

STATE OF NEW YORK

7678

IN SENATE

January 6, 2022

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

AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law, in relation to establishing the New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employment program

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

1 Section 1. The agriculture and markets law is amended by adding a new
2 article 29-A to read as follows:

ARTICLE 29-A

NEW YORK STATE YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

3 Section 525. Legislative intent and findings.

4 526. Definitions.

5 527. New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship
6 summer employment program.

7 528. Commissioner's power and duties.

8 § 525. Legislative intent and findings. The legislature hereby finds
9 that diversifying the agricultural industry addresses issues of food
10 insecurity and food access in the state. The legislature further finds
11 that there are certain culturally significant foods in the state and
12 seeks to encourage the continuance of production of such foods and to
13 generate an interest in the production of such foods by future gener-
14 ations of persons working in agriculture. The legislature hereby estab-
15 lishes the New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship
16 summer employment program to allow students the opportunity to be
17 educated on the agricultural industry and alternative career paths and
18 to attain entrepreneurial experience. The legislature also establishes
19 this program to subsidize youth employment for farms and farmers'
20 markets that could otherwise participate in the program if the wages
21 were not a hardship. It is the intention of the legislation that the
22 New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employ-
23 ment program serves as a stepping stone for such youth in careers in

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

LBD13495-02-1

1 agriculture and entrepreneurship, as well as to provide farmers means to
2 participate in the program.

3 § 526. Definitions. As used in this section:

4 1. "Minority or socially disadvantaged" means a group whose members
5 have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of
6 their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual
7 qualities or citizenship status. These groups include, but are not
8 limited to, the following:

9 (a) African Americans;

10 (b) Native Indians;

11 (c) Alaskan Natives;

12 (d) Hispanics;

13 (e) Asian Americans; and,

14 (f) Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

15 2. "Low income or economically disadvantaged" means having a family
16 income that does not exceed one hundred fifty percent of the federal
17 poverty level and includes being a child of a working migratory family
18 or an agricultural worker who is employed by more than one agricultural
19 employer during the course of a year, and whose income varies according
20 to weather conditions and market stability.

21 3. "Qualifying business" means a farmers market, mobile market, commu-
22 nity supported agriculture, cooperative, or any other type of business
23 structure that provides New York grown and raised foods directly to
24 consumers as approved by the commissioner.

25 4. "Qualifying farm" means a small to medium-sized farm or urban farm
26 participating in a qualifying business.

27 5. "Agricultural work" means work performed maintaining crops or tend-
28 ing livestock.

29 6. "Entrepreneurship work experience" means experience that aims to
30 develop skills deemed necessary to succeed in the design, launch and
31 running of a new business.

32 7. "Subsidized employment" means any employment through the New York
33 state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employment
34 program for which any costs associated with participation in the
35 program, including wages and transportation, are paid by the state or by
36 the federal government.

37 § 527. New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer
38 employment program. 1. There is hereby established in the department the
39 New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employ-
40 ment program to provide students with the opportunity to be educated on
41 the agricultural industry and alternative career paths and to provide
42 agricultural work experience and entrepreneurship work experience.

43 2. The commissioner shall establish application criteria that require
44 qualifying businesses and qualifying farms to provide unsubsidized or
45 subsidized employment as follows:

46 (a) Unsubsidized employment:

47 (i) demonstrate that such business or farm can provide students with
48 both agricultural work experience and entrepreneurship work experience;

49 (ii) pay wages to eligible students in an amount that is above minimum
50 wage;

51 (iii) provide transportation to and from the qualifying business or
52 qualifying farm or to provide transportation compensation to the eligi-
53 ble student; and

54 (iv) provide eligible students with a minimum of sixteen hours and a
55 maximum of no more than forty hours of work per week.

56 (b) Subsidized employment:

1 (i) demonstrate that such business or farm can provide students with
2 both agricultural work experience and entrepreneurship work experience;

3 (ii) establish a hardship to pay wages to eligible students in an
4 amount that is above minimum wage;

5 (iii) demonstrate a hardship to provide transportation to and from
6 the qualifying business or qualifying farm or a hardship to provide
7 transportation compensation to the eligible student; and

8 (iv) provide eligible students with a minimum of sixteen hours and a
9 maximum of no more than forty hours of work per week.

10 § 528. Commissioner's powers and duties. The commissioner shall have
11 the following powers and duties with regards to the New York state youth
12 in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employment program:

13 1. to promulgate grants as necessary to achieve the legislative intent
14 of this program as set forth in this article.

15 2. to apply for federal grants to help fund the program.

16 3. in consultation and cooperation with the commissioner of social
17 services, the commissioner of education, and the president of the higher
18 education services corporation, to perform outreach to ensure the
19 program is known and available to students who are low income or econom-
20 ically disadvantaged.

21 4. to establish a website for the program which includes a portal
22 where students may apply for jobs and where qualifying businesses and
23 qualifying farms may connect and which provides promotional materials
24 about the program in a pdf format that is easily accessible and print-
25 able by organizations and the general public.

26 5. to include annual outreach campaigns that start at least three
27 months prior to the date when applications for the summer program are
28 first able to be submitted. Such campaigns shall include outreach to
29 schools, non-profit organizations, qualifying businesses and qualifying
30 farms. Such outreach shall be performed in a variety of methods, includ-
31 ing a social media campaign.

32 6. to create an informational packet for students on agricultural
33 opportunities in higher education including, but not limited to, infor-
34 mation on the availability of scholarships, student loan forgiveness,
35 and government assistance to create and establish farms.

36 7. to establish a subsidized employment program for qualifying farms
37 and qualifying businesses that could otherwise participate in the
38 program if paying wages were not a hardship.

39 § 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
40 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-
41 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-
42 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and
43 completed on or before such effective date.