

ASSEMBLY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN'S
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4029

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 5, 2026

The Assembly Community Development and Women's Affairs Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4029.

This bill would establish a “Farmer Supply Link Program” (program) to support New Jersey farmers in purchasing bulk agricultural supplies, developing agricultural capital, and accessing agricultural assets at a discounted rate. The goal of this program is to mitigate the costs of starting and managing a farm business, and to maintain and improve the resilience of the farming industry. This bill addresses recommendations from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture’s report, “The Next Generation of Farming in New Jersey.”

The bill authorizes the State Agricultural Development Committee and Department of Agriculture to develop a bulk purchasing program designed to reduce individual farmers’ supply costs, to be called the “Farmer Supply Link Program.” The program is to be administered by county agricultural development boards (boards). The bill establishes several definitions specific to the program, such as for strategic purchasing practices required in each boards’ procurement and goal setting efforts.

Under the program, boards would be authorized to enter into contracts or purchase agreements with established agricultural product aggregators to purchase discounted bulk agricultural supplies. Agricultural party aggregators would participate in the “Farmer Supply Link Program” under the oversight of a third party, non-profit agency. Agricultural supplies may include equipment, compost, fertilizer, fuel, farm infrastructure, seeds, livestock, and pesticides. Supplies would then be ordered by and sold to farmers.

The bill authorizes boards to establish rules, regulations, fee schedules, and formats for the distribution of agricultural supplies. Fees are required to be reasonable, Consumer-Price-Adjusted, and sufficient to recover all costs associated with the implementation and enforcement of the purchasing contract, including direct, indirect, and administrative costs. Boards are also authorized to establish terms governing the use of agricultural supplies purchased through the program. Any excess revenue collected by a board from the purchase of agricultural supplies through the “Farmer

Supply Link Program” in excess of the minimum fees established by the board are to be deposited as a credit to the Preserve New Jersey Farmland Preservation Fund. In establishing rules and regulations for auctions and product distribution, boards are authorized to include prioritization of new and beginning farmers, or farmers with demonstrated financial need. Boards are also authorized to participate in programs administered by federal departments and agencies in implementing the “Farmer Supply Link Program.”

In the first year a board participates in the program, boards are to request grants from the committee, which shall then make awards from the Preserve New Jersey Farmland Preservation Fund. The committee shall establish eligibility and prioritization criteria for award of funds to eligible boards. Subsequent to the first year of the program, any contract by a board with a agricultural product aggregator for the purchase of agricultural supplies shall be payable only from amounts derived from the collection of auction fees.