

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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1 SECOND REGULAR SESSION
2

3 ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
4

5 Legislative Document

No. 2028

6
7 H.P. 1541

House of Representatives, February 2, 1984

8 Submitted by the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture pursuant to
9 Joint Rule 19. Approved by Legislative Council on May 25, 1983.

10 Reported by Representative Michael from the Committee on Agriculture
and printed under Joint Rule 19.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

11
12 STATE OF MAINE
13

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

17 RESOLVE, Establishing a Food Policy
18 for Maine.
19

20 Emergency preamble. Whereas, Acts and resolves
21 of the Legislature do not become effective until 90
22 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies;
23 and

24 Whereas, it is in the best interest of the State
25 to ensure the availability of an adequate supply of
26 wholesome and nutritious food to its citizens; and

27 Whereas, the State is currently dependent on im-
28 ported food to supply over 70% of its food needs; and

29 Whereas, the encouragement of increased produc-
30 tion of food in Maine would be beneficial in decreas-
31 ing our reliance on out-of-state food sources, while
32 enhancing rural economic development and contributing
33 positively to Maine's rural quality of life; and

1 Whereas, the State supports a broad range of pro-
2 grams which affect the production and distribution of
3 food; and

4 Whereas, a food policy for Maine would provide
5 the framework to ensure that state programs are con-
6 ducted so as to optimize their effectiveness and en-
7 sure their consistency with state policy objectives;
8 and

9 Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature,
10 these facts create an emergency within the meaning of
11 the Constitution of Maine, and require the following
12 legislation as immediately necessary for the preser-
13 vation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
14 therefore, be it

15 **General policy. Resolved:** That it is in the
16 best interest of the State to support a food supply
17 system that:

18 1. Contributes positively to the nutritional,
19 economic and social well-being of its citizenry and
20 its rural communities;

21 2. Enhances the availability, affordability and
22 quality of food for its citizens;

23 3. Is economically efficient and environmentally
24 appropriate; and

25 4. Is sustained by a structure that promotes a
26 fair return to all participants, provides
27 entrepreneurial freedom and allows access to opportu-
28 nity to participate in the food supply system; and be
29 it further

30 **Rural communities. Resolved:** That the State
31 shall:

32 1. Encourage and develop an agricultural and
33 food industry that will contribute to appropriate ec-
34 onomic growth and community vitality in the State and
35 particularly in its rural communities; and

36 2. Encourage production, processing and market-
37 ing systems that are accessible and affordable to the

1 state's dispersed rural population; and be it further

2 Consumers. Resolved: That the State shall:

3 1. Ensure that all Maine citizens have the op-
4 portunity to avail themselves of a nutritious and
5 balanced diet;

6 2. Encourage local and regional food production
7 to the extent that it can efficiently supply
8 nutritious and affordable food in order to enhance
9 the availability and choice of food to its citizens;

10 3. Provide for an adequate understanding of
11 proper nutrition by its citizens and ensure access to
12 information about the nutritional content of foods in
13 order to promote food choices that are healthful and
14 that reduce the risk of disease caused by improper
15 diet;

16 4. Encourage the growth and development of con-
17 sumer food cooperatives in order to provide a range
18 of choices for an affordable food supply; and

19 5. Ensure an adequate system of food quality and
20 safety control in order to protect citizens from poor
21 quality, unwholesome or contaminated food; and be it
22 further

23 Production. Resolved: That the State shall:

24 1. Encourage the production of commodities that
25 are suited to the state's natural and human re-
26 sources, that can be produced competitively in the
27 State, that exhibit marketing potential due to ex-
28 panding consumption trends or competitive displace-
29 ment of imported supplies, and that offer the best
30 rate of return to the producer;

31 2. Encourage cost-effective production prac-
32 tices, including the use of appropriate technology,
33 conservation of energy resources, recycling of waste
34 products, increased use of integrated pest management
35 and the use of crop varieties and livestock breeds
36 that produce a quality product, offer disease resist-
37 ance and produce high yields under this state's con-
38 ditions;

1 3. Encourage the awareness and use of production
2 and processing practices that minimize exposure to
3 health risks and accidental injury;

4 4. Ensure the adoption of production practices
5 that conserve soil and water resources and protect
6 the environment. To the extent that soil and water
7 conservation practices needed for the long-term main-
8 tenance of the soil resource are not cost-effective
9 for producers in the short-run, support state and
10 federal financial assistance for these measures;

11 5. Encourage the substitution of Maine produced
12 production inputs, including seed, feed, fertilizer,
13 equipment and services for imported inputs to the ex-
14 tent that this substitution is cost competitive, pro-
15 vides greater stability in production costs and con-
16 tributes to the viability of the state's agricultural
17 sector;

18 6. Encourage the diversification of Maine agri-
19 culture, to the extent that it contributes positively
20 to Maine's agricultural economy, provides stability
21 in farm income, promotes better soil management and
22 more efficient use of local resources and provides
23 Maine consumers with a greater variety of locally
24 produced food;

25 7. Assist in the development of an efficient
26 service and supply infrastructure that promotes use
27 of local resources to the extent that they are com-
28 petitive, that minimizes costs to producers, that
29 maintains an appropriately diverse agriculture, that
30 meets the needs of both small scale and large com-
31 mercial farm operations and that supports the state
32 economy; and

33 8. Ensure that Maine producers have access to
34 appropriate business and management training to
35 enhance their ability to compete and to ensure the
36 most efficient use of labor, capital, technological
37 and other resources required for production; and be
38 it further

39 **Marketing. Resolved:** That the State shall:

40 1. Support the development of market structures
41 that:

- 1 A. Can efficiently and consistently provide sup-
2 plies of agricultural products which meet the
3 specifications demanded by wholesalers, retailers
4 and consumers in terms of quality, quantity and
5 packaging;
- 6 B. Provide a fair price to the producers and
7 reasonable prices to consumers;
- 8 C. Provide organized and coordinated marketing,
9 including the development of producer coopera-
10 tives and collective bargaining, in order to fa-
11 cilitate entry of small scale producers into
12 wholesale markets and to strengthen the bargain-
13 ing position of producers, to the extent that
14 marketing opportunities and returns to producers
15 as a whole are enhanced by these structures; and
- 16 D. Maximize marketing options through proper
17 storage, appropriate agricultural and fish pro-
18 cessing facilities, efficient and innovative
19 methods of transportation and other means;
- 20 2. Facilitate access to marketing opportunities
21 by ensuring that producers have access to appropriate
22 training and assistance programs to develop marketing
23 skills;
- 24 3. Promote informed marketing decisions by en-
25 suring the availability of adequate and timely market
26 information to producers and other market partici-
27 pants; and
- 28 4. Support an efficient transportation system in
29 order to minimize transportation costs in the distri-
30 bution of food products from producer to consumer;
31 and be it further

32 **Finance. Resolved:** That the State shall:

- 33 1. Ensure the availability, accessibility and
34 affordability of equity and long-term credit to agri-
35 cultural and fisheries enterprises that will contrib-
36 ute positively to the state's agricultural and fish-
37 eries economies, that contribute to the development
38 of commodities which meet the criteria defined by
39 this Act and that possess the skills necessary to

1 conduct a sound business operation;

2 2. To the extent that entrant farmers face par-
3 ticular constraints in obtaining appropriate financ-
4 ing due to the high capital costs of establishing a
5 farm operation, establish incentives or subsidies
6 that would provide reduced interest and encourage or
7 establish special terms or other means that will al-
8 low credit-worthy new farmers to enter farming; and

9 3. Encourage commercial banking and credit in-
10 stitutions to offer financing to credit-worthy food
11 production and processing enterprises in order to re-
12 duce the state's dependence on federal sources of
13 credit in this area; and be it further

14 **Farmland. Resolved:** That the State shall:

15 1. Ensure an adequate and affordable supply of
16 productive agricultural land to meet the needs of ex-
17 isting and future agricultural operations;

18 2. Protect agricultural lands, including lands
19 currently used for food production and lands espe-
20 cially suited to food production, from conversion to
21 development to the extent that such lands are so lo-
22 cated and in such concentration as to form a critical
23 mass capable of supporting the supply and market
24 structures needed for a viable agricultural economy;

25 3. Protect agricultural operations from con-
26 straints on necessary agricultural practices due to
27 encroachment of incompatible land uses into farming
28 areas; and

29 4. Enhance the economic viability of agricultur-
30 al operations in order to arrest the abandonment of
31 productive agricultural land and its subsequent re-
32 version to forested land or development; and be it
33 further

34 **Research and education. Resolved:** That the
35 State shall:

36 1. Provide the research and development capabil-
37 ities needed to:

- 1 A. Keep abreast of the latest basic and applied
2 research developed by the research community at
3 large which has a bearing on the state's food
4 production capabilities and potential;
- 5 B. Assess the nutritional status and needs of
6 Maine citizens;
- 7 C. Develop new varieties of crops and breeds of
8 livestock suited to Maine's climate and soils;
- 9 D. Ensure the future abundance of Maine's com-
10 mercial fisheries;
- 11 E. Develop new production techniques and tech-
12 nologies which enhance the yields and quality of
13 Maine produced food;
- 14 F. Develop new processing and storage techniques
15 and technologies which are needed to keep Maine's
16 food industry competitive and capable of respond-
17 ing to new market opportunities; and
- 18 G. Assess emerging trends in consumer prefer-
19 ences, marketing structures and market competi-
20 tion in order to maintain and enhance the market-
21 ability of Maine's commodities and to identify
22 and respond to new marketing opportunities; and
- 23 2. Provide the educational outreach needed to
24 implement new techniques and technologies developed
25 to assist in the production, processing and marketing
26 of Maine produced food; and be it further

27 Structure. Resolved: That the State shall:

28 1. Support and encourage owner-operated family
29 and part-time farms to the extent that this provides
30 efficiency in production, maintains entrepreneurial
31 freedom, contributes to a healthy and competitive ag-
32 ricultural economy, enhances local economic growth
33 and contributes to the social and political vitality
34 of the State and its rural areas;

35 2. Ensure that the structure of the food indus-
36 try provides an appropriate distribution of returns
37 resulting in a fair price to the various partici-

1 pants, from producer to consumer, in order to main-
2 tain competition and stability within the system; and

3 3. Ensure that the structure of the food indus-
4 try facilitates entry of new participants in order to
5 foster competition, innovation and efficiency.

6 Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited
7 in the preamble, this Act shall take effect when ap-
8 proved.

9 STATEMENT OF FACT

10 The purpose of this resolve is set out in the
11 emergency preamble.

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