

SCS SB 1222 -- FARM MENTORING AND EDUCATION FUND

SPONSOR: Goodman (Wasson)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 20 to 3.

This substitute creates the Farm Mentoring and Education Fund which will consist of moneys appropriated from the General Revenue Fund and any other available moneys. The moneys will be used to establish a program to provide educational training to help individuals plan and begin sustainable and traditional farming enterprises. The program will provide selected participants with a low-cost, first-hand mentoring system by pairing participants with full-time farmers and individuals pursuing agricultural commodity enterprises. The program will be administered by the farm mentoring and education authority within the University of Missouri Extension Center and will be located in a different regional extension center on a yearly rotational basis.

The General Assembly may appropriate up to \$99,000 a year to the fund to pay various program expenses. The unexpended fund balance will revert to the General Revenue Fund at the end of each fiscal year.

The provisions of the substitute expire August 28, 2009.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of Up to \$99,000 in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill is a logical statewide application of the highly successful pilot project in West Plains, Missouri, administered by the University of Missouri Extension Center. The program provides beginning farmers with both practical farming education and good basic business practices.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Goodman; University of Missouri, College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; Central Missouri University; and University of Missouri.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Roland Tackett, Legislative Analyst