

The Local Farms and Food Act of 2023

Co-sponsored by Senators Sherrod Brown, Tina Smith, Peter Welch, John Fetterman, and Representatives Chellie Pingree, Dan Newhouse, Jill Tokuda, Yadira Caraveo

Section-by-Section Outline

The Local Farms and Food Act offers program reforms to remove barriers for applicants, increase infrastructural investments, and sustain the impactful nutrition incentives through Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP), Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. The bill sections include:

Section 2: Local Agriculture Market Program Reform

Amend Section 210A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1627) to improve equity and access to the suite of LAMP subprograms by directing USDA to offer streamlined “turnkey grants” for projects of \$100,000 or less through the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program; provide USDA the authority and direction to prioritize geographic diversity and balance, scale matching funds requirements; provide for limited investment in physical infrastructure and equipment, and increase funding from \$50 million per year to \$75 million.

- Proposed FMPP Turnkey options:
 - Outreach and promotion projects (includes customer facing and vendor recruitment);
 - Farmers market manager staff-time;
 - Vendor training (food safety, nutrition programs, marketing practices etc); and
 - Planning and design projects for new and existing markets (includes community engagement, site designs, permitting, etc.); and
 - Data collection and evaluation.
- Proposed LFPP Turnkey Options:
 - Food hub feasibility study;
 - Value chain coordinator staff-time;
 - Technical assistance (business, grant writing, awards management);
 - Data collection and evaluation; and
 - General purpose equipment.
- Provide USDA the authority and direction to prioritize geographic diversity and balance during the application process for FMLFPP to ensure greater geographic diversity among awardees.
- Reduce matching fund requirement from 50 to 25 percent for VAPG applications with an Adjusted Gross Income of \$250,000 or less.

- Allowing for a limited amount of funding to support physical infrastructure and equipment purchases with LAMP subprogram funding as part of larger projects.
- Direct USDA to coordinate between AMS and RD regarding infrastructure and equipment investments and compliance with documentation and monitoring requirements.
- Allow projects focused on SNAP redemption and related systems that don't include SNAP incentives.
- Direct USDA to make value chain coordination and outreach and technical assistance projects specifically authorized Regional Food Systems Partnership Program and Local Food Promotion Program eligible projects.
- Increase funding for LAMP from \$50 million per year to \$75 million per year.
- Increase appropriations authority from \$20 million to \$30 million per year.

Section 3: Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

Amend section 4402(a) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 3007(a)) to reauthorize the program and funding provision and add the authority to seek discretionary appropriations in addition to mandatory funding.

Section 4: Federal Share for Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program

Amend section 4405 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 7517) to reduce the matching fund requirement to 25 percent of the total project cost for nutrition incentive projects.

Section 5: Produce Prescription Program Application Review

Amend section 4405 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 7517) to require a specialized review panel for GusNIP produce prescription grants that includes healthcare expertise.