

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

Legislative Document

No. 293

H.P. 213

House of Representatives, February 21, 1989

Reference to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed Pert".

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative TARDY of Palmyra.

Cosponsored by Representative WHITCOMB of Waldo, Senator PEARSON of Penobscot and Representative LISNIK of Presque Isle.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE

An Act Relating to Agricultural Awareness.



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

3 Sec. 1. 7 MRSA c. 8-D is enacted to read:

5 CHAPTER 8-D

7 AGRICULTURAL AWARENESS

9 §241. Awareness program

11 The Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources
13 shall:

15 1. Public awareness. Produce audio-visual materials,
17 facilitate public service programming, prepare written materials,
19 organize a speakers' bureau and otherwise educate the public.
21 The commissioner, in carrying out these duties, shall address the
23 following needs: maintaining a lasting and sustainable
agriculture; protecting our critical rural infrastructures;
guaranteeing continued and effective production and marketing of
fresh fruits, vegetables and livestock; preserving prime
farmland; conserving our soils and water; and generally ensuring
the quality of life in rural Maine.

25 2. Agricultural literacy. Cooperate with the Department of
27 Education and Cultural Services to develop instructional
29 materials, train teachers and teacher trainers and otherwise
31 complete actions for utilizing agriculture as an exciting medium
33 for educating students both about society and the natural world,
while increasing their literacy by infusing basic agricultural
concepts such as agriculture and economics, the dynamics of world
hunger, agriculture and history within present subjects taught in
Maine schools.

35 3. Cooperation. Cooperate with appropriate local, state,
37 and federal agencies and institutions, educational and farm
39 organizations and interested individuals, including the Maine Ag
41 in the Classroom Association, the Department of Educational and
Cultural Services and the Cooperative Extension Service in
carrying out this chapter.

43 **Sec. 2. Appropriation.** The following funds are appropriated
45 from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

47 1989-90

49 1990-91

51 **AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL
RESOURCES, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Agricultural and Rural
Resources Development**

1 All Other \$60,000 \$60,000
3
5 Provides funds to be used for
7 the preparation and printing
9 of written, instructional and
11 audio-visual materials;
13 organization and delivery of
15 teacher training and speaker
17 training; and other
19 activities for furthering
21 agricultural awareness in
23 Maine.

17 **STATEMENT OF FACT**

19 This bill establishes a program in agricultural awareness,
21 utilizing present staff at the Department of Agriculture, Food
23 and Rural Resources and the Department of Educational and
25 Cultural Services. The intent of the bill is to increase
27 understanding among both the public and school children regarding
the importance of a viable food and fiber production system.
This bill provides a mechanism to increase the awareness of the
importance of agriculture to the quality and character of rural
life in Maine as well as our society in general and nationwide.

29 The bill attempts to address our growing lack of
31 understanding of agriculture as a result of being 2 or 3
33 generations removed from our rural heritage. This bill would
35 promote an appreciation by the general public of the increasing
37 pressure on farmers and farmland resulting from development
pressures, environmental concerns and economic factors. In order
for Maine to maintain a sustainable and lasting agriculture, it
is necessary to educate present and future citizens, thereby
guaranteeing that they have the knowledge with which to make
decisions in the best interest of their State's and their
nation's economic and societal well-being.