

1 H.231

2 Introduced by Representatives Lorber of Burlington and Bray of New Haven

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Conservation and development; Vermont economic development

6 authority; Farm-to-Plate Corporation

7 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to create the Farm-to-Plate

8 Corporation to foster economic development and job growth in the farm and

9 food sectors by providing coordination, technical advice, and financial support

10 at all levels of the food system.

11 An act relating to the creation of the Farm-to-Plate Corporation

12 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

13 Sec. 1. 10 V.S.A. chapter 17 is added to read:

14 CHAPTER 17. THE FARM-TO-PLATE CORPORATION

15 § 375. THE FARM-TO-PLATE CORPORATION; CREATION; GOALS;

16 METHODS

17 (a) There is created a Farm-to-Plate Corporation, which is established to:

18 (1) Increase economic development in Vermont's food and farm sector.

19 (2) Create jobs in the food and farm economy.

20 (3) Improve access to healthy local foods.

1 (4) Facilitate the purchase of local foods by Vermont schools, with a
2 particular emphasis on procuring local beef.

3 (b) To accomplish the goals stated in subsection (a) of this section, the
4 Farm-to-Plate Corporation shall:

5 (1) Foster and expand business networking, infrastructure, jobs, and
6 economic development in the place-based food economy.

7 (2) Facilitate food system coordination and efficiency;

8 (3) Develop proposals and projects to standardize, streamline, and
9 centralize the school food procurement process.

10 (4) Provide strategic investment through loans, grants, and technical
11 assistance to all areas of Vermont's food systems, including:

12 (A) Farmers;

13 (B) Processors;

14 (C) Packers;

15 (D) Marketers;

16 (E) Distributors;

17 (F) Financiers;

18 (G) Food infrastructure engineers and builders;

19 (H) Individuals providing technical assistance or education.

1 (2) Inventory and improve Vermont's food system infrastructure,

2 including:

3 (A) Farm facilities;

4 (B) Slaughterhouses;

5 (C) Meat and vegetable processing facilities of all types, including

6 washing, sorting, jarring, canning, freezing, precutting, butchering, and

7 packing;

8 (D) Cold storage facilities;

9 (E) Grain mills;

10 (F) Root cellars;

11 (G) Retail outlets;

12 (H) Farmers' market facilities;

13 (I) On-farm renewable energy generators;

14 (J) Internet resources;

15 (K) Specialty and value-added food processing and preparation

16 facilities;

17 (L) Distribution routes and facilities.

18 (c) The Vermont economic development authority shall incorporate a

19 nonprofit corporation pursuant to the provisions of subdivision 216(14) of this

20 title to administer the Farm-to-Plate Corporation program, and to fulfill the

21 goals and utilize the methods of this chapter, as expressed in subsections (a)

1 and (b) of this section, by means of technical assistance, loans, grants, or other
2 means approved by the board.

3 § 376. BOARD OF DIRECTORS; APPOINTMENT; AUTHORITY

4 (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision 216(14) of this title, the
5 board of directors shall consist of five directors to be designated as follows:

6 (1) One director who shall be designated by the authority.

7 (2) One director who shall be designated by the sustainable agriculture
8 council.

9 (3) One director shall be the dean of the University of Vermont
10 agriculture extension program or a designee.

11 (4) One director who shall be designated by the speaker of the house and
12 shall be a member of the house.

13 (5) One director shall be designated by the president pro tempore of the
14 senate and shall be a member of the senate.

15 (b) The terms of the directors shall be five years except that the initial
16 terms of the directors appointed pursuant to subdivision (a)(4) and (5) of this
17 section shall be two years, and the term of the director appointed pursuant to
18 subdivision (a)(3) of this section shall be four years.

19 (c) The board shall meet at least twice annually.

1 (d) The board may hire or assign a program administrator to administer,
2 manage, and direct the affairs and business of the board, subject to the policies,
3 control, and direction of the corporation formed under this section.

4 (e) In order to carry out the intent of this chapter, the board shall, at least
5 once annually, work with regional economic development authorities and
6 representatives of nonprofit organizations working to advance local food
7 systems in Vermont.

8 (f) The board is authorized to seek and accept funds from private and
9 public sources, bonds, loans, grants, and appropriations.

10 § 377. ANNUAL REPORT

11 Prior to January 31 of each year, the Farm-to-Plate Corporation shall submit
12 a report concerning its activities to the governor and the legislative committees
13 with jurisdiction over commerce, general affairs, agriculture, ways and means,
14 finance, corrections and institutions, and appropriations. The report shall
15 include the following information:

16 (1) A list and description of activities funded by the corporation during
17 the preceding year.

18 (2) A representative sample of technical assistance provided by the
19 corporation during the preceding year.

1 (3) A list of funds received by the board, whatever their form or nature,
2 and the source thereof, unless anonymity is a condition of a particular
3 contribution.

4 (4) A full financial report of the activities of the Farm-to-Plate
5 Corporation, including a special accounting of all activities from July 1
6 through December 31 of the year preceding the legislative session during
7 which the report is submitted.

8 (5) A survey of the supply and demand for food system infrastructure
9 and food supply indicating the existing and potential supply and geographic
10 variations.

11 (6) An explanation of how funding and assistance provided by the
12 corporation helped to advance the intent of this chapter.

13 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION

14 An amount of \$100,000.00 is appropriated from the general fund to the
15 Farm-to-Plate Corporation for the purposes of this act.

16 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

17 This act shall take effect upon passage.