

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

**Reports
to the
ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTH LEGISLATURE
Volume Two**

January, 1969

Legislative Research Committee

Publication 104-20 (Vol. II)

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Senator Horace A. Hildreth, Jr., Falmouth, Chairman
 Resigned August 14, 1968
 Senator Kenneth P. MacLeod, Brewer, Chairman
 Elected September 19, 1968
 Representative Samuel A. Hinds, Vice Chairman

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 Armand Duquette, Biddeford
 Harvey Johnson, Smithfield
 Carlton D. Reed, Jr., Woolwich
 Appointed October 20, 1967
 Joseph Sewall, Old Town
 Appointed August 16, 1968
 Roger V. Snow, Jr., Falmouth
 Resigned October 18, 1967
 J. Hollis Wyman, Milbridge

From the House:

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Ex Officio:

Joseph B. Campbell, Augusta
 President of the Senate
 David J. Kennedy, Milbridge
 Speaker of the House

Office of Legislative Research:

Samuel H. Slosberg, Gardiner, Director
 David S. Silsby, Augusta, Assistant Director

Office of Legislative Finance:

Frederick W. Kneeland, Augusta, Finance Officer
 Resigned July 12, 1968
 William H. Garside, Augusta, Finance Officer
 Appointed July 17, 1968
 Samuel A. Hinds, Assistant Finance Officer
 Appointed November 20, 1968; Effective, January 1, 1969

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

January 15, 1969

To the Members of the 104th Legislature:

As Chairman of the Legislative Research Committee of the 103rd Maine Legislature it is with great pride and pleasure that I present a cumulation of findings and recommendations that we as a Committee have developed on our assigned subjects during the past biennium.

This, the second of three volumes, designated as Legislative Research Committee publication 104-20 (Vol. II), combines in a single publication the findings and recommendations developed in nine specific areas of study which are individually reported in committee publications numbered 104-11 through 104-19.

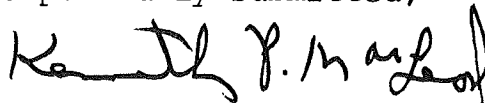
On behalf of the Committee and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our grateful appreciation to Horace A. Hildreth, Jr., formerly our Committee Chairman, to Roger V. Snow, Jr., a former member of the Committee and to Frederick W. Kneeland, the former Legislative Finance Officer, each of whom resigned during the interim after having so faithfully served this Committee.

I also extend, on behalf of the entire Committee, our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Committee, staff, to the news media and to the many private citizens, organizations and employees of the State, without whose endless cooperation and dedicated

service the Committee could not have reached its conclusions.

The members of the Committee further wish to express their appreciation for being chosen to participate in these assignments and sincerely hope the reports contained herein will prove of benefit to the Members of the Legislature and the people of the State of Maine.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth P. MacLeod". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "K".

KENNETH P. MACLEOD, Chairman
Legislative Research Committee

PROPOSED BILLS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE 104TH LEGISLATURE

Page

AN ACT to Revise the Liquor Laws----- 32

AN ACT Relating to Setting Salaries of All County
 Officials Except County Commissioners and
 County Attorneys----- 48

AN ACT Relating to Annual Reports of Counties----- 54

AN ACT Relating to Damage to Private Water Supplies
 Resulting from Alteration of Highways----- 71

AN ACT to Provide for a Statistician in the
 Department of Agriculture----- 135

C O N T E N T S

	Page
Legislative Research Committee Membership-----	ii
Letter of Transmittal-----	iii
Proposed Legislation-----	v
Table of Contents-----	vi
 Research Reports:	
Operation of State Liquor Commission-----	1
County Government-----	42
Highway Well Damage-----	56
Land Acquisition-----	74
Marine Growth-----	81
Governmental Operations-----	99
State Printing-----	111
Agricultural Prices-----	126
Foreign Competition-----	136
 Authority-----	 184
Rules-----	191
Directory of Committee Membership, 1941 - 1968-----	194
Index of Committee Reports, 1940 - 1968-----	198

STATE OF MAINE
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

REPORT ON
AGRICULTURAL PRICES
to
ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTH LEGISLATURE

JANUARY, 1969
Legislative Research Committee
Publication 104-18

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL PRICES

CHAIRMAN - Sam A. R. Albair

VICE CHAIRMAN - J. Hollis Wyman

Albert E. Cote

Samuel A. Hinds

Louis Jalbert

Harvey Johnson

Horace A. Hildreth, Jr., Ex Officio

Kenneth P. MacLeod, Ex Officio

ORDERED, the House concurring, that the Legislative Research Committee be instructed to study the differential between prices received by producers of agricultural products in Maine and the prices at which these same products are sold at retail to determine if any inequities exist that are detrimental to the agricultural industry, and the reason therefor, if their findings with respect to such possible inequities are affirmative, and that the Legislative Research Committee be instructed to report their findings to a special session of the 103rd Legislature or to the 104th Legislature.

The Legislative Research Committee, as directed by legislative order, has explored all available avenues to ascertain meaningful price data on agricultural commodities in order to determine if inequities exist between the various marketing levels which may be harmful to the industry. In the course of this effort the Committee held several executive sessions and publicly heard a number of interested persons in the field of agriculture who testified as to certain price inequities. The Committee also gathered an extensive file of specific price and market information from such sources as the United States Department of Agriculture, the Boston and New York Marketing Services, business and industrial firms, the State Department of Agriculture and the University of Maine Extension Service. As the situation exists today, with the exception of two leading agricultural industries, there is little or no current price information being tabulated in the State of Maine. The agricultural interests of this State are for the most part solely dependent upon the Federal Government, through the New England Crop Reporting Service, for its statistical information.

The Committee found exceptions to this in two out of the three so-called major agricultural industries - potatoes, milk and poultry meat. Milk prices are controlled by the State and through a joint venture the Federal-State Market News Service at Presque Isle records and publishes both price and quantity shipping data on potatoes. The 50 million dollar poultry meat industry is reported to be the

only major area with no available statistical price information. Fruit and vegetable prices are compiled, analyzed and made available through independent means based on marketing areas in Portland, Maine. Other agricultural products such as apples and blueberries receive only token service as far as statistical data on prices is concerned. Apples in quantity storage are subject to storage reports and a compilation is prepared on blueberry prices annually.

Since a study of prices and comparative analysis of such information for differing products at various marketing levels, requires the technical knowledge and skills of a qualified statistician, the Committee was unable, short of employing outside professional assistance, to compile and evaluate data for the purpose of determining price inequities, as requested by legislative order.

Wherein no provision was made in the order for a separate appropriation for the purpose of assistance, the Committee could only assume that such a professional study was not warranted. Therefore, rather than submit an assortment of compilations or tabulations, possibly containing erroneous findings and statistics, the value of which might validly be challenged, the Committee reports that the desired information requested by the terms of the legislative order is unavailable at the present time. Further, that the inability to secure accurate price data at the various market levels, other than by professional study, reflects a real need for technical assistance in procuring, analyzing, tabulating

and reporting statistical price data within the Department of Agriculture. On the basis of information received by the Committee this need for such specialized statistical skills on a full-time basis has existed for some time. It was revealed during the deliberations that over the years the Department of Agriculture has repeatedly requested the necessary funds to employ a statistician but for various reasons the funds were never approved.

Many states have noted the necessity for an agricultural statistician and some have taken appropriate action to provide such a service. Colorado, New York and Illinois are listed among those that have established statistical services.

In conclusion, even though legislation of a type may have originally been contemplated through this assignment, the Committee felt it ill advised to suggest specific recommendations at this time in the absence of statistical detail, properly verified, upon which to make such a determination. However, the Committee, on the basis of its findings recognized the compelling need for a full-time statistician in the Department of Agriculture to supplement present efforts and recommends that urgent action be taken in this regard to alleviate the present situation.

In light of Maine's agricultural growth and pressing desire for information, the employment of an agricultural statistician will fulfill a long time need as well as provide the basic ingredient for new channels of understanding which will insure the beginning of previously unrecorded data.

STATISTICIANDEFINITION

This is advanced technical and supervisory statistical and research work of an administrative nature involving the gathering, analysis and reporting of statistical data of broad scope for a major state department.

Work includes the planning of statistical reporting forms and procedures for a department or division, directing subordinates in editing, tabulating and analyzing raw data, and preparing or directing the preparation of periodical and special reports presenting data in tabular or other suitable form with explanatory text and charts. Data and reports prepared are given important uses in both public relations and internal administrative activities and planning. Supervision is exercised over a technical and clerical staff engaged in statistical work. Assignments are ordinarily received in the form of studies to be made of economic data or other information necessary to the planning of agency programs and the employee is expected to carry projects through to completion under only administrative direction. Reports and analyses prepared as a result of research studies are not ordinarily subject to review for technical adequacy, however, informational publications and releases are subject to review and approval by higher agency officials.

EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED (Any one position may not include all of the duties listed, nor do the listed examples include all tasks which may be found in positions of this class.)

Introduces and revises statistical reporting forms and procedures in a major department.

Devises procedures for the processing of raw statistical data either by punch cards and tabulating machinery or by manual tabulation.

Supervises a statistical and clerical staff in editing, tabulating, analyzing and reporting data.

Consults with departmental officials on desirable reporting procedures and statistical studies.

Prepares or reviews and edits reports of recurrent and special research studies.

Supervises the filing of statistical data and other materials and the mailing and distribution of reports and publications.

Prepares personnel and fiscal reports and budget estimates, and requisitions necessary supplies and equipment.

Performs related work as required.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Extensive knowledge of complex mathematical and statistical methods and formulae.

Extensive knowledge of research techniques and of sources and availability of information relating to the program to be supervised.

Extensive knowledge of the media and use of graphic presentation.

Considerable knowledge of tabulating machines and office equipment useful in performing statistical operations.

Ability to plan and outline statistical procedures necessary in compilation of data.

Ability to supervise a group of employees in statistical and clerical activities.

Ability to analyze and interpret complex statistical data and to present analyses and conclusions with clarity and precision in written and graphic form.

DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

Considerable experience of a progressively responsible nature in the analysis and presentation of statistical data; and graduation from a four-year college or university with specialization in statistics.

AN ACT to Provide for a Statistician in the Department of Agriculture.
Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

Sec. 1. R. S., T. 7, §2, amended. The 3rd sentence of section 2 of Title 7 of the Revised Statutes is repealed as follows:

~~He shall gather statistics of information concerning agriculture and publish the same annually.~~

Sec. 2. R. S., T. 7, §2, amended. Section 2 of Title 7 of the Revised Statutes is amended by adding at the end a new paragraph, as follows:

The commissioner shall appoint, subject to the Personnel Law, a statistician who shall collect, compile, systematize and publish statistical information concerning agriculture.

Sec. 3. Appropriation. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture the sum of \$10,250 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1970 and the sum of \$15,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1971 to carry out the purposes of this Act. The breakdown shall be as follows:

		<u>1969-70</u>		<u>1970-71</u>
AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF				
Personal Services	(1)	\$ 9,750	(1)	\$14,000
All Other		500		1,000
		<u>\$10,250</u>		<u>\$15,000</u>