

2024 -- S 2537

LC005244

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

A N A C T

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY -- ORGANIC FARMING AND
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Introduced By: Senators Paolino, de la Cruz, Rogers, and DeLuca

Date Introduced: March 01, 2024

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 2 of the General Laws entitled "AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY"
2 is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 28

4 ORGANIC FARMING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

5 **2-28-1. Short title.**

6 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Organic Farming and Certification
7 Program."

8 **2-28-2. Organic farming and certification program.**

9 (a) The department of environmental management shall establish an organic farming and
10 certification program and shall establish rules and regulations for this purpose. The organic farming
11 and certification program shall:

12 (1) Assist in the marketing of Rhode Island grown organic agricultural products for the
13 purpose of sale and promotion within the State of Rhode Island or United States;

14 (2) Enhance the economic competitiveness of Rhode Island grown organic agricultural
15 products;

16 (3) Provide financial and technical assistance support to organic farmers for the activities
17 and programs which enhance the economic viability of local organic agriculture, and support the
18 development of a locally based, safe and sustainable organic food system;

1 (4) Provide individual farm grants to small or beginning Rhode Island organic farmers that
2 support the entry or sustainability within the industry;

3 (5) Work with the state department of health for the certification of organic farmers and
4 organizations and to further develop and support food safety related programs and standards
5 pertaining to local organic agriculture;

6 (6) Ensure that any funding received from the federal Specialty Crop Block Grant is
7 allocated to this program; and

8 (7) Perform other activities necessary to facilitate the success and viability of the state's
9 organic agricultural sector.

10 **2-28-3. Program funding.**

11 There shall hereby be annually appropriated, out of money in the treasury not otherwise
12 appropriated, the sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) for the purposes of
13 administering the provisions of this chapter.

14 **2-28-4. Program staffing -- Full-time employee.**

15 In carrying out the provisions of this chapter, the department of environmental management
16 shall designate one full-time employee who shall be assigned exclusively to the organic farming
17 and certification program.

18 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY -- ORGANIC FARMING AND
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

- 1 This act would establish the organic farming and certification program to be administered
- 2 by the department of environmental management.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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