

ASSEMBLY, No. 1578

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

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SYNOPSIS

Establishes NJ Agricultural Literacy Week.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/14/2021)

1 AN ACT establishing "New Jersey Agricultural Literacy Week" and
2 amending P.L.2011, c.10.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6
7 1. Section 1 of P.L.2011, c.10 (C.4:10-25.1) is amended to read
8 as follows:

9 1. a. The Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the
10 Department of Education, shall coordinate with farmers in the State,
11 the New Jersey Farm to School Network or its successor entity,
12 public, private, and charter schools and their food services, and
13 other interested and relevant organizations and groups, as
14 determined by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of
15 Education, to establish :

16 (1) an annual week of promotional events to be known as "Jersey
17 Fresh Farm to School Week **【.**" The week shall **】** " to be celebrated
18 each year throughout the State with the holding of relevant
19 promotional events during the last week of September; and

20 (2) an annual week for classroom activities to be known as "New
21 Jersey Agricultural Literacy Week" to be celebrated each year
22 throughout the State by designating a children's book and
23 developing activities that highlight how agricultural products
24 provide the necessary ingredients for meals, during the third week
25 of March .

26 b. "Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week" shall highlight and
27 promote the value and importance of New Jersey agriculture and
28 fresh foods produced in New Jersey, and the value and importance
29 of fresh farm foods for children, their general health, and their
30 success in school. The promotional events shall be provided to:

31 (1) children through school breakfast, lunch, and snack
32 programs and in the classroom;

33 (2) community groups, churches, and service organizations;

34 (3) the public at large at farms and community farmers markets;
35 and

36 (4) other organizations or groups or at other locations in the State
37 determined by the Department of Agriculture to be beneficial for
38 the success of promoting the value and importance of New Jersey
39 agriculture and fresh foods produced in New Jersey.

40 c. "New Jersey Agricultural Literacy Week" shall highlight the
41 importance of agriculture and teach how the agricultural products in
42 the State provide the necessary ingredients for meals through
43 classroom activities and a focus on the designated children's book.
44 The name of the designated children's book and the recommended

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.

1 classroom activities shall be provided to teachers in kindergarten,
2 first, and second grade.

3 (cf: P.L.2011, c.10, s.1)

4
5 2. Section 2 of P.L.2011, c.10 (C.4:10-25.2) is amended to read
6 as follows:

7 2. a. The Department of Agriculture shall develop a "New
8 Jersey Farm to School Program" and a "New Jersey Agricultural
9 Literacy Program" and, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure
10 Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), adopt rules and
11 regulations for its implementation, including, but not necessarily
12 limited to, rules and regulations that:

13 (1) provide encouragement for schools that participate in school
14 meal programs to expand or improve their kitchen facilities to allow
15 for the daily production of meals that incorporate more fresh,
16 locally grown or produced farm produce, fruit or other products;

17 (2) establish a bidding matrix that provides for school purchases
18 of New Jersey-grown food and allows schools to adopt price
19 preferences for local agricultural and farm products; **[and]**

20 (3) in conjunction and cooperation with the Department of
21 Education, provide for the incorporation and coordination of school
22 curricula with information about:

23 (a) New Jersey agriculture;

24 (b) the importance and significance of farms and farmers to
25 New Jersey's economy, culture, history, and quality of life; **[and]**

26 (c) the health value of eating fresh farm foods and locally grown
27 produce and fruits ; and

28 (d) the crops and animals in New Jersey that provide the
29 necessary ingredients for meals;

30 (4) designate a children's book each year that shows how
31 agricultural products provide the necessary ingredients for meals,
32 that is targeted for children in kindergarten, first, and second grade;

33 (5) encourage teachers in kindergarten, first, and second grade to
34 read the designated book during classroom instruction during "New
35 Jersey Agricultural Literacy Week"; and

36 (6) encourage additional classroom activities during "New Jersey
37 Agricultural Literacy Week", which may include, but need not be
38 limited to, personal stories from volunteers which may include
39 farmers .

40 b. The Department of Agriculture, in conjunction with the
41 Department of Education, shall develop a training program with
42 emphasis on the theme of "Farm to School" and shall offer this
43 program to schools, teachers, and other event providers.

44 c. (1) The Department of Agriculture shall establish a "New
45 Jersey Farm to School" website that shall be designed to:

46 (a) provide opportunities for the establishment of purchasing
47 networks between and among farmers, distributors, and schools or
48 school districts;

(b) facilitate the development and refinement of promotional events in association with "Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week" and "New Jersey Agricultural Literacy Week"; and

(c) provide for the dissemination of information about, and the website-based promotion of, these and other related events.

The department shall include on the "New Jersey Farm to School" website a copy of any public contract or other written agreement for the purchase of fresh foods and the provision thereof to school children, which has been entered into and successfully implemented by any school or school district in the State.

(2) The department shall post, in a prominent location on the homepage of its Internet website, a hyperlink that provides visitors with direct access to the "New Jersey Farm to School" website established pursuant to this subsection.

(cf: P.L.2014, c.37, s.1)

3. Section 1 of P.L.2014, c.39 (C.4:10-25.2a) is amended to read as follows:

1. The Secretary of Agriculture may solicit and accept contributions from private and public sources for the purpose of providing support to help fund the "New Jersey Farm to School Program," and the "New Jersey Agricultural Literacy Program" established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.2011, c.10 (C.4:10-25.2), which encourages schools to purchase produce from local farmers to incorporate in school meals throughout the growing season, **[and]** to increase the amount of local fresh produce available for consumption by students during the school day , and to teach how agricultural products provide the necessary ingredients for meals.

(cf: P.L.2014, c.39, s.1)

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would designate the third week of March as "New Jersey Agricultural Literacy Week." The bill requires the Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Department of Education, to establish a "New Jersey Ag Literacy Program" and to annually designate a children's' book, targeted for children in kindergarten, first, and second grade, to highlight the importance of agriculture and teach how the agricultural products in the State provide the necessary ingredients for meals. During "New Jersey Agricultural Literacy Week" each teacher in kindergarten, first, and second grade would be encouraged to read the designated book during classroom instruction to connect common ingredients in breakfast, lunch, or dinner to the crops and animals that provide the necessary ingredients for those meals. New Jersey Agricultural

1 Literacy Week would also encourage and promote the value and
2 importance of New Jersey agriculture through additional classroom
3 activities and through personal stories from volunteers which may
4 include farmers. The bill would allow The Secretary of Agriculture
5 to solicit and accept contributions from private and public sources
6 for the purpose of providing support to help fund the "New Jersey
7 Agricultural Literacy Program."