STATE OF NEW YORK

2479

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 13, 2017

Introduced by Sen. RITCHIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Agriculture

AN ACT to authorize and direct the commissioner of agriculture and markets to study and develop a long-term strategy for sustaining farming and food production in New York state

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The commissioner of agriculture and markets is hereby authorized and directed to study and develop a long-term strategy for sustaining farming and food production in New York state. At such commissioner's discretion, the plan shall be based on an analysis of land use, economic trends, market trends, natural resource conservation, and other factors necessary to develop a forward-looking statewide blueprint for conserving productive land and maintaining the vitality of agricultural production in New York state.

§ 2. The commissioner of agriculture and markets is directed to give particular focus to article 25-AA, section 300 et seq., of the agriculture and markets law. Such commissioner should evaluate the efficiency and thoroughness of past applications of section 308 of article 25-AA of the agriculture and markets law, and determine if that section of law has protected farmland without allowing section 306 of the agriculture and markets law's grant of authority to preserve unacceptable practices. Suggestions for reducing the number of inconclusive "sound agricultural practice opinions" should also be included in the report.

§ 3. The commissioner of agriculture and markets is further directed to propose programs that encourage: the independent growth of farms less than 220 total acres in size, or that employ "non-traditional" diversified sustainable practices, or that have aspects of their business not directly related to commodity market sales.

§ 4. Such strategy may be developed in consultation with agricultural and economic development advisory bodies created or authorized by statue

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD07793-01-7

and such other organizations or person as the commissioner of agriculture and markets shall deem appropriate.

§ 5. Within one year of the effective date of this act, the commissioner of agriculture and markets shall submit a report of any findings and recommendations to the governor and the legislature.

§ 6. This act shall take effect immediately.