

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 396**

Introduced by Brandt, 32; Briese, 41; Cavanaugh, J., 9; DeBoer, 10; Dorn, 30; Geist, 25; Gragert, 40; McCollister, 20; McKinney, 11; Murman, 38; Sanders, 45; Williams, 36; Wishart, 27.

Read first time January 14, 2021

Committee: Education

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to schools; and to adopt the Nebraska Farm-To-
- 2 School Program Act.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1           Section 1. Sections 1 to 7 of this act shall be known and may be  
2 cited as the Nebraska Farm-to-School Program Act.

3           Sec. 2. For purposes of this act:

4           (1) Food means an agricultural commodity or product, whether raw or  
5 processed, that is produced and marketed for human consumption; and

6           (2) Program means the Nebraska farm-to-school program as established  
7 in section 3 of this act.

8           Sec. 3. A Nebraska farm-to-school program is established to be  
9 administered on a statewide basis by the State Department of Education.

10          Sec. 4. (1) The program shall provide for the purchase of locally  
11 and regionally produced or processed food in order to improve child  
12 nutrition and strengthen local and regional farm economies.

13          (2) The program shall link elementary and secondary public and  
14 nonpublic schools in this state with Nebraska farms in a manner that  
15 provides schools with fresh and minimally processed food for inclusion in  
16 school meals and snacks, encourages children to develop healthy eating  
17 habits, and improves the incomes of Nebraska farmers who will enjoy  
18 direct access to consumer markets.

19          (3) The program may include activities that provide students with  
20 hands-on learning opportunities, including, but not limited to, farm  
21 visits, cooking demonstrations, and school gardening and composting  
22 programs, and that integrate nutrition and agricultural education into  
23 the school curricula.

24          Sec. 5. The State Department of Education shall employ a  
25 coordinator to administer the program. The duties of such coordinator  
26 shall include:

27          (1) Identifying and promoting the critical ways for local  
28 communities to participate in the program and advise communities on  
29 needed strategies, plans, and action to administer the program;

30          (2) Establishing a partnership with public agencies and nonprofit  
31 organizations to implement a public engagement campaign and establish a

1 structure to facilitate communication between farmers and schools;

2 (3) Providing leadership at the state level to encourage schools to  
3 develop and improve school nutrition plans using locally or regionally  
4 grown or locally or regionally processed food;

5 (4) Conducting workshops and training sessions and providing  
6 technical assistance to school food services, farmers, processors, and  
7 distributors regarding the demand for and the availability of Nebraska  
8 food products, and assisting persons seeking to participate in the  
9 program;

10 (5) Providing information regarding the program in an electronic  
11 format on the web sites for the State Department of Education and the  
12 Department of Agriculture; and

13 (6) Seeking financial or in-kind contributions to support the  
14 program.

15 Sec. 6. The Department of Agriculture and the State Department of  
16 Education shall cooperate in administering the program and shall each  
17 provide professional consultation and staff support.

18 Sec. 7. It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate one  
19 hundred thousand dollars from the General Fund to the State Department of  
20 Education each fiscal year. Such funds shall be used for purposes of  
21 supporting the program, including, but not limited to, salaries, support,  
22 maintenance, and miscellaneous purposes.