPEAL OF SUNSET OF ON-FARM SLAUGHTER AUTHORITY

2013 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 13, as amended by 2016 Acts and Resolves No. 98, Sec. 2 (sunset of authority to conduct on-farm slaughter) is repealed.

Sec. 7. 6 V.S.A. § 3351a is amended to read:

§ 3311A. LIVESTOCK; INSPECTION; LICENSING; PERSONAL
SLAUGHTER; ITINERANT SLAUGHTER

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “Assist in the slaughter of livestock” means the act of slaughtering or butchering an animal and shall not mean the farmer’s provision of a site on the farm for slaughter, provision of implements for slaughter, or the service of disposal of the carcass or offal from slaughter.

(2) “Sanitary conditions” means a site on a farm that is:

(A) clean and free of contaminants; and

(B) located or designed in a way to prevent:

(i) the occurrence of water pollution; and

(ii) the adulteration of the livestock or the slaughtered meat.

(b) The requirement for a license under section 3306 of this title or for inspection under this chapter shall not apply to the slaughter by an ~~individual~~ owner of livestock that the ~~individual~~ owner raised for the ~~individual's~~ owner's exclusive use or for the use of members of his or her household and his or her nonpaying guests and employees.

(c) The requirement for a license under section 3306 of this title or for inspection under this chapter shall not apply to the slaughter of livestock that occurs in a manner that meets all of the following requirements:

(1) ~~An individual~~ A person or persons purchases livestock from a farmer that raised the livestock.

(2) The farmer is registered with the Secretary, on a form provided by the Secretary, as selling livestock for slaughter under this subsection.

(3) The individual or individuals who purchased the livestock performs the act of slaughtering the livestock, as the owner of the livestock.

(4) The act of slaughter occurs, after approval from the farmer who sold the livestock, on a site on the farm where the livestock was purchased.

(5) The slaughter is conducted under sanitary conditions.

(6) The farmer who sold the livestock to the individual or individuals does not assist in the slaughter of the livestock.

(7) No more than the following number of livestock per year are slaughtered under this subsection:

(A) 15 swine;

(B) five cattle;

(C) 40 sheep or goats; or

(D) any combination of swine, cattle, sheep, or goats, provided that no more than 6,000 pounds of the live weight of livestock are slaughtered per year.

(8) The farmer who sold the livestock to the individual or individuals maintains a record of each slaughter conducted under this subsection and reports quarterly to the Secretary, on a form provided by the Secretary, on or before April 15 for the calendar quarter ending March 31, on or before July 15 for the calendar quarter ending June 30, on or before October 15 for the calendar quarter ending September 30, and on or before January 15 for the calendar quarter ending December 31. If a farmer fails to report slaughter activity conducted under this subsection, the Secretary, in addition to any enforcement action available under this chapter or chapter 1 of this title, may suspend the authority of the farmer to sell animals to an individual or individuals for slaughter under this subsection.

(9) The slaughtered livestock may be halved or quartered by the individual or individuals who purchased the livestock but solely for the purpose of transport from the farm.

(10) The livestock is slaughtered according to a humane method, as that term is defined in subdivision 3131(6) of this title.

(d) The requirement for a license under section 3306 of this title or for inspection under this chapter shall not apply to an itinerant slaughterer engaged in the act of itinerant livestock slaughter or itinerant poultry slaughter.

(e) An itinerant slaughterer may slaughter livestock owned by a person on the farm where the livestock was raised under the following conditions:

(1) the meat from the slaughter of the livestock is distributed only as whole ~~or half~~, halved, or quartered carcasses to the person who owned the animal for his or her personal use or for use by members of his or her household or nonpaying guests; ~~and~~

(2) the slaughter is conducted under sanitary conditions; and

(3) the livestock is slaughtered according to a humane method, as that term is defined in subdivision 3131(6) of this title.

(f) A carcass or offal from slaughter conducted under this section shall be disposed of according to the requirements under the required agricultural practices for the management of agricultural waste.

* * * Animal Welfare; Traceability * * *

Sec. 8. 6 V.S.A. § 1152 is amended to read:

§ 1152. ADMINISTRATION; INSPECTION; TESTING; RECORDS

(a) The Secretary shall be responsible for the administration and enforcement of the livestock disease control program. The Secretary may appoint the State Veterinarian to manage the program, and other personnel as are necessary for the sound administration of the program.

(b) The Secretary shall maintain a public record of all permits issued and of all animals tested by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets under this chapter for a period of five years.

(c) The Secretary may conduct any inspections, investigations, tests, diagnoses, or other reasonable steps necessary to discover and eliminate contagious diseases existing in domestic animals in this State. The Secretary shall investigate any reports of diseased animals, provided there are adequate resources. In carrying out the provisions of this part, the Secretary or his or her authorized agent may enter any real estate, premises, buildings, enclosures, or areas where animals may be found for the purpose of making reasonable inspections and tests. A livestock owner or the person in possession of the animal to be inspected, upon request of the Secretary, shall restrain the animal and make it available for inspection and testing.

(d) The Secretary may contract and cooperate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, other federal agencies or states, and accredited veterinarians for the control and eradication of contagious diseases of animals. The Secretary shall consult and cooperate, as appropriate, with the Commissioners of Fish and Wildlife and of Health regarding the control of contagious diseases.

(e) If necessary, the Secretary shall set priorities for the use of the funds available to operate the program established by this chapter.

(f) Any commercial slaughterhouse operating in the State shall maintain and retain for three years records of the number of animals slaughtered at the facility, the physical address of origination of each animal, the date of slaughter of each animal, and all official identification numbers of slaughtered animals. A commercial slaughterhouse shall make the records required under this subsection available to the Agency upon request.

(g) Records produced or acquired by the Secretary under this chapter shall be available to the public, except that:

(1) the Secretary may withhold from inspection and copying records that are confidential under federal law; and

(2) the Secretary may withhold or redact a record to the extent needed to avoid disclosing directly or indirectly the identity of individual persons, households, or businesses.

Sec. 9. 6 V.S.A. § 1470 is added to read:

§ 1470. RECORDS

(a) A commercial slaughter facility operating in the State shall maintain and retain for three years records of the number of animals slaughtered at the facility, the physical address of origination of each animal, the date of slaughter of each animal, and all official identification numbers of slaughtered animals. A commercial slaughterhouse shall make the records required under this subsection available to the Agency upon request.

(b) Records produced or acquired by the Secretary under this chapter shall be available to the public for inspection and copying, except that:

(1) the Secretary may withhold from inspection and copying records that are confidential under federal law; and

(2) the Secretary may withhold or redact a record to the extent needed to avoid disclosing directly or indirectly the identity of individual persons, households, or businesses.

Sec. 10. REPORT ON RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION FOR
LIVESTOCK

On or before January 15, 2020, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall submit to the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Appropriations and the House Committees on Agriculture and Forestry and on Appropriations a report regarding the use of radio frequency identification

(RFID) tags and readers by livestock owners and federally inspected commercial slaughter facilities in the State. The report shall include:

(1) a summary of the current Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets practice of providing metal or plastic animal identification tags to livestock owners at no or low cost;

(2) a summary of any existing or pending federal requirements for the use of RFID tags and readers by livestock owners or federally inspected commercial slaughter facilities;

(3) a summary of how RFID tags and readers are used to manage livestock or track animals through the slaughter process, including the benefits of RFID in comparison to metal or plastic animal identification tags;

(4) an analysis of whether RFID tags and readers are beneficial for the management or slaughter of all livestock, including whether use of RFID tags and readers is appropriate for certain livestock types, small farms, or small slaughter facilities;

(5) an estimate of the cost of equipping a farm or a federally inspected commercial slaughter facility with RFID tags and readers; and

(6) a recommendation of whether the State should provide financial assistance to livestock owners or federally inspected commercial slaughter facilities for the purchase of RFID tags and readers, including eligibility requirements, cost-share, timing, or other criteria recommended by the

Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the provision of RFID tags and readers to livestock owners or federally inspected commercial slaughter facilities in in the State.

Sec. 11. 6 V.S.A. § 4607 is amended to read:

§ 4607. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE VERMONT WORKING LANDS
ENTERPRISE BOARD

(a) Duties. The Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Board is charged with:

(1) optimizing the agricultural and forest use of Vermont lands and other agricultural resources;

(2) expanding existing markets and identifying and developing new profitable in-state and out-of-state markets for food, fiber, forest products, and value-added agricultural products, including farm-derived renewable energy and independent animal welfare certification programs; and

* * *

(d) Definition. As used in this section, “independent animal welfare certification program” means a program offered by a body approved by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets that uses qualified, third-party, on-farm auditors to routinely assess whether a livestock producer or commercial slaughter facility is 100 percent compliant with specific farm animal welfare standards exceeding industry standards based on industry guidelines, provided that:

(1) the protocol of the standards are made public;

(2) the standards include, at a minimum, provisions for humane slaughter, space allowance, environmental enrichment and ability to engage in natural behaviors, pain control and physical alterations, handling, and responsible antibiotic use;

(3) routine caging, crating, or tethering of animals is prohibited;

(4) the auditors have no vested or financial interest in audit outcomes;
and

(5) the auditors possess a background in animal welfare science or have received equivalent training and are able to recognize, review, and apply established farm animal welfare standards and protocols.

* * * Carbon Markets; Pilot Program; Assistance * * *

Sec. 12. GREEN MOUNTAIN STATE FOREST CARBON PILOT
PROJECT

(a) Findings and purpose.

(1) Vermont's public forestlands provide many benefits to the State including access to outdoor recreation, increased tourism, and helping keep our environment healthy.

(2) Private owners of forestlands are facing increased pressure to develop their forestlands and possess limited financial resources to resist this pressure.

(3) Private owners of forestlands are significant in this State as they own nearly 80 percent of the forestlands in Vermont.

(4) The purpose of this section is to create a pilot project to allow the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation to demonstrate how parcels of Vermont's forestlands may enter both compliance and voluntary carbon markets and produce a report and materials to aid private owners of forestlands entering both compliance and voluntary carbon markets.

(b) The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish the Green Mountain State Forest Carbon Pilot Project that shall:

(1) enter at least one parcel of forestland into a voluntary carbon market;

(2) enter at least one parcel of forestland into a compliance carbon market; and

(3) produce a report and any necessary materials that will aid in the education of private owners of Vermont forestlands on the process of entering their lands into a carbon market.

(c) The Department shall have the authority to use available private, State, and federal funding to implement the pilot project as described in subsection (b) of this section.

(d) On or before January 15, 2021, the Department shall submit a report to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry addressing:

- (1) the implementation of the pilot project;
- (2) any materials created to educate private owners of Vermont forestlands on the process of entering their lands into a carbon market; and
- (3) any recommendations for further action.

Sec. 13. 10 V.S.A. chapter 83, subchapter 9 is added to read:

Subchapter 9. Vermont Forests in Carbon Markets

§ 2685. Green Mountain State Forest Carbon Program

(a) Definitions. As used in this subchapter:

- (1) “Carbon dioxide equivalent” means an amount of a greenhouse gas that would cause the same amount of warming as a ton of carbon dioxide emissions.
- (2) “Carbon market” means a voluntary or compliance market place that trades carbon allowances representing the reduction, avoidance, or sequestration of carbon measured using tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- (3) “Contracted entity” or “entity” means the entity that enters into a contract with the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation to supply the services identified in subsection (c) of this section.
- (4) “Department” means the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.
- (5) “High ecological value” means an area that has been designated as a fragile area in the Fragile Areas Registry pursuant to 10 V.S.A. chapter 158.

(b) Establishment. The Department shall establish the Green Mountain State Forest Carbon Program to support and promote the entrance by owners of tracts of Vermont forestlands into international, national, and regional carbon markets. The Department shall contract with an entity to implement the program and provide services to owners of forestland that will facilitate the entrance of the forested land into a carbon market.

(c) Services.

(1) The contracted entity shall provide the following services to owners of forestlands:

(A) technical assistance to private owners of forestlands on how to gain access to carbon markets;

(B) technical assistance to private owners of forestlands on aggregation of multiple small parcels of forested land into parcels that are economically attractive to carbon marketplaces, including creating forest management plans; and

(C) services related to legal requirements and frameworks to gain access to carbon marketplaces.

(2) When providing services under this subsection, the contracted entity shall give priority to forestlands that have been previously identified as having high ecological value.

(d) Report. On or before January 15, 2024, the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall submit to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry a report regarding the activities and progress of the contracted entity. The report shall include:

(1) a summary of the contracted entities activities;

(2) an evaluation of the effectiveness of the services provided by the contracted entity to private owners of forestlands;

(3) a summary of the contracted entity's progress in aggregating Vermont's forestlands into marketable parcels for carbon markets;

(4) an accounting of how the contracted entity used the funds dispersed and whether these funds are sufficient to provide the services necessary to achieve the purpose of the program;

(5) recommended changes to the program, including legislative amendments to expand access for private owners of Vermont forestlands to carbon markets.

* * * Logger Safety * * *

Sec. 14. 10 V.S.A. §§ 2622b and 2622c are added to read:

§ 2622b. ACCIDENT PREVENTION AND SAFETY TRAINING FOR
LOGGING CONTRACTORS

(a) Training Program. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall develop a logging operations accident prevention and safety training

curriculum and supporting materials to assist logging safety instructors in providing logging safety instruction. In developing the logging operations accident prevention and safety training curriculum and supporting materials, the Commissioner shall consult with and seek the approval of the training curriculum by the Workers' Compensation and Safety Division of the Department of Labor.

(1) The accident prevention and safety training curriculum and supporting materials shall consist of an accident prevention and safety course that addresses the following:

(A) safe performance of standard logging practices, whether mechanized or nonmechanized;

(B) safe use, operation, and maintenance of tools, machines, and vehicles typically utilized and operated in the logging industry; and

(C) recognition of health and safety hazards associated with logging practices.

(2) The Commissioner shall make the accident prevention and safety training curriculum and supporting materials available to persons, organizations, or groups for presentation to individuals being trained in forest operations and safety.

(b) Request for proposal. The Commissioner shall prepare and issue a request for proposal to develop at least three course curriculums and associated

training materials. The Commissioner may cooperate with any reputable association, organization, or agency to provide course curriculums and training required under this subsection.

(c) Certificate of completion. The Commissioner, any logging safety instructor, or a logger safety certification organization shall issue a certificate of completion to each person who satisfactorily completes a logging operations accident prevention and safety training program based on the curriculum developed under this section.

§ 2622c. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE; LOGGER SAFETY; MASTER

LOGGER CERTIFICATION; COST-SHARE

(a) The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation annually shall award a grant to the Vermont Logger Education to Advance Professionalism (LEAP) program for the purpose of providing financial assistance to logging contractors to reduce the total costs of logger safety training or continuing education in logger safety. Financial assistance from the LEAP program shall be in the form of grants. The following costs to a logging contractor enrolled in the LEAP program shall be eligible for assistance:

(1) the costs of safety training, continuing education, or a loss prevention consultation;

(2) the costs of certification under the Master Logger Certification Program; or

(3) the costs of completion of a logging career technical education program.

(b) A grant awarded under this section shall pay up to 50 percent of the cost of an eligible activity.

(c) Of the grant funds awarded annually to the LEAP program under subsection (a) of this section, the LEAP program annually shall award grants to pay for the costs of the initial certification of up to 10 logging contractors enrolled in the Master Logger certification program through the Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands.

Sec. 15. 10 V.S.A. § 2702 is added to read:

§ 2702. VALUE-ADDED FOREST PRODUCTS; FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Commissioner shall award grants of up to \$10,000.00 to applicants engaged in adding value to forest products within the State. A grant awarded under this section may be used by the applicant to pay for expenses associated with State and local permit application costs, project consultation costs, engineering and siting costs, and expert witness analysis and testimony necessary for permitting.

Sec. 16. IMPLEMENTATION OF LOGGER SAFETY AND VALUE-
ADDED PRODUCTS PROGRAMS; FUNDING

The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall not implement the programs established under 10 V.S.A. §§ 2622b and 2622c (logger safety) and under 10 V.S.A. § 2702 (value-added forest products) unless and until appropriations to implement the programs are approved by the General Assembly for fiscal year 2020.

* * * Wetlands * * *

Sec. 17. REPEAL OF SUNSET OF FEE FOR PIPELINES IN WETLAND
2018 Acts and Resolves No. 194, Sec. 8a (sunset of maximum fee for manure pipeline in wetland) is repealed.

* * * Advanced Wood Boilers * * *

Sec. 18. 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 194, Sec. 26b is amended to read:

Sec. 26b. REPEALS

(a) 32 V.S.A. § 9741(52) (sales tax exemption for advanced wood boilers) shall be repealed on July 1, ~~2021~~ 2023.

(b) Sec. 26a of this act (transfer from CEDF) shall be repealed on July 1, ~~2021~~ 2023.

* * * Food Residuals on Farms * * *

Sec. 19. CERTIFICATION OF FARMS ACCEPTING FOOD RESIDUALS

(a) Except as provided under subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall not require a farm that accepts food residuals for composting to obtain a solid waste certification under 10 V.S.A. chapter 159 until July 1, 2020, provided that:

(1) the farm is complying with the requirements of 6 V.S.A. chapter 215; and

(2) the farm was accepting food residuals for composting on or before January 1, 2019,

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary of Natural Resources may require a farm that accepts food residuals for composting to be certified under 10 V.S.A. chapter 159 prior to July 1, 2020 or may order a farm to cease acceptance of food residuals for composting if the Secretary determines that the acceptance or management of food residuals on a farm presents an undue threat to human health or the environment.

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 20. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019, except that Sec. 13 (Green Mountain State Forest Carbon Program) shall take effect July 1, 2021.