STATE OF NEW YORK

1678

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 17, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. L. ROSENTHAL -- read once and referred to the Committee on Agriculture

AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law, in relation to requiring the establishment of a plant-based agriculture grant program

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

Section 1. The agriculture and markets law is amended by adding a new section 16-c to read as follows:

§ 16-c. Plant-based agriculture grant program. 1. For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Expert assistance" means assistance from an agricultural scientist, climatologist, pedologist, horticulturist, hydrologist, or agronomist for assessment, design, planning, and best management practices of a land-use transition to plant-based agriculture.

(b) "Feed crop" means a crop that is grown for livestock consumption.

(c) "Livestock" means poultry, cattle, dairy cows, sheep, swine, goat, or fish.

(d) "Plant-based agriculture" means any farming that uses crops for growing inputs for plant-based products and does not include livestock farming, dairy, or any crop production for livestock feed.

(e) "Program" means the plant-based agriculture grant program.

(f) "Technical assistance" means outreach, education, expert assistance, legal support for contractual barriers, project planning, project design, grant application assistance, buyer expertise and packaging assistance, project implementation, or project reporting assistance provided to a farmer to improve their successful participation in the program.

(g) "Technical assistance provider" means organizations with demonstrated technical expertise in designing and implementing agricultural management practices.

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

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(h) "Small farm" means a farm with an annual gross cash farm income of less than three hundred fifty thousand dollars.

(i) "Midsize farm" means a farm with an annual gross cash farm income between three hundred fifty thousand and nine hundred ninety-nine thousand nine hundred ninety-nine dollars.

2. The department shall establish a plant-based agriculture grant program to assist small and medium-sized farms transition to plant-based agriculture. Such program shall, at a minimum:

(a) Provide grants to persons farming on small to midsize farms to transition the use of the land from raising livestock or growing feed crops to plant-based agriculture.

(b) Develop best practices for transitioning land used for raising livestock or growing feed crops to plant-based agriculture.

(c) Provide technical assistance, in consultation with technical assistance providers, to persons farming on small to midsize farms.

3. The department shall require an applicant for a grant to submit the following to the department in the application:

(a) a description of any crops currently produced on the farm;

(b) a description of the land that will be transitioned from raising livestock or growing feed crops to plant-based agriculture;

(c) a plan that demonstrates how the applicant will transition such land to plant-based agriculture using the best practices developed by the department pursuant to paragraph (b) of subdivision two of this section;

(d) a description of what the farm will transition to producing using plant-based agriculture;

(e) a projected timeline for the completion of the transition; and

(f) any other information the department deems necessary.

4. Grants shall be awarded on a competitive basis through a request for proposal process which shall set forth the standards for the selection process, the required project proposal format, costs eligible for funding, project implementation, reporting requirements, and such other provisions as the department may deem necessary or beneficial in implementing the program.

5. The department shall require a person who receives a grant to provide a report, in consultation with a technical assistance provider, to the department that demonstrates that the grant recipient is transitioning to plant-based agriculture.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.