

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 113

BY REPRESENTATIVES CONNICK AND LEGER

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, in collaboration with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center, to study the feasibility of promoting the growth, production, and use of organic produce in this state.

WHEREAS, Louisiana is losing revenue, taxes, jobs, and current and future infrastructure because the state is not growing food for the local market; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana is also facing a public health crisis because of the foods residents eat; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana is not regionally competitive in the local, school lunch, organic, grass-fed cattle and dairy industry, or the small grains and brewers markets; instead, Louisiana consumers, such as, bakers, butchers, brewers, markets, chefs, and schools, purchase food that is grown outside of the state; and

WHEREAS, locally grown food, protected in a secure and direct market supply chain, ensures our bio-security from certain threats like terrorism, war, and natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, due to an immense generational shift in Louisiana, millennials are the largest generation ever and they prefer locally grown food, which they are willing to pay a premium for with their tremendous buying power; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's agricultural community can choose to embrace or eschew this local market, but many facets of our economy will suffer if Louisiana does not begin the commitment to locally grown agricultural products; and

WHEREAS, a goal of this study is the establishment of a local and sustainable agriculture department within the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center or the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center to study the seeds, markets, cultures, consumers, and barriers to state markets, to research local preference programs, and to research and expand the School Lunch Louisiana Program; and

WHEREAS, an additional goal of this study is the establishment of a Louisiana Food Policy Council that will meet annually with the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center, and constituents such as chefs, brewers, public health officials, doctors, millers, students, and other members of the general public to: make policy recommendations for legislative sessions; establish an at-large agricultural liaison between the division of administration, Louisiana State University, Southern University, the Governor's office, and members of the general public; work with appropriate legislative committees, including the House and Senate committees on agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, and rural development, on legislation and policy directives; and maintain the lawful, federal requirement that the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center provide research and recommendations for all constituents in their districts.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, in collaboration with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center, to study the feasibility of promoting the growth, production, and use of organic produce in this state, the establishment of a local and sustainable agriculture department within the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center or the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center, and the establishment of a Louisiana Food Policy Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the House and Senate committees on agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, and rural development by February 1, 2018.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the vice president of agriculture of the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, and the chancellor-dean of the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center.

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES