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Resolve, To Study Maine's Agricultural Creative Economy Sector

Sec. 1 Departments to study the creative, rural agricultural value-added sector of the State's economy. Resolved: That the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, in collaboration with the Department of Labor, Department of Economic and Community Development and Department of Conservation, shall undertake a study of the creative, rural agricultural value-added sector of the State's economy. The study must include consideration of:

1. The economic impact of farmers in the State expanding their businesses and diversifying their products to meet local demand for locally grown produce, meats, artisan and specialty food products, the use of shared-use kitchens and farm-to-school programs;
2. Barriers to small-scale food production that cater to the tourist trade and local demand;
3. Creation of a cabinet-level advisory board comprising representatives of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, Department of Labor, Department of Economic and Community Development and Department of Conservation to develop long-term strategies in agriculture and agricultural value-added businesses in all aspects of economic development;
4. Creation of positions in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to develop and nurture the agricultural creative economy, including veterinarians, dairy inspectors, meat inspectors, livestock marketing specialists, home and small food processing specialists, advisors on new trends such as shared-use kitchens and farm-to-school programs and agricultural and business liaison specialists; and
5. Funding for the marketing of agricultural and food products from the State, a food policy council, a revolving loan program and training in cooperation with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension in business and food processing; and be it further

Sec. 2 Report. Resolved: That the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources shall submit a report on the results of the study undertaken pursuant to section 1 along with any recommended legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature no later than December 5, 2007.

SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, the Department of Labor, the Department of Economic and Community Development and the Department of Conservation to collaborate on a study of the creative, rural agricultural value-added sector of the State's economy.

This resolve directs the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to submit the study to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature along with any recommended legislation no later than December 5, 2007.