



# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 606

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H.P. 374

House of Representatives, February 25, 2025

**Resolve, to Study Barriers to Financial Assistance Programs for  
Farmers and Food Producers**

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Received by the Clerk of the House on February 20, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative PLUECKER of Warren.

1           **Sec. 1. Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to seek**  
2 **stakeholder input on lowering barriers to financial assistance programs.**

3 **Resolved:** That the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall direct  
4 staff of the Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to study the bureau's financial  
5 assistance programs for farmers and food producers to identify barriers to these programs  
6 and methods to eliminate those barriers and increase the effectiveness of the programs in  
7 addressing farmer and food producer needs. This study must be undertaken within existing  
8 resources and must include at least 2 listening sessions with farmers and food producers.  
9 The listening sessions must encompass topics, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 10           1. Application materials, submission procedures and timelines for application retention  
11 by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry;
- 12           2. Contact procedures to inform applicants of new program opportunities;
- 13           3. Accessibility for beginning and emerging farmers and the expansion of education  
14 about department programs, partnerships with community organizations to reach new  
15 groups of farmers and identification of farmers who currently underuse department  
16 programs; and
- 17           4. Input on how the department can organize and consolidate its financial assistance  
18 offerings.

19           **Sec. 2. Report. Resolved:** That, by January 15, 2026, the Commissioner of  
20 Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall submit a report detailing the results of the  
21 study under section 1 and any recommended legislation to the Joint Standing Committee  
22 on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, which may report out legislation to the Second  
23 Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

24                                   **SUMMARY**

25           This resolve requires the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to  
26 direct staff of the Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to study the bureau's  
27 financial assistance programs for farmers and food producers to identify barriers to these  
28 programs and methods to eliminate those barriers and increase the effectiveness of the  
29 programs in addressing farmer and food producer needs. The commissioner is required to  
30 submit a report by January 15, 2026 to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture,  
31 Conservation and Forestry, which may report out legislation to the Second Regular Session  
32 of the 132nd Legislature.