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REPRESENTING OHIO'S 9TH DISTRICT



SECTION-BY-SECTION OF H.R. 3225, THE COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AND JOBS ACT

Sec. 1. Short Title and Table of Contents

The Community Agriculture Development and Jobs Act

Sec. 2. Findings and Purpose (Intent)

There are 23 findings and 4 points outlining the Intent of Congress

Sec. 3. Office of Community Agriculture

This section establishes the Office of Community Agriculture (OCA) within the executive operations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Secretary would appoint a Director to manage the office. OCA would coordinate activities throughout the Department related to promoting and enhancing agriculture in nontraditional communities and improving nutrition in such communities.

The specific responsibilities of the Office are:

- (A) Ensuring that Department authorities are used to promote and enhance agricultural production in nontraditional communities
- (B) Ensuring that Department authorities are used to support educational and training initiatives related to best agricultural practices in nontraditional communities
- (C) Ensuring that Department authorities are used to combat hunger, poor nutrition, obesity and food insecurity in nontraditional communities
- (D) Ensuring that Department authorities are used to support eliminating shortages of affordable fresh food products in nontraditional communities
- (E) Ensuring that Department authorities are used to support educational initiatives promoting the consumption of locally produced foods and the nutritional benefits of such foods
- (F) Ensuring that Department authorities are used to strengthen local food systems and support sustainable food systems in nontraditional communities
- (G) Ensuring that Department resources and programs provide sufficient consideration to the needs of low-income and high unemployment communities
- (H) Ensuring that Federal nutrition assistance programs administered by State agencies maximize the impact of Federal funds to support promoting and enhancing agricultural production including consumption of locally produced foods in nontraditional communities
- (I) Developing a strategy to ensure that federal nutrition assistance programs (including those programs administered by State agencies) are used to support economic development and agricultural production in nontraditional communities
- (J) Make policy recommendations to the Secretary without modification related to complying with subparagraphs A through I

Nontraditional communities is defined as a community or area where there is limited agricultural production and is not engaged in traditional agricultural production.

Sec. 4. Community Agriculture Outreach Program

This section creates a grant program designed to fund:

- (1) Initiatives including infrastructure needs to encourage the production of local foods in nontraditional communities;
- (2) Initiatives including infrastructure needs to strengthen local food distribution systems in nontraditional communities;
- (3) Initiatives including infrastructure needs designed to create sustainable food systems in nontraditional communities;
- (4) Initiatives including infrastructure needs that create or expand the opportunities to consume fresh fruits and vegetables in nontraditional communities;
- (5) Initiatives including infrastructure needs that promote agricultural processing in nontraditional communities;
- (6) Initiatives including infrastructure needs that encourage recipients of federal and state domestic food assistance programs to purchase locally grown or produced foods in nontraditional communities;
- (7) Education and training related to best practices for agricultural production in nontraditional communities;
- (8) Education initiatives that promote the nutritional benefits of consuming locally produced foods in nontraditional communities;
- (9) The conversion, including purchase and acquisition, of vacant land to be used for agricultural production in nontraditional communities; and
- (10) Other activities that promote economic development through agricultural production in nontraditional communities

Grants shall not exceed \$500,000 under the program and can be provided for a 3-year period. \$20 Million in discretionary appropriations are authorized for the program. Eligible entities include community organizations, municipalities, institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, and local school districts.

Sec. 5. Farmers' Market Promotion Program Expansion

This section revamps and significantly expands the Farmers' Market Promotion Program administered by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). The intent of expanding the program is to support the development of new farmers' markets, sustaining existing farmers' markets, supporting efforts to enhance the sales of existing farmers' markets, provide additional resources for the administration of the program, and to permit technical assistance for applicants.

Under the program, the Secretary would make loans, provide loan guarantees and grants for:

- The construction of new farmers' markets
- The improvement or rehabilitation of existing farmers' markets
- The acquisition of equipment and other infrastructure needs for farmers' markets
- Purchase and rehabilitation of land or property for farmers' markets
- Agri-tourism initiatives; marketing and advertising; transportation
- Delivery; education & outreach activities to encourage farmers' markets participation in federal & state food and nutrition assistance programs
- Business development and management, including professional development
- Establishing satellite location of existing farmers' markets designed to increase sales in areas not easily accessible through traditional transportation

- Planning and feasibility initiatives for new or expanding farmers' markets

Eligible entities under the program are public agencies, nonprofit organizations, farmers' market operators or such other entities as the Secretary may designate. Eligible entities must demonstrate financial need and reserve at least 50 percent of the floor area for food products produced locally.

The interest rate for loans made under the program shall be equivalent to the rate charged on Treasury securities and the duration of the rate shall be for the term of the loan.

\$50 Million per year in mandatory funding through the Commodity Credit Corporation is authorized through fiscal year 2018 and at least 50 percent of those funds must be grants. Up to \$5 Million may be used for administration and technical assistance.

Sec. 6. Seniors Farmers' Market Program Extension and Expansion

This section would provide increased mandatory funding to expand the Seniors Farmers' Market Program, sets a 10 percent maximum limit for administrative costs and requires the Secretary to provide priority to underserved communities and to farmers' markets that have an operating program. The Commodity Credit Corporation would make the following funds available under this section:

- \$25 Million for fiscal year 2013
- \$50 Million for fiscal year 2014
- \$75 Million for fiscal year 2015
- \$100 Million for each fiscal years 2016 through 2018

Sec. 7. Community Agriculture Research and Improved Agricultural Reporting

This section requires the Secretary submit several reports to Congress and establishes the Community Agriculture Research Initiative.

- (a) Requires Farmers' Markets be included in the Census of Agriculture and identifies specific items to be included
- (b) Requires the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report on Farmers' Markets and identifies specific items to be reported on including but not limited to number of markets, economic value of markets, products sold at markets, average income and form of payments accepted at markets
- (c) Requires the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report on how contracts are awarded for Federal food assistance programs such as the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and Special Milk Program
- (d) Requires the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report identifying the number of recipients and federal and state dollars spent in the U.S., in each state, county and Congressional District on all USDA domestic food assistance programs
- (e) Requires the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report on the status of Agricultural Production in Nontraditional Communities and identifies specific items to be included. If the Secretary does not submit the report by the end of the fiscal year the Director of the Office of Community Agriculture will submit the report in 90 days without modification
- (f) Requires the Secretary incorporate promoting and enhancing agricultural production in nontraditional communities into the USDA's performance goals
- (g) Establishes the Community Agriculture Research Initiative and provides \$20 million from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The Initiative will focus on doing scientific research on the needs of promoting and enhancing agricultural production practices in nontraditional communities.