

1 AN ACT concerning agriculture.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 5. The Food and Agriculture Research Act is
5 amended by changing Section 5 as follows:

6 (505 ILCS 82/5)

7 Sec. 5. Legislative findings. It is the intent of this
8 Act to provide a solid base of State funding for public food
9 and agricultural research programs in Illinois while
10 fostering public confidence in this research through public
11 participation. Blessed with rich agricultural soils and a
12 favorable agricultural climate, Illinois traditionally ranks
13 fourth or fifth among the States in the nation's gross
14 agricultural production. The food and agricultural sector,
15 employing nearly 20% of the State's workers, is committed to
16 providing safe, nutritious, high-quality, affordable, and
17 convenient agricultural products and services to Illinois
18 citizens. Compared with all other states, however, Illinois
19 faces a tremendous challenge to meet its needs for ongoing
20 adequate research investments that improve human health while
21 protecting and enhancing its natural resources and
22 environment. Without adequate State funding, the food and
23 agricultural sector faces the consequences of falling behind
24 in information, projects, and programs affecting human lives
25 and the demand for improved nutrition, food quality, human
26 health, and environment.

27 Currently, the State's agricultural universities conduct
28 research that provides basic information about the structure
29 and function of food and agricultural systems. Although
30 these agricultural institutions have a remarkable record of
31 contributions to an improved food and agricultural sector,

1 their research is significantly underfunded. The State's
2 Agricultural Experiment Station, maintained as the food and
3 agricultural research facilities and program of the
4 University of Illinois, ranks only 29th in state funding
5 among the state agricultural experiment stations. Southern
6 Illinois University at Carbondale, Illinois State University,
7 and Western Illinois University also conduct food and
8 agricultural research but receive no State appropriated fund
9 allocations. This underfunding represents a missed
10 opportunity for Illinois and places it in poor competitive
11 position with other important agricultural states. The
12 State's consumers and producers reap high returns from
13 existing public investment in food and agricultural research,
14 with a pretax return of 40%, the highest among publicly
15 supported research activities.

16 Illinois needs mechanisms that allow publicly supported
17 researchers to work closely with farmers, agribusiness,
18 consumers, conservationists, environmentalists, and other key
19 decision-makers. Together, these groups can identify
20 challenges and opportunities for researchers before they
21 conduct research and transfer the information and technology.
22 This will allow Illinois to retain its prominence as a
23 leading agricultural state.

24 The Illinois Council on Food and Agricultural Research
25 (C-FAR) is a statewide coalition committed to funding
26 relevant and high-quality research and related outreach
27 programs leading to profitable, consumer-sensitive, and
28 environmentally sound food and agricultural systems. The
29 intent of this Act is to secure funds to support targeted
30 research initiatives so that Illinois will continue to meet
31 tomorrow's food and agricultural needs while using our
32 natural resources responsibly.

33 The General Assembly of Illinois hereby:

34 (1) Identifies food and agricultural research as a

1 critically important activity with great public benefits.

2 (2) Identifies the State's agricultural
3 universities responsible for basic, developmental, and
4 adaptive research related to the food and agricultural
5 sector; and

6 (3) Authorizes the expenditure of State funds to
7 enlarge, improve, and sustain the publicly supported
8 programs of food and agricultural research in Illinois.

9 (Source: P.A. 89-182, eff. 7-19-95.)