



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 611

February Session, 2006

* SB00611ENVAPP032006 *

AN ACT CONCERNING THE MARKETING OF CONNECTICUT-GROWN FARM PRODUCTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 22-38a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2006*):

3 The Commissioner of Agriculture shall establish and administer a
4 program to promote the marketing of farm products grown and
5 produced in Connecticut for the purpose of encouraging the
6 development of agriculture in the state. The commissioner may, within
7 available appropriations, provide a grant-in-aid to any person, firm,
8 partnership or corporation engaged in the promotion and marketing of
9 such farm products, provided the words "CONNECTICUT-GROWN"
10 or "CT-Grown" are clearly incorporated in such promotional and
11 marketing activities. The commissioner shall (1) contract with a public
12 relations or advertising firm to design, plan and implement a
13 multiyear, state-wide marketing and advertising campaign, including,
14 but not limited to, television and radio advertisements, promoting the
15 availability of, and advantages of purchasing, Connecticut-grown farm
16 products, (2) establish and continuously update a web site connected
17 with such advertising campaign that includes, but is not limited to, a
18 comprehensive listing of Connecticut farmers' markets, pick-your-own
19 farms, roadside and on-farm markets, farm wineries, garden centers

20 and nurseries selling predominantly Connecticut-grown horticultural
21 products and agri-tourism events and attractions, and (3) conduct
22 efforts to promote interaction and business relationships between
23 farmers and restaurants, grocery stores, institutional cafeterias and
24 other potential institutional purchasers of Connecticut-grown farm
25 products, including, but not limited to, (A) linking farmers and
26 potential purchasers through a separate feature of the web site
27 established pursuant to this section, and (B) organizing state-wide or
28 regional events promoting Connecticut-grown farm products, where
29 farmers and potential institutional customers are invited to participate.
30 The commissioner shall use his best efforts to solicit cooperation and
31 participation from the farm, corporate, retail, wholesale and grocery
32 communities in such advertising, Internet-related and event planning
33 efforts, including, but not limited to, soliciting private sector matching
34 funds. The commissioner shall use all of the funds provided to the
35 Department of Agriculture pursuant to subparagraph (C) of
36 subdivision (4) of section 4-66aa of the 2006 supplement to the general
37 statutes for the purposes of this section. The commissioner shall report
38 annually to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
39 having cognizance of matters relating to the environment on issues
40 with respect to efforts undertaken pursuant to the requirements of this
41 section, including, but not limited to, the amount of private matching
42 funds received and expended by the department. The commissioner
43 may adopt, in accordance with chapter 54, such regulations as he
44 deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

45 Sec. 2. Section 22-38c of the general statutes is repealed and the
46 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2006*):

47 There shall be an expand and grow Connecticut agriculture account,
48 which shall be a separate, nonlapsing account within the General
49 Fund. Funds received pursuant to section 26-194 and section 22-38a, as
50 amended by this act, shall be deposited into said account. The
51 Commissioner of Agriculture [may] shall make payments from said
52 account to fund the programs established in [section] sections 22-38a,

53 as amended by this act, and 22-38b.

54 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a Forest,
55 Parks, Tourism and Historical task force to determine the feasibility of
56 transferring the management of state forest land and state parks from
57 the Department of Environmental Protection to a new and
58 independent commission or agency.

59 (b) The task force shall be comprised of seventeen members who are
60 knowledgeable about state parts, forests, tourism and historic entities
61 to be appointed as follows: Three by the Governor, three by the
62 president pro tempore of the Senate, three by the speaker of the House
63 of Representatives, two by the majority leader of the Senate, two by the
64 majority leader of the House of Representatives, two by the minority
65 leader of the Senate and two by the minority leader of the House of
66 Representatives. Members of the task force shall receive no
67 compensation for their services, but shall be reimbursed for any
68 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

69 (c) The task force may request and may receive cooperation and
70 assistance in the performance of its duties from any federal, state or
71 local agency or from any private citizen or entity, including the
72 temporary assignment of personnel which may be necessary to carry
73 out the performance of its functions and may exchange information
74 and personnel with agencies of the state with reference to issues of
75 mutual concern.

76 (d) The task force shall determine if the transfer of management of
77 state forest land and state parks from the Department of
78 Environmental Protection to a new independent commission or agency
79 would financially benefit the state and, if so, how such financial
80 benefits would support: (1) Increased staff levels to maintain state
81 forest land and state parks, (2) a newly created commission or agency,
82 and (3) tourism and historic entities.

83 (e) In considering whether to recommend the creation of a new

84 commission or agency, the task force shall explore the benefit of
85 locating such commission or agency within the Department of
86 Environmental Protection for administrative purposes only, including
87 transferring existing forestry staff. Such staff would manage increased,
88 sustainable harvesting of state forest land and state park resources.
89 The task force shall explore the benefit of removing jurisdiction over
90 tourism and historic matters from the Connecticut Commission on
91 Culture and Tourism and placing jurisdiction over such matters with a
92 newly formed commission or agency and utilizing available funding
93 to, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture, expand
94 agricultural tourism in the state.

95 (f) The task force shall determine the ability of the state to realize
96 economic gain through enhanced, sustainable management of state
97 forest land, including, but not limited to, determining: (1) The amount
98 of state forest land available for harvest; (2) additional markets that
99 may be explored, such as the creation of cellulose ethanol through the
100 conversion of waste wood into wood alcohol and fuel for motor
101 vehicles; (3) the feasibility of commission or agency collaboration with
102 nonprofit land conservation organizations and private land owners; (4)
103 the ability to meet or exceed recommendations of the Council on
104 Environmental Quality; and (5) the feasibility of special projects,
105 including, but not limited to, planting Christmas trees in the medians
106 of state highways and harvesting and selling such trees when they
107 mature.

108 (g) Not later than January 1, 2007, the task force shall submit a
109 report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing
110 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
111 relating to state parks and forests, in accordance with the provisions of
112 section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on
113 the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2007, whichever is
114 later.

115 Sec. 4. (*Effective July 1, 2006*) The sum of three hundred thousand
116 dollars is appropriated to the Department of Agriculture, from the

117 General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, to the expand
118 and grow Connecticut agriculture account pursuant to section 22-38c
119 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	22-38a
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	22-38c
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section

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Joint Favorable Subst. C/R

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