

2016 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 420

BY SENATOR THOMPSON

BESE. Requires BESE and the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry to develop and implement a Farm to School Program. (gov sig)

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,**

1 and other agricultural products.

2 (3) Farm to school programs increase student awareness of the
3 importance of agricultural activities through active learning opportunities such
4 as farm visits, cooking demonstrations, tasting demonstrations, and school
5 gardening and composting programs, and integrate nutrition and agricultural
6 education into the school curriculum.

7 B.(1) The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in
8 collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, shall develop
9 and implement a farm to school program, to be administered by the state
10 Department of Education, for the purpose of assisting schools and school food
11 service personnel to identify and utilize all available resources to support and
12 increase the use of locally grown or raised agricultural products in school
13 nutrition programs.

14 (2) The Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture
15 and Forestry shall collaboratively:

16 (a) Create an inventory of small and large farmers and crops across the
17 state, by region.

18 (b) Create a plan for local schools to develop relationships with local
19 farmers to support requests that specific crops be produced for use in school
20 nutrition programs.

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

24 (d) Develop specific farm to school standards and guidelines for farmers
25 and schools regarding contracting with schools and school districts and school
26 food safety and liability insurance requirements.

27 (e) Develop a plan to ensure that schools have the proper equipment to
28 prepare and process fresh food onsite.

29 (f) Create a plan to integrate classroom and hands-on activities related

1 **to agriculture, food, health, and nutrition into the school curricula.**
2 **(g) Develop a Louisiana Farm to School Handbook to provide guidance**
3 **and resources to schools and farmers and other producers of agricultural**
4 **products to promote the use of local and regionally produced foods in school**
5 **nutrition programs and to develop and implement a successful farm to school**
6 **program.**

7 **C. The state Department of Education and the state Department of**
8 **Agriculture and Forestry shall consult with the Louisiana State University**
9 **Agricultural Center, the Southern University Agricultural Center, the**
10 **Louisiana Farm to School Alliance, and any other appropriate resource or**
11 **stakeholder group in implementing the provisions of this Section.**

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

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

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jeanne C. Johnston.

DIGEST

SB 420 Original 2016 Regular Session Thompson

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

Proposed law 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.

Proposed law 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.

Proposed law requires the state Dept. of Education and the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry to collaboratively:

- (1) Create an inventory of small and large farmers and crops across the state, by region.

- (2) Create a plan for 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) Develop specific farm to school standards and guidelines for farmers and schools regarding contracting with schools and school districts and school food safety and liability insurance requirements.
- (5) Develop a plan to ensure that schools have the proper equipment 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.

Proposed law requires DOE and the Dept. of Agriculture to consult with the LSU and Southern University agricultural centers, the Louisiana Farm to School Alliance, and other stakeholder groups in implementing the provisions of proposed law .

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:195.1)