

LEGISLATIVE BILL 69

Approved by the Governor May 16, 2007

Introduced by Hudkins, 21

FOR AN ACT relating to agriculture; to amend sections 2-5415, 2-5416, and 2-5418, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006; to modify provisions of the Agricultural Opportunities and Value-Added Partnerships Act; to authorize grants for specialty crops; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 2-5415, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

2-5415 For purposes of the Agricultural Opportunities and Value-Added Partnerships Act:

(1) Farming or ranching operation means the active use, management, and operation of real and personal property for the production of crops or raising of livestock;

(2) Project means any agricultural or value-added agricultural product activity in the areas specified in section 2-5419 designed to promote the purposes specified in section 2-5416. Project does not mean, and grant funds shall not be used for, any activity primarily designed to contribute to a single business, enterprise, or individual or designed to subsidize an existing farming or ranching operation; and

(3) Specialty crop means fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops, including floriculture; and

~~(3)~~ (4) Value-added means increasing the net worth of food or nonfood agricultural products by processing, alternative production and handling methods, collective marketing, or other innovative practices.

Sec. 2. Section 2-5416, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

2-5416 The purposes of the Agricultural Opportunities and Value-Added Partnerships Act are to:

(1) Support small enterprise formation in the agricultural sector of Nebraska's rural economy, including innovative cooperative efforts for value-added enterprises;

(2) Support the development of agricultural communities and economic opportunity through innovative partnerships among farming and ranching operations, rural communities, and businesses for the development of value-added agricultural products;

(3) Encourage collaboration between farming and ranching operations and between farming and ranching operations and communities, government, and businesses as well as between communities and regions;

(4) Strengthen the value-added production industry by promoting strategic partnerships and networks through multigroup cooperation for the creation of employment opportunities in the value-added agriculture industry;

(5) Enhance the income and opportunity for farming and ranching operations in Nebraska in order to stem the decline in their numbers;

(6) Increase the farming and ranching operations' share of the food-system profit; and

(7) Enhance opportunities for farming and ranching operations to participate in electronic commerce and new and emerging markets that strengthen rural economic opportunities; and ~~—~~

(8) Encourage the production and marketing of specialty crops in Nebraska and to support the creation and development of agricultural enterprises and businesses that produce and market specialty crops in Nebraska.

Sec. 3. Section 2-5418, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

2-5418 Eligible entities for grants under the Agricultural Opportunities and Value-Added Partnerships Act include communities, counties, agencies, educational institutions, economic development providers, nonprofit corporations, agricultural cooperatives, agricultural associations, agricultural marketing associations or entities, resource conservation organizations, development districts, and farming or ranching operations ~~in collaborative arrangements with other operations, entities, or organizations~~ that meet the purposes specified in section 2-5416.

Sec. 4. Original sections 2-5415, 2-5416, and 2-5418, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, are repealed.