

1 AN ACT concerning public health.

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

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Farm
5 Fresh Schools Program Act.

6 Section 5. Findings. The General Assembly finds all of the
7 following:

8 (1) According to the Centers for Disease Control and
9 Prevention, less than 20% of young people eat the
10 recommended 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables
11 each day. A recent study in the New England Journal of
12 Medicine finds that, unless reversed, in the next 50 years
13 obesity will shorten life expectancy in the United States
14 by 2 to 5 years, exceeding the impact of cancer or heart
15 disease. Studies by the Yale University School of Public
16 Health have found that, due to obesity and related
17 diseases, the current generation of young people may be the
18 first in American history whose life expectancy is
19 projected to be less than that of their parents.

20 (2) Farm-to-school programs link schools with local
21 and regional farms in order to provide schools with fresh
22 and minimally processed farm commodities for inclusion in
23 school meals, vending machines, salad bars, and snacks.

1 These programs also help children develop nutritional
2 awareness and healthy eating habits.

3 (3) In addition to procuring farm fresh foods for
4 school food offerings, farm-to-school programs often
5 include activities that provide pupils with hands-on
6 learning opportunities, such as farm visits, cooking
7 demonstrations, and school gardening and composting
8 programs, and integrate nutritional and agricultural
9 education into school curricula.

10 (4) It is in the interest of this State to promote
11 farm-to-school programs that emphasize the purchase of
12 farm fresh foods by schools in order to improve child
13 nutrition and strengthen local and regional farm
14 economies.

15 Section 10. Farm Fresh Schools Program. The Department of
16 Agriculture, in cooperation with the State Board of Education
17 and the Department of Public Health, shall create the Farm
18 Fresh Schools Program. The intent of the Program is to reduce
19 obesity and improve nutrition and public health, as well as
20 strengthen local agricultural economies by increasing access
21 to and promoting the consumption of locally grown fruits and
22 vegetables in schools and increasing physical activities and
23 programs that promote pupil wellness.

24 Section 15. Grants.

1 (a) The Department of Agriculture and the State Board of
2 Education shall jointly administer a process to review grant
3 proposals and award grants on a competitive basis to eligible
4 applicants to implement the Farm Fresh Schools Program.

5 (b) The first 6 grants awarded pursuant to the Farm Fresh
6 Schools Program shall be awarded in 6 different counties,
7 including 3 urban counties and 3 rural counties with a
8 significant agricultural economy.

9 Section 20. Farm Fresh Schools Program Fund. The Farm Fresh
10 Schools Program Fund is created as a special fund in the State
11 treasury. Moneys in the Fund shall be used, subject to
12 appropriation, by the Department of Agriculture and the State
13 Board of Education for the purposes of this Act.

14 Section 25. Rules. The Department of Agriculture, with the
15 cooperation of the Department of Public Health and the State
16 Board of Education, shall adopt rules for the implementation of
17 this Act.

18 Section 90. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
19 Section 5.719 as follows:

20 (30 ILCS 105/5.719 new)

21 Sec. 5.719. The Farm Fresh Schools Program Fund.