

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
130TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



Disposition of bills and summaries of all laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

July 2022

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**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

LD 174 An Act To Implement Maine’s Roadmap to End Hunger by 2030

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Public Law 2021, chapter 677 requires the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to act as the lead among departments and agencies of State Government to implement a strategic plan to end hunger in the State.

LD 219 An Act To Improve the Agricultural Marketing Loan Fund and Agricultural Development Grant

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Public Law 2021, chapter 710 separates the Agricultural Development Fund from the Agricultural Marketing Loan Fund. It requires the transfer of \$467,240 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Agricultural Development Fund Other Special Revenue Funds account by June 30, 2023. It also requires the Finance Authority of Maine to transfer the balance of the realized interest in the Agricultural Marketing Loan Fund and any previously awarded agricultural development grant funds that have not been paid to grantees to the Agricultural Development Fund.

It also requires the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to use the Agricultural Development Fund to provide technical assistance grants for conducting market research, feasibility studies, engineering studies, construction planning, land use planning, facility design and configuration planning and for funding the purchase of on-farm equipment and other technology purchases that directly support the growth of agricultural enterprises.

Public Law 2021, chapter 710 provides that an agricultural marketing loan for a project the total cost of which exceeds \$200,000 may not exceed 90% of the project cost. It changes the interest rate for agricultural marketing loans from 5% per year to the federal prime rate on the date of loan commitment but not greater than 5%.

It also provides that the agricultural marketing loan funds may be used to fund the development of new or existing sustainable water resources; for the design and implementation of improvements to infrastructure, equipment and natural resources to enhance a commercial agricultural enterprise’s climate adaptation or mitigation capacity; and for refinancing existing loans used to finance eligible uses.