STATE OF NEW YORK

2249

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 16, 2025

Introduced by Sens. COMRIE, BRISPORT -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT to amend the urban development corporation act, in relation to the beginning farmers NY fund

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

Section 1. Subdivisions 2, 3 and 5 of section 16-w of section 1 of chapter 174 of the laws of 1968 constituting the urban development corporation act, subdivision 2 as amended by section 1 of part W of chapter 58 of the laws of 2016 and subdivisions 3 and 5 as amended by section 1 of part FF of chapter 58 of the laws of 2015, are amended to read as follows:

2. The corporation shall consult with the department of agriculture and markets in order to establish such criteria governing the award of grants as authorized herein, as the corporation and such department deem necessary. Such criteria shall include, but not be limited to, farmers who have not produced an "agricultural product" as defined by section three hundred twenty-eight of the agriculture and markets law, for more than ten consecutive years, and who will materially and substantially participate in the production of an agricultural product within a region of the state. **Such criteria shall also consider farm income and farm investments as necessary to accommodate beginning farmers reporting less than ten thousand dollars of annual farm income.**

3. Appropriations to the beginning farmers NY fund may be used for the following purposes:

(a) to assist farmers in demonstrating innovative agricultural techniques including, but not limited to, organic farming and specialty crops.

(b) capital grants in accordance with a business plan to improve farm profitability. Upon completion of such business plan, recipients shall

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

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be eligible for capital grants to enhance the profitability of farming operations**, including on land under lease by the recipient**. Such grants may be used for purposes including, but not limited to, the purchase of machinery or the construction or improvement of physical structures**, including semi-permanent structures. Recipients of awards for construction or improvement of physical structures on land under lease by the award recipient, shall receive compensation for or retain ownership of such structures**. Any capital grant shall be issued with a one-to-one match between the state and recipient.

5. The beginning farmers NY fund shall not invest an amount in any single beneficiary that **is less than one thousand dollars or that** exceeds fifty thousand dollars, subject to any exceptions to be established by guidelines of the corporation. **The corporation shall establish award tiers to accommodate awards of less than fifteen thousand dollars. Awards of five thousand dollars or less shall be awarded in a single payment prior to project completion.**

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the first of April next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.