

CHAPTER 211

AN ACT creating the Farm to School Coordinating Council.

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

1. a. There is established in the Department of Agriculture the Farm to School Coordinating Council. The council shall consist of five members as follows:

- (1) the Secretary of Agriculture, or the secretary's designee;
- (2) the Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee; and
- (3) three members of the public appointed by the Governor, who have experience working with the New Jersey Farm to School Program, one upon recommendation by the President of the Senate and one upon recommendation by the Speaker of the General Assembly.

b. The Governor shall appoint the chairperson of the council. The council shall hold its first meeting as soon as practicable after the appointment of the public members.

c. The council may meet and hold hearings at the times and places it designates.

d. The council may call upon any department, office, division, or agency of State government as it may require, as may be available to it for its purposes, and as may be necessary in order to perform its duties, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it for its purposes.

e. Any vacancy in the membership of the council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

2. a. The Farm to School Coordinating Council shall examine all areas of the New Jersey Farm to School Program and identify any outstanding issues or problems that need to be resolved and areas in need of improvement. The council shall focus on the procurement process relating to the purchase of agricultural products by schools from New Jersey farmers, and recommend ways to increase the participation of both farmers and schools in the program. The council shall also make recommendations on ways to promote and increase the use of fresh farm foods at schools throughout the State.

b. Within one year after its first meeting, the council shall prepare and submit a written report to the Governor and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), with its findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Copies of the report shall also be provided to the public upon request free of charge, and posted on the Internet websites of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education.

3. This act shall take effect immediately, and shall expire on the 60th day after submittal of the report required pursuant to subsection b. of section 2 of this act.

Approved August 7, 2017.