

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 404 (SB 420)

2016 Regular Session

Thompson

Provides for the "Louisiana Farm to School Program Act" as follows:

Requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), in collaboration with the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry, to develop and implement a farm to school program to be administered by the state Department of Education (DOE).

Provides that the purpose of the program is to assist schools and school food service personnel to identify and utilize all available resources to support and increase the use of locally grown or raised agricultural products in school nutrition programs.

Requires the DOE and the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry (DA&F) to collaboratively:

- (1) Provide an inventory of farming operations throughout the state by region that links schools and school districts with farmers through the use of the LSUAgCenter's membership in the MarketMaker network.
- (2) Provide guidance to local schools to develop relationships with local farmers to support requests that specific crops be produced for use in school nutrition programs.
- (3) Encourage schools and school districts to include local farmers, food processors, and suppliers when procuring food products that fall under the Federal Small Purchase Threshold.
- (4) Disseminate specific farm to school procurement guidelines for farmers and schools regarding contracting with schools and school districts and school food safety and liability insurance requirements.
- (5) Disseminate information to schools and school districts regarding the proper equipment required to prepare and process fresh food onsite.
- (6) Create a plan to integrate classroom and hands-on activities related to agriculture, food, health, and nutrition into the school curricula.
- (7) Develop a Louisiana Farm to School Handbook to provide guidance and resources to schools and farmers and other producers of agricultural products to promote the use of local and regionally produced foods in school nutrition programs and to develop and implement a successful farm to school program.

Requires DOE and the DA&F to consult with the LSU and Southern University agricultural centers, the Louisiana Farm to School Alliance, and other stakeholder groups in implementing new law.

Provides that implementation of the farm to school program is subject to the appropriation of funds by the legislature or the availability of any other federal funding, grants, gifts, or public or private donations which may be used for coordination of resources for the program.

Effective upon signature of the governor (June 8, 2016).

(Adds R.S. 17:195.1)