

132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1198

S.P. 487

In Senate, March 20, 2025

Resolve, Directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to Assess Its Current Meat and Poultry Inspection Programs

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

DAREK M. GRANT Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BLACK of Franklin.

Cosponsored by Representative HALL of Wilton and

Senators: HICKMAN of Kennebec, TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin, Representatives:

COOPER of Windham, CRAY of Palmyra, GUERRETTE of Caribou, JACKSON of Oxford, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft.

Sec. 1. Meat and poultry inspection study. Resolved: That the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall conduct a review of programs and processes related to meat and poultry inspections, including processes related to exemptions from inspections, to determine areas for possible improvements, efficiencies and enhanced flexibility to benefit agricultural producers, processors and retail and public customers. In conducting the review under this section, the department shall consult with livestock and poultry producers and processors, the United States Department of Agriculture, the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and other stakeholders that the department determines necessary to assess existing programs' statutory authorities, rules, regulations, policies and practices, including those involving investigations, enforcement and staff training. The department shall also review the existing exemptions that relate to poultry processors that process certain numbers of poultry per year and the department's existing cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service and that agreement's related requirements.

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That, by January 15, 2026, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall submit a report based on its review in section 1, including recommended state or federal legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry may submit legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

21 SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to conduct a review of programs and processes related to meat and poultry inspections, including processes related to exemptions from inspections, to determine areas for possible improvements, efficiencies and enhanced flexibility to benefit agricultural producers, processors and retail and public customers. The department is required to submit a report based on its evaluation by January 15, 2026 to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, which may submit legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.