

STATE OF NEW YORK

3954--A

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 29, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. THIELE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Agriculture -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law, the state finance law, and the economic development law, in relation to procurement of locally grown farm and food products and codifying the New York state council on food policy

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

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "local food, farms, and jobs act".

3 § 2. Section 16 of the agriculture and markets law is amended by
4 adding a new subdivision 6-a to read as follows:

5 6-a. Establish a New York state council on food policy. The purpose
6 of the council shall be to facilitate the growth of a New York-based
7 local farm and food product economy that revitalizes rural and urban
8 communities, promotes healthy eating with access to fresh foods, creates
9 jobs, ensures a readily available supply of safe food in an emergency
10 event, and supports economic growth through making local farm or food
11 products available to all New York citizens.

12 (a) The responsibilities of the council shall include, but are not
13 limited to, the following:

14 (i) to develop and recommend a food policy for the state which recog-
15 nizes that it is in the best interests of the state to ensure the avail-
16 ability of an adequate supply of affordable, fresh and nutritious food
17 to its residents;

18 (ii) to develop and recommend state policies to expand agricultural
19 production, including locally-grown and organically-grown food;

20 (iii) to develop and recommend a strategic plan for implementation of
21 the state food policy, including benchmarks and criteria for measuring
22 progress in achieving state food policy objectives;

23 (iv) to offer comments on state regulations, legislation and budget
24 proposals in the area of food policy, to ensure a coordinated and
25 comprehensive inter-agency approach to food policy issues;

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

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1 (v) to assist state agencies, state-owned facilities, and other enti-
2 ties with the purchase of local farm or food products and with tracking
3 and reporting of such purchases in order to meet the goals established
4 in this section;

5 (vi) to assist local farm and food entrepreneurs to identify and
6 secure necessary resources and equipment to begin, maintain, and expand
7 projects and networks necessary for the development of local farm or
8 food products; provided, however, that the council will facilitate
9 program start-ups and then relinquish rights, benefits, and control
10 within a reasonably short duration of time;

11 (vii) to facilitate the building of infrastructure, including aggre-
12 gation, processing, storage, packaging, and distribution facilities
13 necessary to move local farm or food products to local and other
14 markets;

15 (viii) to support and expand programs that recruit, train, and provide
16 technical assistance to New York farmers and residents in order to
17 encourage the production of local farm or food products;

18 (ix) to coordinate interagency policies, initiatives, and procedures
19 promoting local farm and food products in New York communities, by work-
20 ing with and involving state, federal, and local agencies, as well as
21 community based organizations, educational institutions, and trade
22 organizations in executing the purposes of this section;

23 (x) to facilitate the elimination of legal barriers hindering the
24 development of a local farm and food economy by working with federal,
25 state, and local public health agencies, other agencies and applicable
26 entities, and the New York attorney general to create consistent and
27 compatible regulations for the production, storage, distribution, and
28 marketing of local farm or food products;

29 (xi) to facilitate the use of public lands for growing local farm or
30 food products by working with governmental entities at the local, state,
31 and federal levels;

32 (xii) to set annual goals for all purchases of local farm or food
33 products by New York residents and to monitor the development and expan-
34 sion of a local farm and food economy through data collection, tracking,
35 measurement, analysis, and reporting on progress made in an annual
36 report to the legislature; and

37 (xiii) to initiate and facilitate public awareness campaigns about the
38 economic benefits of a local farm and food economy.

39 (b) (i) The council shall consist of thirteen voting members as
40 follows: six members with experience and expertise related to agricul-
41 ture, nutrition or food policy appointed on the recommendation of the
42 legislative leaders, two each by the temporary president of the senate
43 and the speaker of the assembly, and one each by the minority leader of
44 the senate, and the minority leader of the assembly; the dean of the New
45 York state college of agriculture and life sciences; and six members
46 shall be appointed by the governor.

47 (ii) The council shall consult on a regular basis with an advisory
48 board consisting of: the commissioner, the commissioner of health, the
49 commissioner of the office of temporary and disability assistance, the
50 commissioner of the office of children and family services, the commis-
51 sioner of education, the director of the office for the aging and eight
52 members appointed by the governor.

53 (c) (i) The six council members selected by the legislative leaders
54 shall be appointed to three-year staggered terms as determined by the
55 legislature. Such persons may be nominated by organizations representing

1 the sectors outlined in paragraph (b) of this subdivision. Vacancies
2 shall be filled by the legislative leaders.

3 (ii) The six council members selected by the governor and the dean of
4 the New York state college of agriculture and life sciences shall be
5 appointed to three-year staggered terms as determined by the governor.

6 (iii) The members of the advisory board shall be appointed to three-
7 year staggered terms as determined by the governor. Such persons shall
8 be nominated by organizations representing the sectors outlined in para-
9 graph (b) of this subdivision. Vacancies shall be filled by the gover-
10 nor.

11 (d) The council may apply for and establish a not-for-profit corpo-
12 ration.

13 (e) The board of directors shall elect its presiding officers from
14 among its members and may elect or appoint an executive committee, other
15 committees, and subcommittees to conduct the business of the organiza-
16 tion.

17 (f) The council may solicit grants, loans, and contributions from
18 public or private sources and may enter into any contracts, grants,
19 loans, or agreements with respect to the use of such funds to execute
20 the purposes of this subdivision.

21 (g) The council shall issue a written report on the first day of
22 December each year on: (i) the activities of the council during the
23 preceding year; (ii) recommended food policies for the state; (iii)
24 recommended changes to the strategic plan; (iv) an account of the
25 progress made in achieving the goals of the council; and (v) actions
26 which are necessary to implement the recommendations of the council and
27 effectuate its purposes.

28 (h) Subject to the availability of public or private funds, the board
29 of directors may employ an executive director, treasurer, other staff,
30 or independent contractors necessary to execute the purposes of this
31 subdivision, and it may fix the compensation, benefits, terms, and
32 conditions of those persons' employment.

33 (i) The state governmental agencies represented on the board of direc-
34 tors may re-direct existing staff, as appropriations permit; assist in
35 executing the purposes of this subdivision; and provide office space,
36 meeting space, and other research and communication services as appro-
37 priate.

38 (j) No member of the council shall be disqualified from holding any
39 public office or employment, nor shall he or she forfeit any such office
40 or employment by virtue of his or her appointment hereunder. Members of
41 the council shall receive no compensation for their services but shall
42 be allowed their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the perform-
43 ance of their functions hereunder. All members of the council shall
44 serve at the pleasure of the governor and vacancies shall be filled in
45 the same manner as original appointments.

46 § 3. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 163-c to
47 read as follows:

48 § 163-c. Procurement goals for local farm or food products. 1. For
49 the purposes of this section, "local farm or food products" are products
50 grown, processed, packaged, and distributed by New York citizens or
51 businesses located wholly within the borders of New York state.

52 2. (a) In order to create, strengthen, and expand local farm and food
53 economies throughout New York, it shall be the goal of this state that:

54 (i) twenty percent of all food and food products purchased by state
55 agencies and state-owned facilities, including, without limitation,
56 facilities for persons with mental health and developmental disabili-

1 ties, correctional facilities, and public universities, shall, by two
2 thousand twenty-two, be local farm or food products; and

3 (ii) fifty percent of all food and food products purchased by state
4 agencies and state-owned facilities, including, without limitation,
5 facilities for persons with mental health and developmental disabili-
6 ties, correctional facilities, and public universities, shall, by two
7 thousand twenty-six, be local farm or food products.

8 (b) The New York state council on food policy shall support and
9 encourage that twenty-five percent of food and food products purchased
10 by entities funded in part or in whole by state funds, which spend more
11 than twenty-five thousand dollars per year on food or food products for
12 its students, residents, or clients, including, without limitation,
13 public schools, child care facilities, after-school programs, and hospi-
14 tals, shall, by two thousand twenty-three, be local farm or food
15 products. The goal shall increase to forty percent by two thousand twen-
16 ty-eight.

17 (c) To meet the goals set forth in this section, when a state contract
18 for purchase of food or food products is to be awarded to the lowest
19 responsible bidder, an otherwise qualified bidder who will fulfill the
20 contract through the use of local farm or food products may be given
21 preference over other bidders, provided that the cost included in the
22 bid of local farm or food products is not more than ten percent greater
23 than the cost included in a bid that is not for local farm or food
24 products.

25 (d) All state agencies and state-owned facilities that purchase food
26 and food products shall, with the assistance of the New York state coun-
27 cil on food policy, develop a system for (i) identifying the percentage
28 of local farm or food products purchased for fiscal year two thousand
29 twenty-two as the baseline; and (ii) tracking and reporting local farm
30 or food products purchases on an annual basis.

31 § 4. Section 16 of the agriculture and markets law is amended by
32 adding a new subdivision 52 to read as follows:

33 52. Establish, and make available on its website, a geo-coded elec-
34 tronic database to facilitate the purchase of fresh produce and food
35 products by schools. The database shall be developed jointly with the
36 New York state council on food policy and, at a minimum, contain the
37 information necessary for (a) schools to identify and contact agricul-
38 tural producers that are interested in supplying schools in the state
39 with fresh produce and food products and (b) agricultural producers of
40 fresh produce and food products to identify schools in the state that
41 are interested in purchasing those products.

42 § 5. Subdivisions 8 and 9 of section 180-a of the economic development
43 law, as added by chapter 550 of the laws of 1999, are amended to read as
44 follows:

45 8. geographically balanced public input and advice from individuals
46 and agencies directly involved with the production, processing, manufac-
47 turing and storage of agricultural products; and such other individuals
48 and agencies as may be engaged in state and local activities in support
49 of economic development in the agriculture resource industry; [and]

50 9. the establishment and purposes of the New York state council on
51 food policy established pursuant to subdivision six-a of section sixteen
52 of the agriculture and markets law; and

53 10. all things necessary or convenient to carry out the functions,
54 powers and duties expressly set forth in this article.

55 § 6. This act shall take effect immediately.