

HOUSE BILL No. 6368

August 13, 2008, Introduced by Rep. Mayes and referred to the Committee on Agriculture.

A bill to provide for the coordination and development of certain farm-to-school procurement processes and procedures; to provide for procedures and recommendations for certain farm product producers to access school-related food programs; to provide for certain powers and duties for the departments of education and agriculture; and to provide for the dissemination of certain information to schools and farm product producers.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "farm-
2 to-school procurement act".

3 Sec. 2. As used in this act:

4 (a) "Farm product" means that term as defined in section 2 of
5 the Michigan right to farm act, 1981 PA 93, MCL 286.472.

6 (b) "MDA" means the Michigan department of agriculture.

1 (c) "MDE" means the Michigan department of education.

2 Sec. 3. (1) The MDE and the MDA shall collaborate and
3 cooperate by means of a memorandum of understanding executed
4 between the departments in order to implement the provisions of
5 this act.

6 (2) As part of the collaboration, the MDE shall do the
7 following:

8 (a) Investigate the potential of various procurement
9 procedures and tools for school food authorities to purchase local
10 farm products and abide by federal regulations, including, but not
11 limited to, the small purchase threshold and multiple or line-item
12 awards to farmers, processors, and suppliers within larger food
13 contracts.

14 (b) Educate food service directors on the small purchase
15 threshold and other procurement procedures and tools and promote
16 their use for farm-to-school initiatives.

17 (c) Implement food preparation training for food service staff
18 to accommodate sourcing fresh and local foods.

19 (d) Encourage school food service directors to include local
20 farmers, processors, and suppliers when taking bids for farm
21 products that fall under the small purchase threshold.

22 (e) Encourage all new school construction projects to consider
23 kitchen facilities capable of producing fresh and healthy school
24 meals and opportunities for hands-on learning.

25 (3) As part of the collaboration, the MDA shall do the
26 following:

27 (a) Hire a farm-to-school point person to coordinate efforts

1 between MDA, MDE, and the Michigan department of community health,
2 who would be responsible for identifying local farmers, processors,
3 and suppliers and work with MDE to make that information available
4 to school food service directors and for creating and disseminating
5 information on the school food procurement process to help farmers,
6 processors, and suppliers learn more about the process.

7 (b) Identify, target, and promote job creation around farm-to-
8 school initiatives.

9 (c) In cooperation with commodity groups and growers
10 associations, utilize existing web-based market development tools
11 or adopt a voluntary web-based directory of farmers searchable by
12 location. The directory should be updated and consistently
13 maintained and usable by anyone interested in locating farmers and
14 Michigan farm products.

15 (d) Investigate opportunities for farmers to supply their
16 products to commercial distributors.

17 Sec. 4. The MDE and the MDA may accept funds from any federal,
18 state, or private source to implement this act.