

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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120th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2001

Legislative Document

No. 1037

H.P. 793

House of Representatives, February 20, 2001

Resolve, to Establish the Maine Agri-tourism Program.

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

Millicent M. MacFarland

MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND, Clerk

Presented by Representative BELANGER of Caribou.
Cosponsored by Senator KNEELAND of Aroostook and
Representatives: GREEN of Monmouth, HONEY of Boothbay, MAYO of Bath, NUTTING
of Oakland, SHERMAN of Hodgdon, Senators: GOLDTHWAIT of Hancock, KILKELLY of
Lincoln, NUTTING of Androscoggin.

2 **Preamble. Whereas,** maintaining an economically viable family
farm in a global economy has become increasingly challenging; and

4 **Whereas,** family farms are in need of alternative sources of
revenue to support continued successful operations; and

6 **Whereas,** other states have established revolving loan funds
8 and other programs to assist family farms in initiating
agri-tourism ventures; and

10 **Whereas,** agri-tourism provides family farmers with a source
12 of additional income beyond the income they derive from sales of
the commodities they produce; now, therefore, be it further

14 **Sec. 1. Program to be developed. Resolved:** That the
16 Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, the
Commissioner of Conservation and the Chief Executive Officer of
18 the Finance Authority of Maine jointly develop the Maine
Agri-tourism Program to provide low-interest loans and technical
20 assistance to family farms to aid them in initiating agri-tourism
businesses. For purposes of this resolve, "agri-tourism" is the
22 economic activity that occurs when people link travel with
products, services and experiences of the agriculture and food
24 system, including, but not limited to, farm accommodations, farm
vacations and farm tours. In carrying out their responsibilities
26 under this resolve, the commissioners and the chief executive
officer shall:

28 1. Examine the pilot project for agri-tourism currently
30 operating in the State of Vermont, as well as similar programs in
other states, as models for the program to be developed in this
32 State;

34 2. Identify the economic potential for agri-tourism
businesses in this State;

36 3. Consult with family farmers in this State about their
38 interest in an agri-tourism program, including estimates of
funds necessary to adapt their farms to take advantage of
40 agri-tourism opportunities; and

42 4. Develop a proposal for the Maine Agri-tourism Program,
including administrative costs of operating the program; and be
44 it further

46 **Sec. 2. Report. Resolved:** That the Commissioner of
Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, the Commissioner of
48 Conservation and the Chief Executive Officer of the Finance
Authority of Maine shall submit a report, including any
50 legislation necessary to

2 implement the agri-tourism program, by January 15, 2002, to the
Joint Standing Committee on Business and Economic Development.
4 Following receipt of the report, the Joint Standing Committee on
Business and Economic Development may report out legislation to
6 the Second Regular Session of the 120th Legislature.

8 **SUMMARY**

10 This resolve requires the Commissioner of Agriculture, Food
and Rural Resources, the Commissioner of Conservation and the
12 Chief Executive Officer of the Finance Authority of Maine to
develop a Maine Agri-tourism Program. The resolve requires a
14 report on the proposed program to the Second Regular Session of
the 120th Legislature.
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