

STATE OF NEW YORK

592

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

Introduced by Sens. HINCHEY, ASHBY, BORRELLO, CLEARE, MAY, ROLISON, WEBB
-- 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:

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

ARTICLE 29-A

NEW YORK STATE YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Section 525. Legislative intent and findings.

526. Definitions.

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

528. Commissioner's power and duties.

§ 525. Legislative intent and findings. The legislature hereby finds that diversifying the agricultural industry addresses issues of food insecurity and food access in the state. The legislature further finds that there are certain culturally significant foods in the state and seeks to encourage the continuance of production of such foods and to generate an interest in the production of such foods by future generations of persons working in agriculture. The legislature hereby establishes the New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employment program to allow students the opportunity to be educated on the agricultural industry and alternative career paths and to attain entrepreneurial experience. The legislature also establishes this program to subsidize youth employment for farms and farmers'

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

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1 markets that could otherwise participate in the program if the wages
2 were not a hardship. It is the intention of the legislation that the
3 New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employ-
4 ment program serves as a stepping stone for such youth in careers in
5 agriculture and entrepreneurship, as well as to provide farmers means to
6 participate in the program.

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

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

13 (a) African Americans;

14 (b) Native Indians;

15 (c) Alaskan Natives;

16 (d) Hispanics;

17 (e) Asian Americans; and,

18 (f) Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

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

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

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

31 5. "Agricultural work" means work performed maintaining crops or tend-
32 ing livestock.

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

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

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

47 2. The commissioner shall establish application criteria that require
48 qualifying businesses and qualifying farms to provide unsubsidized or
49 subsidized employment as follows:

50 (a) Unsubsidized employment:

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

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

1 (iii) provide transportation to and from the qualifying business or
2 qualifying farm or to provide transportation compensation to the eligi-
3 ble student; and

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

6 (b) Subsidized employment:

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

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

11 (iii) demonstrate a hardship to provide transportation to and from
12 the qualifying business or qualifying farm or a hardship to provide
13 transportation compensation to the eligible student; and

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

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

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

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

22 3. in consultation and cooperation with the commissioner of social
23 services, the commissioner of education, and the president of the higher
24 education services corporation, to perform outreach to ensure the
25 program is known and available to students who are socially disadvan-
26 tagged or economically disadvantaged.

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

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

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

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

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