

HOUSE BILL NO. 649

INTRODUCED BY S. FYANT, L. MUSZKIEWICZ, T. CROWE, P. ELVERUM, C. NEUMANN, J. WEBER, D. POWERS, S. ROSENZWEIG, W. CURDY, B. GILLESPIE, W. MCKAMEY, J. KASSMIER, P. FLOWERS, J. KARLEN, P. TUSS, C. FITZPATRICK

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING A FARM TO FOOD BANK GRANT PROGRAM; REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ESTABLISH AND ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM; ESTABLISHING GRANT REQUIREMENTS; ESTABLISHING A GRANT PROCESS; PROVIDING PREFERENCES FOR GRANT AWARDS; ESTABLISHING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; PROVIDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Short title. [Sections 1 through 7] may be cited as the "Farm to Food Bank Act".

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Purpose. (1) The purpose of [sections 1 through 7] is to provide a farm to food bank grant program administered by the department for farm to food bank activities. Farm to food bank programs strengthen local food economies by creating a new market for Montana farmers and ranchers, expanding access to fresh, local products for those who may not otherwise have access to those products, and strengthening producer and consumer relationships in the state. Farm to food bank program implementation looks different in each community, but in Montana it includes the following elements:

- (a) using available funds to support Montana farmers and ranchers;
 - (b) providing support for regional food hubs that can leverage producer relationships to purchase, process, store, and distribute products for and to food banks; and
 - (c) providing access to fresh, healthy, local products for low-income consumers.
- (2) [Sections 1 through 7] create a pilot program to:

- (b) methods for determining an applicant's progress in implementing farm to food bank activities;
- (c) methods for determining compliance with the requirements of [section 5]; and
- (d) other procedures necessary to administer and implement the grant program.

NEW SECTION. Section 5. Farm to food bank grant requirements. (1) Grants awarded in

accordance with [sections 1 through 7] must be based on a competitive process open to applicants based on an applicant's:

- (a) ability to administer and implement farm to food bank activities;
- (b) ability to incorporate positive change in local food purchasing;
- (c) history of and ability to promote healthy food activities; and
- (d) ability to demonstrate statewide relationships with food hubs.

(2) Applicants shall demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this section.

(3) Preference must be provided to applicants who demonstrate an ability to reach underserved communities, especially those in rural areas and on tribal reservations.

(4) Food purchased for farm to food bank activities with grant funds must be food, products, or ingredients that:

- (a) are Montana-grown; and
- (b) could reasonably be a part of an established food bank nutrition program.

(5) Food purchased for farm to food bank activities may not be used to supplant existing local food purchases by food banks that would otherwise be purchased with existing food bank nutrition funds from other sources.

(6) A grant recipient may spend up to ~~20%~~ 5% of the award amount on administration costs, including convening and partnering with food and agriculture development centers, local producers, food pantries, and food hubs.

NEW SECTION. Section 6. Farm to food bank grant program special revenue account. (1) There is an account in the state special revenue fund to be known as the farm to food bank grant program account.

(2) The purpose of the account is to: