

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE

H.P. 503 - L.D. 691

An Act To Support Farms and Address Food Insecurity

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §219-B is enacted to read:

§219-B. Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives

1. Fund established. The Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives, referred to in this section as "the fund," is established in the department to provide incentives to federal food and nutrition assistance program participants for the purchase of locally grown fruits and vegetables and to support outreach for and administration of programs that offer nutrition incentives to participants of federal food and nutrition assistance programs. The fund is established to match contributions from private and public sources of up to \$50,000 annually to further the purposes of this section. The fund, to be accounted within the department, must be held separate and apart from all other money, funds and accounts. Eligible investment earnings credited to the assets of the fund become part of the assets of the fund. Any unexpended balances remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year do not lapse and must be carried forward to the next fiscal year. For purposes of this section, "local" means within the State.

2. Fund recipients. An organization based in the State that supports local food producers, local food production or low-income individuals in receiving food and nutrition assistance may receive proceeds from the fund upon application with the department. The department shall prioritize an applicant that has a demonstrated history of incentivizing the use of federal food and nutrition assistance programs to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables or that demonstrates the ability to leverage the proceeds to match or receive additional funds from local, state, federal or private sources. The department shall periodically post a request for applications for eligible organizations to apply for fund proceeds.

3. Report; audit. The department shall require a periodic report from a recipient under subsection 2 detailing the use of fund proceeds and the federal food and nutrition assistance programs involved and to ensure that the funds are expended appropriately pursuant to this section. The department may audit a recipient to carry out the purposes of this subsection.

4. Rules. The department may adopt routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2 A to carry out the purposes of the fund, including application criteria and procedures for recipients, disbursement of funds to recipients and for outreach and administration purposes and reporting and audit procedures for recipients.

Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY, DEPARTMENT OF
Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives N384**

Initiative: Provides one-time funding to capitalize the Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives to be used to match contributions from private and public sources.

GENERAL FUND	2021-22	2022-23
All Other	\$25,000	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$25,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>