

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 4704

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 29, 2018

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Assemblywomen Carter, Mosquera, Downey, Senators Cruz-Perez,
T.Kean, Madden, Addiego, Greenstein and Pou

SYNOPSIS

Directs Department of Agriculture to establish food desert produce pilot program.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Human Services Committee on December 3, 2018, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/22/2019)

1 AN ACT concerning the availability of produce in food desert
2 communities.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. As used in this act:

8 “Department” means the Department of Agriculture.

9 “Federal WIC program” means the Special Supplemental
10 Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, established
11 pursuant to the federal “Child Nutrition Act of 1966,” Pub.L.89-
12 642 (42 U.S.C. s.1771 et seq.).

13 “Food desert community” means a municipality, or physically
14 contiguous area in the State, in which residents have limited access
15 to nutritious foods, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, through
16 supermarkets, grocery stores, and farmers markets.

17 “Food voucher” means any type of food voucher, coupon, stamp,
18 certificate, written authorization, or benefits card, which has been
19 issued to a person by a government entity in accordance with the
20 provisions of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the
21 federal WIC program, the New Jersey Supplementary Food Stamp
22 Program, the Work First New Jersey program, or any other federal
23 or State level nutrition or income assistance program.

24 “New Jersey Supplementary Food Stamp Program” means the
25 State level food stamp program, established pursuant to
26 P.L.1998, c.32 (C.44:10-79 et seq.).

27 “Partnering provider” means an entity that qualifies for
28 allowable federal or State reimbursements for food vouchers, and is
29 selected by the Department of Agriculture to participate in the
30 program.

31 “Program” means the food desert produce pilot program
32 established by the Department of Agriculture pursuant to this act.

33 “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program” or “SNAP” means
34 the supplemental nutrition assistance program, established pursuant
35 to the federal “Food and Nutrition Act of 2008,” Pub.L.88-
36 525 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).

37 “Work First New Jersey” means the Work First New Jersey
38 temporary public assistance program, established pursuant to
39 P.L.1997, c.38 (C.44:10-55 et seq.).

40

41 2. a. The Department of Agriculture shall establish a two-year
42 program to provide residents of food desert communities with
43 access to fresh and affordable produce. In establishing the program,
44 the department shall select one or more partnering providers to

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AHU committee amendments adopted December 3, 2018.

1 establish weekly markets in three food desert communities, one of
2 which shall be located in a rural area, in order to make fruits and
3 vegetables more affordable to families and individuals with limited
4 access to fresh food.

5 b. The department shall:

6 (1) solicit and select a partnering provider that demonstrates the
7 ability to reliably provide a consistent, year-round supply of
8 reasonably priced fresh fruits and vegetables to serve food desert
9 communities;

10 (2) work with food desert communities to identify and recruit a
11 partnering provider to establish weekly markets, ¹~~that~~ which¹
12 may be operated in partnership with local public schools,
13 community organizations, or nonprofit organizations; and

14 (3) engage in appropriate outreach efforts with food desert
15 communities, the agricultural industry, and the public concerning
16 the availability of the program.

17 c. A partnering provider that operates a market shall, at a
18 minimum:

19 (1) demonstrate to the department the ability to reliably provide
20 a consistent, year-round supply of reasonably priced fresh fruits and
21 vegetables;

22 (2) accept cash, credit, debit, and food vouchers for produce at
23 any market operating under the program;

24 (3) offer reduced price produce packages;

25 (4) include storage guides containing information on how to
26 keep the produce fresh and recipes for use of the produce; and

27 (5) donate any surplus produce at the end of each market to food
28 banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, and other nonprofit
29 organizations that distribute food to individuals in need located in
30 the State.

31 d. Within two years after the date of enactment of this act, the
32 department shall submit a written report to the Legislature, pursuant
33 to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), summarizing the
34 program established pursuant to this section¹~~and~~¹ identifying the
35 partnering providers and food desert communities participating in
36 the program, ¹as well as¹ the number of families and individuals
37 served by the markets, ¹and¹ the amount of food vouchers redeemed
38 at the markets¹~~and~~¹ and providing recommendations for legislative
39 actions to expand access to, and the affordability of, fruits and
40 vegetables to residents in food desert communities throughout the
41 State.

42

43 3. This act shall take effect immediately, and shall expire upon
44 the submittal by the department of the report required pursuant to
45 subsection d. of section 2 of this act.