

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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119th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1999

Legislative Document

No. 743

H.P. 536

House of Representatives, January 28, 1999

**An Act to Make Confidential Certain Information Collected from Maine
Farmers and Agricultural Business.**

Submitted by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources pursuant to Joint Rule 204.

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph W. Mayo".

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative KNEELAND of Easton.
Cosponsored by Representative CAMERON of Rumford.

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

4 **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §20 is enacted to read:**

6 **§20. Records confidential**

8 Records and correspondence that pertain to matters
10 customarily regarded as confidential business information are
12 confidential and are not open for public inspection. Summary
14 reports using this information may be published that are
16 aggregated data that do not reveal the activities of an
18 individual person or firm.

20 Nothing in this section prevents the disclosure of any
22 records, correspondence or other material to authorized officers
24 and employees of the Federal Government or State Government.

26 **SUMMARY**

28 The Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources
receives business information from farmers, processors and others
which, if available to competitors, could have a negative impact
of their operations. This bill makes such information reported
to the department confidential, though a compilation of the
information may be published provided it is done in such a manner
as to protect the identity of any individual farmer or
agricultural business. Authorized federal and state agencies
would still have access to the information.