



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF FARMER'S MARKETS AND LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 70TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, farmer's markets contribute to local economic growth by supporting small-scale agriculture and entrepreneurship; and

WHEREAS, farmer's markets provide opportunities to strengthen and secure resilient food systems through direct producer-to-consumer sales; and

WHEREAS, farmer's markets promote access to fresh, nutritious foods improving public health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, farmer's markets play a critical role in bolstering local food systems as a matter of national security by reducing dependency on external supply chains, enhancing self-sufficiency, and ensuring food availability during crisis or disruptions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, to examine farmer's markets and food systems in the state of Montana for the purpose of promoting regional food system infrastructure and coordination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee:

- (1) collaborate on this issue with relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to:
 - (a) small-scale agricultural producers;

- (b) farmer's market organization representatives;
 - (c) city or county public health experts;
 - (d) economic development specialists;
 - (e) food systems experts;
 - (f) tribal government representatives;
 - (g) representatives with expertise in food systems and national security;
 - (h) the Department of Public Health and Human Services;
 - (i) the Department of Agriculture; and
 - (j) the Montana State University-Bozeman extension service.
- (2) study the current economic impact of farmer's markets in Montana;
- (3) review barriers to growth and opportunities for farmer's market improvement, including analyzing infrastructure, market access, regulatory frameworks, and statutory definitions;
- (4) study the impact, opportunities, and challenges of the Montana Local Food Choice Act, as provided in Title 50, chapter 49, part 2, MCA, and the state cottage food laws provided in Title 50, chapter 50, MCA;
- (5) study the role of farmer's markets in advancing food security and nutrition, especially in underserved areas;
- (6) review contributions of farmer's markets to local and regional food system resilience, focusing on national security concerns related to food supply disruptions;
- (7) review current statutes governing consumer protection and liability for food producers and markets;
- (8) study potential collaborations between local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private entities to support farmer's markets; and
- (9) study strategies to integrate farmer's markets into broader rural and community development initiatives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions, comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 70th legislature.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
SJ 11, originated in the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2025.

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2025.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 11

INTRODUCED BY B. GILLESPIE

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