

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

Legislative Document

No. 1208

H.P. 869

House of Representatives, April 18, 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 Representative NUTTING of Leeds, Senator EMERSON of Penobscot and Senator TWITCHELL of Oxford.

STATE OF MAINE

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

An Act to Create a New Crop and Livestock Research and
Development Program.



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

3 7 MRSA §18 is enacted to read:

5 §18. Agricultural New Crop and Livestock Research and
7 Development Program

9 1. Program established. The commissioner shall establish
11 the Agricultural New Crop and Livestock Research and Development
13 Program to support the identification, evaluation, research and
15 appropriate commercial development of new crops, livestock and
17 improved varieties of existing crops as well as to evaluate
19 social, environmental and technical issues affecting the
21 production of new and existing crops and livestock in this State.

23 2. Department responsibilities. In carrying out the duties
25 and responsibilities created by this program, the commissioner
27 may:

29 A. Establish advisory committees, to further the
31 coordination and implementation of specific projects under
33 this chapter. Committees may be made up of representatives
35 of business, university and governmental agencies who have
37 an interest in agricultural development and expertise in the
39 research, demonstration or commercial development of
41 potential new crop and livestock commodities;

43 B. Act as a clearinghouse for information and reports
45 involving the research and development of new crops,
47 livestock or new varieties of existing crops;

49 C. Establish feasibility studies evaluating the potential
51 for new crops and livestock, and develop plans that may
include establishing research and demonstration projects;

D. Identify, evaluate and address production, regulatory,
marketing and financial issues affecting the development and
commercial production of new or existing crop and livestock
enterprises; and

E. Make grants, disburse funds and enter into agreements
with public or private organizations or individuals for
research, experimentation or development of new or
alternative crop and livestock enterprises and new varieties
of existing crops.

3. Agricultural New Crop and Livestock Research and
Development Fund. The Agricultural New Crop and Livestock
Research and Development Fund is governed by the following.

A. A fund is established into which the commissioner may
credit funds received from any source for the administration

1 and implementation of a New Crop and Livestock Research and
3 Development Program. Funds received from sources other than
5 the General Fund shall be deposited in a dedicated account
7 which shall not lapse.

9 B. Funds shall be used to carry out the purposes of this
11 chapter and provide grants to individuals, firms or
13 organizations to conduct research, assess issues concerning
15 new and existing crops and livestock, encourage development
17 and support commercialization of potential new crops,
19 livestock and new varieties.

21 C. The commissioner shall establish, by rule, in a manner
23 consistent with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act,
25 Title 5, chapter 375, criteria for the allocation of grants
27 and any other administrative requirements necessary for the
29 efficient implementation of this program.

31 D. Funds shall not be used for providing loans for start-up
33 of new or expansion of existing business enterprises and no
35 single grant may exceed 20% of the total funds available for
37 grants awarded in a given year. Commodity groups,
39 associations or individuals may specify that funds
41 contributed to this account may be used to initiate projects
43 affecting specific commodities. In awarding grants, the
45 commissioner shall evaluate the financial commitment,
47 whether cash or in-kind, of the applicant and evaluate the
49 extent to which private resources demonstrate long-term
51 financial commitment to a project.

4. Participation of other agencies and private concerns.
In establishing advisory committees, the commissioner may
cooperate with agencies and private concerns including, but not
limited to, the State Planning Office, the Department of Economic
and Community Development, the Finance Authority of Maine and
other financial institutions, regional economic development
agencies, the University of Maine System, local entrepreneurs and
other state and federal agencies which may have an interest in
agricultural development.

FISCAL NOTE

Funding to implement this proposal is included in the Governor's Supplemental Appropriations Act.

STATEMENT OF FACT

This bill establishes the New Crop and Livestock Research and Development Program in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources and provides funds to implement information gathering, coordination of various state and federal agencies and to support feasibility, research and demonstration projects to

1 more quickly evaluate the potential for, and encourage commercial
3 adoption of, a number of new crop and livestock enterprises as
well as new varieties of existing crops.

5 This program will provide information needed by farmers to
7 make better-informed decisions on possible enterprises which will
8 help expand market viable options for new products, and will
9 reduce risks of establishing new enterprises, thus keeping farms
profitable and sustainable in Maine.