



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6842

January Session, 2023



AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL FOOD FOR SCHOOLS INCENTIVE PROGRAM AND EXPANSION OF THE CT GROWN FOR CT KIDS GRANT PROGRAM.

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

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) As used in this section:
- 2 (1) "Local farm" means a farm, farmers' cooperative, food hub or
3 wholesale distributor located in Connecticut.
- 4 (2) "Regional farm" means a farm, farmers' cooperative, food hub or
5 wholesale distributor located in New York, Massachusetts, Rhode
6 Island, Vermont, New Hampshire or Maine.
- 7 (3) "Locally sourced food" means food grown or produced at, or
8 sold by, a local farm and includes, but is not limited to, value-added
9 dairy, fish, pork, beef, poultry, eggs, fruits, vegetables and minimally
10 processed foods.
- 11 (4) "Regionally sourced food" means food grown or produced at, or
12 sold by, a regional farm and includes, but is not limited to, value-
13 added dairy, fish, pork, beef, poultry, eggs, fruits, vegetables and
14 minimally processed foods.
- 15 (5) "Eligible board of education" means a local or regional board of
16 education that is participating in the National School Lunch Program.

17 (6) "Eligible meal program" means a meal program provided by an
18 eligible board of education to its students or a meal provided as part of
19 such board's participation in the National School Lunch Program,
20 School Breakfast Program, Seamless Summer Option, After School
21 Snack Program, Summer Food Service Program or the At-Risk
22 Afterschool Meals component of the Child and Adult Care Food
23 Program administered by the United States Department of
24 Agriculture.

25 (b) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and each fiscal year
26 thereafter, the Department of Education, in consultation with the
27 Department of Agriculture, shall administer the Local Food for Schools
28 Incentive Program. Such program shall provide reimbursement
29 payments to eligible boards of education for the purchase of locally
30 sourced food and regionally sourced food that may be used as part of
31 such board's participation in an eligible meal program. An eligible
32 board of education shall be entitled to receive reimbursement
33 payments in accordance with the guidelines developed pursuant to
34 subsection (e) of this section and in an amount equal to (1) one-half of
35 such board's expenditures for locally sourced foods, and (2) one-third
36 of such board's expenditures for regionally sourced foods.

37 (c) (1) The department shall receive requests from eligible boards of
38 education for reimbursement payments under the program in a
39 manner similar to how the department receives applications under
40 section 10-215b of the general statutes.

41 (2) Each eligible board of education shall (A) maintain a record of
42 such board's expenditures for all locally sourced food and regionally
43 sourced food, as well as documentation confirming the place of origin
44 of such food, as prescribed by the department, and (B) submit, upon
45 request of the department, such records and documentation to the
46 department for review.

47 (d) Any locally sourced food or regionally sourced food for which
48 an eligible board of education seeks reimbursement payments under

49 this section, shall comply with the nutrition standards established by
50 the department pursuant to section 10-215e of the general statutes.

51 (e) The department shall develop guidelines for the implementation
52 of the program. Such guidelines shall (1) establish a maximum
53 reimbursement amount based on total student enrollment for each
54 eligible board of education, (2) assist eligible boards of education in
55 participating in the program, and (3) promote geographic, social,
56 economic and racial equity, which may include a preference for
57 socially disadvantaged farmers, as defined in 7 USC 2279(a), as
58 amended from time to time, or small farm businesses.

59 (f) The department shall develop a survey to be distributed annually
60 to any eligible board of education that receives reimbursement
61 payments under this section. Such survey shall be designed to collect
62 information to assist the department in implementing and improving
63 the program.

64 (g) In addition to the reimbursement payments otherwise provided
65 pursuant to this section, the department may, within available
66 appropriations, provide supplemental grants to eligible boards of
67 education. Such supplemental grant funds may be expended for the
68 purpose of purchasing kitchen equipment, engaging with school
69 nutrition or farm-to-school consultants or training relating to the
70 processing, preparation and serving of locally sourced food and
71 regionally sourced food. In awarding supplemental grants under this
72 subsection, the department shall give priority to an eligible board of
73 education for a town designated as an alliance district pursuant to
74 section 10-262u of the general statutes.

75 (h) The department may accept gifts, grants and donations,
76 including in-kind donations, for the administration of the Local Food
77 for Schools Incentive Program and to implement the provisions of this
78 section.

79 (i) Any unexpended funds appropriated for purposes of this section

80 shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year but shall be available for
81 expenditure during the next fiscal year.

82 (j) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, for the fiscal year
83 ending June 30, 2024, and each fiscal year thereafter, the amount of
84 reimbursement payments payable to eligible boards of education shall
85 be reduced proportionately if the total of such reimbursement
86 payments in such year exceeds the amount appropriated for such
87 reimbursement payments for such year.

88 (k) Not later than January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the
89 department shall submit a report on the Local Food for Schools
90 Incentive Program to the joint standing committee of the General
91 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in
92 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.
93 Such report shall include, but need not be limited to, an accounting of
94 the funds appropriated and received by the department for the
95 program, descriptions of the reimbursement payments made under the
96 program and an evaluation of the program.

97 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024,
98 the Department of Education shall hire two full-time employees to
99 administer the Local Food for Schools Incentive Program described in
100 section 1 of this act. Such employees shall be responsible for (1)
101 identifying and promoting the critical components of individual farm-
102 to-school programs and advising the Commissioner of Education on
103 strategies to implement the program, (2) supporting partnerships with
104 public and nonprofit organizations to establish a structure to facilitate
105 communication between farmers and school district officials, (3)
106 conducting workshops, training sessions and technical assistance to
107 school food service directors, school personnel, farmers, produce
108 distributors and processors regarding the demand for and availability
109 of Connecticut farm products, and (4) identifying grants, donations
110 and other funding sources to assist in funding the program.

111 Sec. 3. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The sum of three hundred thousand

112 dollars is appropriated to the Department of Education from the
 113 General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, for (1) the
 114 development of the Local Food for Schools Incentive Program
 115 described in section 1 of this act, (2) the hiring of two full-time
 116 employees described in section 2 of this act, and (3) entering into
 117 contracts for program evaluation and the provision of technical
 118 assistance to eligible boards of education and local farms, as such
 119 terms are defined in section 1 of this act.

120 Sec. 4. (*Effective July 1, 2024*) The sum of one million five hundred
 121 dollars is appropriated to the Department of Education from the
 122 General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, for the
 123 administration of the Local Food for Schools Incentive Program
 124 described in section 1 of this act, provided two hundred fifty thousand
 125 dollars of such appropriated funds shall be used for supplemental
 126 grants described in subsection (g) of section 1 of this act.

127 Sec. 5. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The sum of one million dollars is
 128 appropriated to the Department of Agriculture from the General Fund,
 129 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, for administration of the CT
 130 Grown for CT Kids Grant Program described in section 10-215l of the
 131 general statutes.

132 Sec. 6. (*Effective July 1, 2024*) The sum of one million dollars is
 133 appropriated to the Department of Agriculture from the General Fund,
 134 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, for administration of the CT
 135 Grown for CT Kids Grant Program described in section 10-215l of the
 136 general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section

Sec. 6	July 1, 2024	New section
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Joint Favorable Subst. C/R

APP