

HB 1326 -- MISSOURI DAIRY AND AGRICULTURE EDUCATION ACT

SPONSOR: Guernsey

This bill establishes the Missouri Dairy and Agriculture Education Act that requires the Department of Agriculture to administer, through the Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority, a dairy producer margin insurance program for the purpose of protecting dairy producer income by paying participating dairy producers margin insurance payments when actual dairy producer margins are less than the threshold levels for payments. All dairy producers in the state must be eligible to participate in the program, and any participating dairy producer may annually purchase margin insurance.

The Missouri Agriculture Education Scholarship Program is established to be administered by the department to provide, upon appropriation, scholarships for eligible students who enter an agriculture education program and make a commitment to work in the agriculture industry in Missouri as a condition of receiving the scholarship. Subject to appropriation, each year the department must make available up to 100 two-year or four-year Missouri agriculture education scholarships in an amount set by the department to assist with the cost of tuition and fees at a two-year or four-year Missouri college or university. The funds for the scholarships are to be appropriated to the department from the revenue generated from state taxes paid by the dairy industry. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of scholarships or revenue available, the department may consider the financial needs of the applicant. The Missouri Agriculture Education Scholarship Program Fund is created consisting of appropriated funds and any gifts, contributions, grants, or other sources to be administered by the department and used solely for awarding the scholarships.