

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 46

INTRODUCED BY A. OLSEN

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY ON FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURAL PROSPERITY IN THE STATE; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 70TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, food security is vital to our state and nation; and

WHEREAS, agriculture is Montana's top production industry and is a central and vital component of this state's economy; and

WHEREAS, the prosperity of Montana's agricultural commodities fuels the prosperity of the state; and

WHEREAS, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations states that "food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life"; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has severely stressed underlying issues of food access and food distribution in the state; and

WHEREAS, Montana's agricultural economy has grown in response to demand for more diverse crops, such as pulse crops and other specialty crops; and

WHEREAS, adding value to Montana-grown food and crops is essential to expanding the state's economy and increasing the wealth of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes the importance of growing and adding value to local products and maintaining markets for the state's agricultural commodities while also providing food security for its citizens; and

WHEREAS, spending on agriculture and food systems directly supports public health, local economies, and independent and historically marginalized farmers and ranchers.

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

1 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

2 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory  
3 committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, to study issues related to the production of food and the  
4 consumption of food in the state.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee examine:

6 (1) the availability of food in the state;

7 (2) the production of food;

8 (3) the access to food by individuals or households;

9 (4) opportunities to add value in all sectors of agricultural production;

10 (5) existing programs and initiatives focused on food security and agricultural prosperity, including  
11 programs funded with federal money or donations, such as the Farmers to Families Food Box Program;

12 (6) issues, challenges, and opportunities related to locally grown, accessed, processed, and  
13 distributed food;

14 (7) the Made in Montana and Grown in Montana products programs; and

15 (8) challenges to food security, such as soil health and pollinator decline.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee consider how markets for the state's commodities  
17 may affect the availability, production, access, and use of food by the state's citizens.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee examine this topic in collaboration with the general  
19 public and the relevant state agencies and stakeholders, including but not limited to those with expertise in  
20 agricultural production, livestock production, community food bank operations, the science of nutrition, and local  
21 food growing and retailing.

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

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

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