

[First Reprint]

## **ASSEMBLY, No. 5377**

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

## **219th LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 23, 2021

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman ROY FREIMAN**

**District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)**

**Assemblyman STERLEY S. STANLEY**

**District 18 (Middlesex)**

**Assemblyman ROBERT J. KARABINCHAK**

**District 18 (Middlesex)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

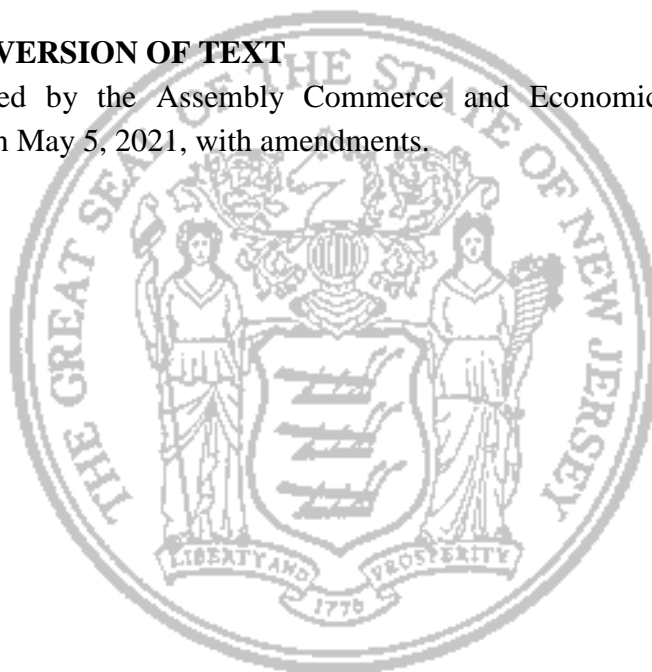
**Assemblyman Verrelli, Assemblywomen Reynolds-Jackson, Vainieri  
Huttle, Quijano, Assemblymen Conaway and Johnson**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes “Food Innovation District Program.”

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Assembly Commerce and Economic Development  
Committee on May 5, 2021, with amendments.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/17/2021)**

1 AN ACT establishing the “Food Innovation District Program” and  
2 supplementing Title 4 of the Revised Statutes.

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

6  
7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. With respect to the modern food system, which consists of  
9 mass production, processing, transporting, and consumption, most  
10 food moves from farm to plate through long and complex global  
11 supply chains;

12 b. The standardization and large volumes these supply chains  
13 demand do not accommodate the more diverse range of products  
14 and companies within the State’s emerging local and regional food  
15 sector;

16 c. This leaves the State’s small- and mid-size farms and food  
17 businesses without appropriate-scale storage, packaging,  
18 processing, and other facilities and services, known as “food system  
19 infrastructure”; and

20 d. It is, therefore, in the interest of the residents of the State to  
21 establish a program to bring together complementary community  
22 and entrepreneurial activities for synergistic business and  
23 development in the State’s food system infrastructure.

24  
25 2. a. The "Food Innovation District Program" is established  
26 within the Division of <sup>1</sup>**【Food and Nutrition】** Marketing and  
27 Development<sup>1</sup> in the Department of Agriculture. The purpose of the  
28 program is to encourage the development of food innovation  
29 districts within New Jersey. A food innovation district is a  
30 geographic concentration of food-oriented businesses, services, and  
31 community activities that are supported through planning and  
32 economic development initiatives in order to promote a positive  
33 business environment, spur regional food system development, and  
34 increase access to local food.

35 b. The division, in consultation with the Department of Labor  
36 and Workforce Development, the Department of Community  
37 Affairs, and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority,  
38 shall establish criteria for the designation of food innovation  
39 districts. Criteria for the food innovation district designation shall  
40 include, but not be limited to:

41 (1) accessibility to mass transportation facilities and services;

42 (2) zoning or a redevelopment plan that permits mixed-use  
43 development; and

44 (3) a cluster of interconnected food businesses, suppliers, and  
45 associated institutions.

**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:

<sup>1</sup>Assembly ACE committee amendments adopted May 5, 2021.

1 c. The division shall establish an application form and  
2 procedure for municipalities to apply for designation of an area as a  
3 food innovation district. An application shall include, but not be  
4 limited to:

- 5 (1) the boundaries of the proposed food innovation district;  
6 (2) an inventory of existing and proposed food-oriented  
7 businesses; regional food hubs; community kitchens; farmers  
8 markets; warehousing, processing, distribution, and related  
9 facilities; and other food system infrastructure;  
10 (3) a plan for the development or redevelopment of the proposed  
11 food innovation district, which shall include, but not be limited to,  
12 plans for:  
13 (a) attracting food-oriented businesses to locate within the  
14 district;  
15 (b) regional food hubs;  
16 (c) community kitchens;  
17 (d) farmers markets;  
18 (e) warehousing, processing, distribution, and related facilities;  
19 (f) urban agriculture production;  
20 (g) healthy food assistance;  
21 (h) programming, events, and community building;  
22 (i) improvements or developments of public spaces;  
23 (j) marketing and outreach;  
24 (k) other food system infrastructure; and  
25 (4) any other information required by the division.

26 d. The division shall publicize the Food Innovation District  
27 Program, and provide links to the application form and procedure  
28 on the division's Internet website.

29 e. A municipality may apply to the division for designation of  
30 all or part of the municipality as a food innovation district. Two or  
31 more municipalities may jointly apply for designation of an area as  
32 a food innovation district. An application shall not be submitted  
33 unless authorized by adoption of a resolution of the governing body  
34 of the municipality, or, in the event of a joint application, the  
35 adoption of parallel resolutions by the governing bodies of the  
36 municipalities.

37 f. Within 60 calendar days of its receipt of a complete  
38 application for designation of an area as a food innovation district,  
39 the division shall approve, conditionally approve, or deny the  
40 application.

41 g. In consultation with the Department of Community Affairs  
42 and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, the division  
43 shall adopt guidance and standards for municipalities to promote  
44 food innovation districts as places for businesses to locate. A  
45 municipality may advertise or otherwise use the food innovation  
46 district designation in accordance with the adopted guidance or  
47 standards.

1       h. In accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act,"  
2   P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the Commissioner of  
3   Agriculture may adopt the rules and regulations necessary to  
4   effectuate the purposes of this section.

5

6       3. This act shall take effect immediately.