

ASSEMBLY, No. 5331

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 29, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman STERLEY S. STANLEY

District 18 (Middlesex)

Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI

District 33 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman McKnight

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “Emerging Food Task Force” to encourage information sharing concerning new produce options and consumer trends.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/22/2021)

1 AN ACT establishing the “Emerging Food Task Force.”

2

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

5

6 1. a. There is established the “Emerging Food Task Force.”
7 The task force shall encourage coordination and information sharing
8 between farmers and retailers to plan for the growth and
9 development of new varieties of produce that would be popular
10 among consumers.

11 b. The task force shall consist of 13 members as follows:

12 (1) the Secretary of Agriculture, who shall serve ex officio, or a
13 designee;

14 (2) the President of the New Jersey Farm Bureau, who shall
15 serve ex officio, or a designee;

16 (3) the President of the New Jersey Food Council, who shall
17 serve ex officio, or a designee;

18 (4) the President of the New Jersey Restaurant and Hospitality
19 Association, who shall serve ex officio, or a designee;

20 (5) the Executive Director of the New Jersey Agricultural
21 Experiment Station, who shall serve as ex officio, or a designee;

22 (6) the Executive Director of the Food Innovation Center at
23 Rutgers University, who shall serve as ex officio, or a designee;

24 (7) four representatives from major food retailers, two of whom
25 shall be appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be appointed
26 by the President of the Senate, and one of whom shall be appointed
27 by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and

28 (8) three public members with relevant farming experience, one
29 of whom shall be appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be
30 appointed by the President of the Senate, and one of whom shall be
31 appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly.

32 c. The members of the task force shall be appointed within 30
33 days after the effective date of this act. The task force shall
34 organize as soon as practicable after the appointment of the task
35 force’s members. The task force shall choose a chairperson and a
36 vice chairperson from among its members, and a secretary who
37 need not be a member of the task force. The task force shall meet
38 regularly as the task force determines or at the call of the
39 chairperson. A majority of the full membership of the task force shall
40 constitute a quorum for the transaction of task force business. The
41 task force may meet and hold hearings at the place or places the task
42 force designates.

43 d. The members of the task force shall serve without
44 compensation, but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses
45 incurred in the performance of their duties and within the limit of
46 funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task force for
47 its purposes.

1 e. Any vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be
2 filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

3 f. The Department of Agriculture shall provide professional
4 and clerical staff support to the task force. The task force shall be
5 entitled to call to the task force's assistance and avail itself of the
6 services of the employees of any State, county, or municipal
7 department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as the task force
8 may require and as may be available for the task force's purposes.
9

10 2. a. The "Emerging Food Task Force" shall:

11 (1) examine current and previous data and research related to
12 popular food trends among consumers;

13 (2) discuss emerging new types or varieties of produce that can
14 be grown by farmers and then sold by major food retailers;

15 (3) identify effective strategies to coordinate the growth and
16 sales of new produce among farmers and major food retailers,
17 increase public knowledge of and accessibility to new produce
18 options, and better predict future trends among consumers;

19 (4) develop recommendations to implement those strategies,
20 including legislation and policies, if appropriate, based on the task
21 force's findings.

22 b. No later than one year after the task force organizes, the task
23 force shall prepare and submit a report to the Governor and,
24 pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the
25 Legislature summarizing the activities and findings of the task
26 force, and setting forth its recommendations.
27

28 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire 30
29 days after the date the task force submits its report pursuant to
30 section 2 of this act.
31
32

33 STATEMENT
34

35 This bill creates a 13-member task force, to be known as the
36 "Emerging Food Task Force." The purpose of the task force is to
37 encourage coordination and information sharing between farmers
38 and retailers to plan for the growth and development of new
39 varieties of produce that would be popular among consumers.

40 Consumer trends are constantly evolving and should be closely
41 monitored in order to increase profitability among farmers and
42 retailers. Consumer trends often consist of new and unique produce
43 types, which can create an unexpected and increased demand on
44 farmers. Heightened coordination and information sharing between
45 farmers and retailers is necessary to ensure farmers are prepared
46 and able to grow the new produce that is desired by consumers.
47 Increased coordination between farmers and retailers will also

1 ensure that new produce grown by farmers is sold efficiently within
2 stores.

3 The State of New Jersey's protection and preservation of
4 farmland has had direct, positive effects on local economies through
5 product sales and job creation. Increasing reliance on farmers and
6 creating additional opportunities for farmers will further stimulate
7 the economy and create jobs throughout the State.

8 The task force would consist of 13 members, including the
9 Secretary of Agriculture, the President of the New Jersey Farms
10 Bureau, the President of the New Jersey Food Council, the
11 President of the New Jersey Restaurant and Hospitality Association,
12 the Executive Director of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment
13 Station, the Executive Director of the Food Innovation Center at
14 Rutgers University, four representatives from major food retailers,
15 and three members of the public who exhibit relevant farming
16 experience. The members of the task force are to be appointed, and
17 the task force is to organize, no later than 30 days after the effective
18 date of the bill.

19 The task force would examine current and previous data and
20 research related to popular food trends among consumers and
21 discuss emerging new types of produce that can be grown by
22 farmers and then sold within major food retailers. The task force
23 would also identify effective strategies to coordinate the growth and
24 sales of new produce among farmers and major food retailers,
25 increase public knowledge of and accessibility to new produce
26 options, and better predict future trends among consumers.

27 The bill provides that vacancies in task force membership would
28 be filled in the same manner as the original appointments. The
29 members of the task force would serve without compensation, but
30 may be reimbursed for traveling and necessary expenses incurred in
31 the performance of their duties. The bill directs the Department of
32 Agriculture to provide professional and clerical staff to the task
33 force as necessary.

34 Within a year after the organization of the task force, the task
35 force is to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature
36 concerning the task force's findings and recommendations.