

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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L.D. 299

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Date: 3/27/26

(Filing No. H- 918)

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AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

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Reproduced and distributed under the direction of the Clerk of the House.

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STATE OF MAINE

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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132ND LEGISLATURE

8

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

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COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 199, L.D. 299, "An Act to Support Investment in Agriculture"

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Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

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'An Act to Build a Viable Future for Maine Agriculture by Transferring a Portion of Real Estate Transfer Tax Revenue to the Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund'

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Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and inserting the following:

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'Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §320-A, sub-§1, ¶A-1 is enacted to read:

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A-1. "Aquacultural" means the practices, techniques or products associated with aquaculture as defined in Title 12, section 6001, subsection 1.

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Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §320-A, sub-§1, ¶C, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 483, Pt. KK, §2, is amended to read:

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C. "Producer" means a person in the State that grows, manufactures, harvests or otherwise creates agricultural, aquacultural, food or forest products and value-added products, including a person engaged in farming, sea farming, harvesting or other agricultural, aquacultural and forestry manufacturing activities.

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Sec. 3. 7 MRSA §320-A, sub-§1, ¶C-1 is enacted to read:

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C-1. "Sea farming" means the breeding, rearing and harvesting of aquatic plants and animals in aquatic environments.

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Sec. 4. 36 MRSA §4641-B, sub-§4-B, ¶E-2, as enacted by PL 2025, c. 388, Pt. V, §6 and affected by §10, is amended by amending subparagraph (2), division (d) to read:

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(d) Deposit 20% in the General Fund, except that 50% of the amount deposited must be transferred to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, which shall deposit the funds in the Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund established in Title 7, section 320-B until the

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COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

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total amount paid for the fiscal year equals \$5,000,000. The Maine Agriculture, Food System and Forest Products Infrastructure Investment Advisory Board established in Title 7, section 320-C shall use the funds deposited into the Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund pursuant to this division to provide grants and low-interest revolving loans to a producer as defined in Title 7, section 320-A, subsection 1, paragraph C who has demonstrated gross business income of at least \$10,000, as evidenced by state or federal tax filings or other documentation acceptable to the board, in any one of the 4 taxable years immediately preceding the date of the application for a grant or loan.

Sec. 5. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY, DEPARTMENT OF
Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund Z384**

Initiative: Provides allocations to allow for the disbursement of loans to applicants who meet qualification criteria.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	\$0	\$5,000,000
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$0	\$5,000,000

Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section number to read consecutively.

SUMMARY

This amendment replaces the bill, which is a concept draft, and changes the title. The amendment amends the definition of "producer" in the provisions of law relating to the Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund to include a person who grows, manufactures, harvests or otherwise creates aquacultural products, including a person who is engaged in sea farming.

The amendment requires the transfer of a portion of the revenue from the real estate transfer tax up to \$5,000,000 each fiscal year to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The department must deposit the funds in the Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund to provide grants and low-interest revolving loans to producers who have demonstrated gross business income of at least \$10,000, as evidenced by state or federal tax filings or other documentation acceptable to the administering agency, in any one of the 4 taxable years immediately preceding the date of the application for a grant or loan.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED
(See attached)



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 299

LR 844(02)

An Act to Support Investment in Agriculture

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-918)
 Committee: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	Projections FY 2027-28	Projections FY 2028-29
Net Cost (Savings)				
General Fund	\$0	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Appropriations/Allocations				
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$0	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Revenue				
General Fund	\$0	(\$5,000,000)	(\$5,000,000)	(\$5,000,000)
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$0	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000

Fiscal Detail and Notes

The bill redirects up to \$5,000,000 of real estate transfer tax revenue from the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund, starting in fiscal year 2026-27. The bill includes corresponding allocations to authorize expenditures for a loan program for applicants who meet the eligibility criteria established in the bill.