

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

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Legislative Document

No. 633

H.P. 468

House of Representatives, March 6, 1989

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture suggested and ordered printed.

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

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative WHITCOMB of Waldo.

Cosponsored by Senator COLLINS of Aroostook, Representative PINES of Limestone and Representative TARDY of Palmyra.

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STATE OF MAINE

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

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An Act to Assist Agricultural Producers to Locate and Train Workers.

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

3 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§2-A is enacted to read:**

5 2-A. Agriculture Advisory Expenses Only 7 MRSA §243  
7 Committee on  
9 Agricultural  
Labor  
Recruitment

11 **Sec. 2. 7 MRSA c. 8-D is enacted to read:**

13 CHAPTER 8-D

15 AGRICULTURAL LABOR RECRUITMENT

17 §241. Recruitment

19 The department shall develop programs to recruit individuals  
21 into farm labor work. These initiatives shall include, but not  
be limited to, the following.

23 1. Employment services for farm workers. In cooperation  
25 with existing service providers, the department shall develop  
27 employment services, farm cooperatives or other business  
arrangements between growers or individuals on a regional basis  
that would:

29 A. Recruit individuals on a regional basis for farm work;

31 B. Act as a regional labor pool for producers who wanted to  
find a qualified:

33 (1) Full-time employee;

35 (2) Temporary replacement worker; or

37 (3) Seasonal worker; and

39 C. Provide a counseling service for individuals seeking  
41 employment or training as farm workers.

43 2. Seasonal workers. The department shall provide  
45 assistance to producers who wish to recruit seasonal farm  
laborers outside of this State.

47 3. Working with other agencies. The department shall work  
49 with individuals and agencies to:

51 A. Recruit retired individuals;

B. Recruit persons with disabilities; and

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C. Work with:

(1) School guidance counselors, teachers and other personnel to present farm work as a positive occupational choice for students; and

(2) School boards and officials to make school vacations coincide with harvest periods in areas where there are crops that require a seasonal labor force.

§242. Employer assistance

1. State and federal requirements. The department shall provide information to producers and other employers of farm labor on the state and federal laws with which employers must comply. This information shall include, but not be limited to, requirements regarding:

A. Health and safety standards;

B. Working conditions;

C. Housing conditions;

D. Child labor laws; and

E. Education requirements and programs for children.

2. Housing, educational and social services. The recruitment of seasonal farm workers who must establish temporary residence during a harvest requires the provision of housing, educational and other social support services for the worker and the worker's family. The department shall work with producers, schools, local service providers, local municipal officials and other state departments to coordinate and enhance the availability of these services.

3. Attract and retain workers. The department shall help producers and other employers of farm labor to attract and retain employees. The assistance shall include, but not be limited to:

A. Designing benefit packages;

B. Determining competitive salary scales;

C. Providing employees opportunities for training and advancement;

D. Providing employers training in employee management; and

1           E. Establishing worker safety programs and reducing injuries.

3     **§243. Advisory committee**

5           The Advisory Committee on Agricultural Labor Recruitment, as  
7     established in Title 5, section 12004-I, shall advise the  
   department on farm labor issues.

9           1. Membership. The advisory committee shall consist of 7  
11     members and shall include a representative from the Department of  
13     Labor, Department of Human Services, Department of Educational  
15     and Cultural Services and Department of Mental Health and Mental  
17     Retardation appointed by the commissioners of these departments.  
19     It shall also include a representative from the agricultural  
   interest areas of apple grower, potato grower, vegetable or small  
   fruit grower, dairy farmer and blueberry grower appointed by the  
   commissioner, the Cooperative Extension Service appointed by its  
   director and the Maine Vocational-Technical Institute System  
   appointed by its director.

21          2. Terms of office. The members appointed by the  
23     commissioner shall serve 2-year terms. Members may not serve  
25     more than 2 consecutive terms. When a vacancy occurs, the  
   commissioner shall appoint a replacement for a new 2-year term.

27          3. Chair. The commissioner shall appoint the chair. The  
   chair shall call the meetings.

29          4. Travel. Members shall be reimbursed for reasonable  
31     travel expenses.

33           Sec. 3. Appropriation. The following funds are appropriated  
   from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

35		1989-90	1990-91
37	<b>AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL RESOURCES,</b>		
	<b>DEPARTMENT OF</b>		
39			
41	<b>Agricultural and Rural</b>		
	<b>Resource Development</b>		

43	Positions	(1.5)	(1.5)
	Personal Services	\$29,896	\$39,854
45	All Other	5,452	5,000
	Capital Expenditures	1,345	

47

49           Provides funds for an  
51     Agricultural Training and  
   Education Specialist, a  
   part-time Clerk Typist II and

1 general operating expenses.  
2 In addition, this  
3 appropriation provides funds  
4 for anticipated travel  
5 expenses of the Advisory  
6 Committee on Agricultural  
7 Labor Recruitment.

9 **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND  
10 RURAL RESOURCES**

11 **TOTAL** \$36,693 \$44,854

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15 **STATEMENT OF FACT**

17 The bill establishes the position of Agricultural Training  
18 and Education Specialist in the Department of Agriculture, Food  
19 and Rural Resources to assist producers and other employers of  
20 farm workers to recruit and retain workers. In addition, it sets  
21 the composition and other requirements of the Advisory Committee  
22 on Agricultural Labor Recruitment.  
23