

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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1 FIRST REGULAR SESSION
2

3 ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
4

5 Legislative Document

No. 1590

6
7 S.P. 545

In Senate, May 10, 1983

8 Submitted by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources
9 pursuant to Joint Rule 24.

10 Referred to the Committee on Agriculture. Sent down for concurrence
and ordered printed.

JOY J. O'BRIEN, Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator Erwin of Oxford.

11 Cosponsors: Representative Michael of Auburn, Senator Emerson of
Penobscot and Representative Lisnik of Presque Isle.

12 STATE OF MAINE
13

14 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
15 NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THREE
16

17 AN ACT to Provide a Comprehensive
18 Marketing Program for Maine Agricultural
19 Products.
20

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

23 Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §§401-A to 401-C are enacted to
24 read:

25 §401-A. Legislative findings

26 The Legislature finds that the marketing of agri-
27 cultural commodities produced in the State is crucial
28 to the maintenance and expansion of the agricultural
29 industry, to the preservation of rural life in the
30 State and to the economic well-being of all of the
31 state's people. The Legislature further finds that
32 over the years, marketing issues have been inade-
33 quately addressed and some of the major agricultural
34 commodities of the State have lost substantial market

1 shares to competitors. In addition, there is a lack
2 of pertinent market information to assist in the
3 development of new commodities to maximize their con-
4 tribution to the state's agricultural economy. There
5 exists a need for a comprehensive marketing program
6 applicable to all agricultural products. Such a pro-
7 gram will provide the necessary market information to
8 enable Maine farmers to make wise short-term and
9 long-term production decisions; establish standards
10 for proper storage, packing and grading; and create
11 adequate enforceable programs for quality assurance
12 as well as for the effective coordination of pro-
13 motion and advertising efforts. In order to ensure
14 that these responsibilities are fulfilled, the Legis-
15 lature finds it necessary to provide state assistance
16 to agricultural marketing.

17 §401-B. Responsibilities of the commissioner

18 To further the purposes of this Part, the commis-
19 sioner shall initiate and implement programs neces-
20 sary to facilitate the effective, profitable market-
21 ing of Maine agricultural products. These programs
22 shall include, but not be limited to the following.

23 1. Research. The commissioner, in conjunction
24 with the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station and
25 the Cooperative Extension Service, shall conduct,
26 assist and foster research to improve the marketing,
27 handling, storage, processing, transportation and
28 distribution of agricultural products in order to
29 develop new and wider markets and reduce distribution
30 costs.

31 2. Information to producers. The commissioner,
32 in conjunction with the Maine Agricultural Experiment
33 Station and the Cooperative Extension Service and
34 other public or private agencies, shall provide pro-
35 ducers information regarding current market condi-
36 tions and such other information as may be needed to
37 maintain quality control and promote quality improve-
38 ment for Maine agricultural products.

39 3. Information to consumers. The commissioner,
40 in conjunction with the Cooperative Extension Ser-
41 vice, shall provide for the dissemination of informa-
42 tion to consumers about Maine agricultural products.

1 4. Organization. The commissioner shall aid
2 Maine producers and consumers by assisting
3 cooperative societies of buyers and sellers, encour-
4 aging direct marketing and by facilitating the effi-
5 cient distribution of farm products.

6 5. Coordination and assistance. The commis-
7 sioner shall consult with, coordinate and assist pro-
8 ducer and dealer organizations and other groups
9 interested in the production, processing and packing,
10 grading, promotion and sale of agricultural goods.

11 §402-C. Maine Agricultural Promotion Assistance
12 Matching Fund

13 The commissioner shall establish a Maine Agricul-
14 tural Promotion Assistance Matching Fund to be used
15 to provide grants to individuals, firms or organiza-
16 tions for promotional efforts, which, in the judgment
17 of the commissioner, promise to effectively expand or
18 strengthen the markets of Maine agricultural prod-
19 ucts. He shall, by rule, promulgated in a manner
20 consistent with the Maine Administrative Procedure
21 Act, Title 5, chapter 375, establish criteria for the
22 allocation of grants, provided that in no case may
23 the amount of any grant exceed 50% of the cost of a
24 promotion project and provided that the amount
25 granted in any fiscal year to a specific promotion
26 project shall not exceed 25% of the moneys available
27 in the fund during that year. He may credit to the
28 fund moneys appropriated by the Legislature or
29 received from other public and private sources. The
30 fund shall be nonlapsing.

31 Sec. 2. 7 MRSA c. 101, sub-c. I-C is enacted to
32 read:

33 SUBCHAPTER I-C

34 MARKET SERVICE

35 §431. Legislative findings and purpose

36 The Legislature finds that market demand informa-
37 tion for Maine agricultural products is lacking in a
38 readily usable form and the lack of this information
39 makes production, grading and handling decisions par-

1 ticularly difficult; that market service information
2 as to the handling of Maine-produced and competing
3 products is lacking for many commodities, as is a
4 system to ensure that this information is readily
5 available to producers; that existing price data for
6 many commodities may not be relevant to the needs of
7 Maine producers; that long-term market projects and
8 analyses of trends in market shares do not exist on a
9 regular basis for many Maine commodities; and that
10 analyses of market structure is lacking for many
11 Maine products. This lack of relevant marketing data
12 severely limits the ability of many Maine agricul-
13 tural producers to market their products effectively.

14 The purpose of this subchapter is to establish a
15 program to maintain a market information service in
16 cooperation with the Maine Agricultural Experiment
17 Station, the Cooperative Extension Service and other
18 state and federal agencies in order to provide infor-
19 mation as to prices, available supplies of different
20 farm products, consumer preferences, demand in local
21 and foreign markets, freight rates and other data
22 essential to assist Maine producers in making
23 informed decisions in the marketing of their prod-
24 ucts.

25 §432. Market information

26 The commissioner shall collect relevant informa-
27 tion from the market place, both directly and from
28 appropriate secondary sources. This information may
29 include product prices, both wholesale and retail,
30 taking into account quantity, packaging, quality,
31 specific market and time of year, purchasing habits
32 of wholesale and retail buyers and preferences of
33 consumers in terms of quantity, packaging, quality
34 and season and availability of supplies of both
35 directly competitive products and substitute prod-
36 ucts. In addition to these factors needed to make
37 short-term marketing decisions, information may also
38 be collected relevant to long-term marketing deci-
39 sions, such as production costs, profitability and
40 market structure.

41 §433. Preparation and distribution of information

1 gather and disseminate information for the benefit of
2 producers and consumers, assist producers, buyers and
3 sellers to achieve more efficient marketing methods,
4 maintain quality control and to establish a Maine
5 Agricultural Promotion Assistance Matching Fund.

6 Funding for this bill, \$202,132 for fiscal year
7 1984 and \$186,747 for fiscal year 1985, is included
8 in the Governor's Part II Budget and will provide the
9 following.

10 Personal Services:

11 One planning and research associate II to serve
12 as a market development specialist, range 23;

13 One planning and research associate II to serve
14 as a market analyst, range 23;

15 Two produce inspectors II to serve as quality
16 assurance field workers, range 14; and

17 One clerk typist II as needed clerical support in
18 the Bureau of Agricultural Marketing, range 8.

19 This request asks for funding, \$21,060 each year,
20 to transfer a position of produce inspector super-
21 visor I, range 16, from the Federal-State Shipping
22 Point Inspection Service, a dedicated revenue ac-
23 count, to the General Fund. This position is essen-
24 tially a quality control activity covering a variety
25 of agricultural products.

26 All Other: Includes necessary travel expenses of
27 these professional and technical personnel and fund-
28 ing for contractual services necessary to carry out
29 the provisions of the bill.

30 Capital request, 1984 only, is for 2 subcompact
31 vehicles at \$6,400 for 2 quality assurance field
32 workers and other typical capital needs for employ-
33 ees.

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