

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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120th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2001

Legislative Document

No. 1154

H.P. 875

House of Representatives, February 28, 2001

An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Maine Millennium Commission on Hunger and Food Security and to Increase the Viability of Maine's Farms and Improve Nutrition.

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

Millicent M. MacFarland

MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND, Clerk

Presented by Representative SNOWE-MELLO of Poland.
Cosponsored by Senator LEMONT of York and
Representatives: DUGAY of Cherryfield, GERZOFSKY of Brunswick, MENDROS of
Lewiston, MITCHELL of Vassalboro, POVICH of Ellsworth, QUINT of Portland,
WHEELER of Bridgewater, Senator: McALEVY of York.

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

4 **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA c. 101, sub-c. II-B** is amended by repealing the
5 subchapter headnote and enacting the following in its place:

6 **SUBCHAPTER II-B**

7 **MAINE FARM FOODS PROGRAM**

8 **Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §472** is enacted to read:

9 **§472. Nutrition education**

10 **1. Development of educational materials.** The commissioner,
11 in consultation with the Commissioner of Human Services, shall
12 develop educational materials to teach consumers the nutritional
13 value of fresh, locally produced foods and how to prepare these
14 foods and provide related information to encourage the use of
15 farm products of the State.

16 **2. Fund established.** A nutrition education fund is
17 established within the department and may be used to develop
18 educational materials in accordance with this subsection, to
19 distribute these materials to nutrition educators working with
20 low-income persons and to facilitate cooperation between the
21 department and these educators.

22 **Sec. 3. Maine Food Products Coupon Program.** The Commissioner
23 of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources and the Commissioner of
24 Human Services shall develop a Maine Food Products Coupon
25 Program, referred to in this section as the "program," to issue
26 coupons to low-income consumers redeemable for fresh locally
27 grown foods. The commissioners shall report to the Joint
28 Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and
29 the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services no
30 later than January 15, 2002. The report must include a
31 recommendation for each agency's role in implementing the
32 program. The program must be developed to ensure that 20% or less
33 of the funds available for this program cover the cost of issuing
34 the coupons and other administrative costs of the program.

35 The report must include preliminary guidelines for
36 participation in the program. These guidelines must include
37 income guidelines to determine eligibility of consumers, the
38 criteria for foods that may be purchased with the coupons and a
39 process for farmers and food producers to apply for and be
40 accepted as food providers in the program. The report must
41 include any legislation to implement the program, a timetable for
42 the adoption of rules to implement the program and a proposed
43 budget for the program.

2 The committees may report out legislation to the Second Regular
Session of the 120th Legislature to implement the program.

4
6 **Sec. 4. Appropriation.** The following funds are appropriated
from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

8 2001-02

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

14 **Division of Market and Production**
Development

16 All Other \$100,000

18 Appropriates one-time funds for awarding
20 grants to nonprofit agencies who serve
low-income clients. Grants are awarded to
22 develop links between the agency's clients
and area farmers and food producers to
24 increase the consumption of locally produced
foods and improve the nutritional value of
food consumed.

26 **Division of Market and Production**
28 **Development**

30 All Other \$100,000

32 Appropriates funds for developing and
distributing educational materials to
34 promote nutrition and the consumption of
locally produced foods.

36 **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD**
38 **AND RURAL RESOURCES**
TOTAL

\$200,000

42 **SUMMARY**

44 This bill directs the Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and
Rural Resources and the Commissioner of Human Services to develop
46 a program to issue coupons redeemable for fresh locally grown
foods to low-income consumers. It requires the commissioners to
48 report to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture,
Conservation and Forestry and the Joint Standing Committee on

2 Health and Human Services with recommendations for the program no
later than January 15, 2002.

4 It establishes a nutrition education fund for the
development and distribution of educational materials to teach
6 consumers about the nutritional value of and how to prepare
locally produced foods.

8
10 It also provides funding for demonstration projects to
increase direct purchasing of fresh farm products by low-income
consumers.