

HB 873 -- Missouri Sustainable Local Food Policy Council

Sponsor: Wyatt

This bill establishes the Missouri Sustainable Local Food Policy Council within the Department of Agriculture for the purpose of building a local food economy benefitting Missouri by creating jobs, stimulating economic development, preserving farmlands and water resources, increasing consumer access to fresh and nutritious foods, and providing greater food security for all Missourians. The 23-member council will be comprised of members from state government including one member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker and one member of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tem, agriculture groups, state universities, a registered dietitian, and a representative of a business specializing in retail or direct food sales.

The Director of the Department of Agriculture will appoint the chair of the council; and all other officers, if any, will be elected by the members of the council. The council must hold its first meeting by December 1, 2011, and will meet at regularly scheduled intervals, but not less than quarterly, thereafter.

In developing sustainable local food policies for Missouri, the council may consider:

- (1) An assessment of the foods that are served to public school students and the possibility of increasing the amount of sustainable local foods used in the breakfast and lunch programs;
- (2) An analysis of the possibility of making sustainable local food available under public assistance programs;
- (3) An analysis of the potential of promoting urban and backyard gardens for the purpose of improving the health of citizens, making use of idle urban property, and lowering food costs for Missourians;
- (4) An evaluation of the potential impacts that the production of sustainable local food would have on economic development;
- (5) Identification of local and regional efforts that could provide information and training programs to assist entrepreneurs and local farmers pursuing opportunities related to a sustainable local food economy;
- (6) Issues regarding the identification and development of solutions to regulatory and policy barriers in developing a strong sustainable local food economy;

(7) Issues regarding strengthening local infrastructure and entrepreneurial efforts related to a sustainable local food economy; and

(8) Any other strategies, initiatives, or policy issues that the council deems necessary in carrying out its duties and responsibilities.

On or before November 1, 2014, the council must report its findings and recommendations including any legislative proposal or administrative action to the General Assembly and the department director.

The provisions of the bill will expire June 30, 2015.