

SENATE BILL NO. 420

BY SENATOR THOMPSON

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:195.1, relative to school nutrition programs; to require the State Board of  
3 Elementary and Secondary Education to develop and implement a farm to school  
4 program to promote the use of locally grown and raised agricultural products in  
5 school nutrition programs; to provide for the duties and responsibilities of the state  
6 Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture and Forestry with  
7 respect to the program; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:195.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 **§195.1. Louisiana Farm to School Program**

11 **A. The legislature finds that:**

12 **(1) Farm to school programs increase student access to healthy, locally**  
13 **grown fruits, vegetables, and other agricultural products.**

14 **(2) A state farm to school program will link Louisiana schools and**  
15 **farmers in order to provide school children with fresh and minimally processed**  
16 **agricultural products for inclusion in school meals and snacks, promote healthy**  
17 **eating habits, and increase the market for locally produced fruits, vegetables,**  
18 **and other agricultural products.**

19 **(3) Farm to school programs increase student awareness of the**  
20 **importance of agricultural activities through active learning opportunities such**  
21 **as farm visits, cooking demonstrations, tasting demonstrations, and school**  
22 **gardening and composting programs, and integrate nutrition and agricultural**  
23 **education into the school curriculum.**

24 **B.(1) The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in**  
25 **collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, shall develop**

1 and implement a farm to school program, to be administered by the state  
2 Department of Education, for the purpose of assisting schools and school food  
3 service personnel to identify and utilize all available resources to support and  
4 increase the use of locally grown or raised agricultural products in school  
5 nutrition programs.

6 (2) The Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture  
7 and Forestry shall collaboratively:

8 (a) Provide an inventory of farming operations throughout the state by  
9 region that links schools and school districts with farmers through the use of the  
10 LSU AgCenter's membership in the MarketMaker network.

11 (b) Provide guidance to local schools to develop relationships with local  
12 farmers to support requests that specific crops be produced for use in school  
13 nutrition programs.

14 (c) Encourage schools and school districts to include local farmers, food  
15 processors, and suppliers when procuring food products that fall under the  
16 Federal Small Purchase Threshold set by 41 U.S.C. 403(11).

17 (d) Disseminate specific farm to school procurement guidelines for  
18 farmers and schools regarding contracting with schools and school districts and  
19 school food safety and liability insurance requirements.

20 (e) Disseminate information to schools and school districts regarding the  
21 proper equipment required to prepare and process fresh food onsite.

22 (f) Create a plan to integrate classroom and hands-on activities related  
23 to agriculture, food, health, and nutrition into the school curricula.

24 (g) Develop a Louisiana Farm to School Handbook to provide guidance  
25 and resources to schools and farmers and other producers of agricultural  
26 products to promote the use of local and regionally produced foods in school  
27 nutrition programs and to develop and implement a successful farm to school  
28 program.

29 C. The state Department of Education and the state Department of  
30 Agriculture and Forestry shall consult with the Louisiana State University

1           Agricultural Center, the Southern University Agricultural Center, the  
 2           Louisiana Farm to School Alliance, and any other appropriate resource or  
 3           stakeholder group in implementing the provisions of this Section.

4                   D. Implementation of the provisions of this Section shall be subject to the  
 5           appropriation of funds by the legislature or the availability of any other federal  
 6           funding, grants, gifts, or public or private donations which may be used for  
 7           coordination of resources for the farm to school program.

8           Section 2. This act shall be known and may be cited as the Louisiana Farm to School  
 9           Program Act.

10           Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
 11           signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
 12           by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
 13           vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
 14           effective on the day following such approval.

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 PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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 SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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 GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_