

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA

ONE HUNDRED FIRST LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 986**

FINAL READING

Introduced by Conrad, 46; Mello, 5.

Read first time January 19, 2010

Committee: Agriculture

A BILL

1 FOR AN ACT relating to the Agricultural Opportunities and  
2 Value-Added Partnerships Act; to amend sections 2-5414,  
3 2-5416, and 2-5419, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska;  
4 to state intent; to authorize grants relating to  
5 electronic scanners and point-of-sale devices; and to  
6 repeal the original sections.

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

1           Section 1. Section 2-5414, Reissue Revised Statutes of  
2 Nebraska, is amended to read:

3           2-5414 (1) The Legislature finds that:

4           (a) There is a serious economic crisis in the  
5 agricultural and rural sectors of Nebraska's economy;

6           (b) There is a need in such sectors to develop strategies  
7 and programs to create genuine economic opportunities that enable  
8 people to improve their incomes, avoid poverty, build assets, and  
9 develop their capacity to contribute to the betterment of their  
10 communities;

11           (c) Strong communities enable local residents to be more  
12 self-sufficient, which contributes to the overall strength and  
13 well-being of Nebraska; and

14           (d) Adding value to agricultural products offers farmers  
15 and ranchers the potential to obtain a larger share of food  
16 dollars.

17           (2) The Legislature further finds that there is a need  
18 to:

19           (a) Support self-employment and small-scale  
20 entrepreneurship in both agricultural and nonagricultural  
21 activities;

22           (b) Enhance income and opportunities for farming and  
23 ranching operations to stem the decline in the number of such  
24 operations;

25           (c) Develop strategies and programs to increase the

1 farming and ranching operations' share of the food-system profit;

2 (d) Build the capacity of farming and ranching operations  
3 and small rural businesses to benefit from the development of  
4 electronic commerce, including the implementation of electronic  
5 scanners or point-of-sale devices to expand the ability of  
6 Nebraskans to utilize federally subsidized food and nutrition  
7 program benefits at farmers markets; and

8 (e) Strengthen value-added enterprises by promoting  
9 strategic partnerships and networks through multigroup cooperation.

10 Sec. 2. Section 2-5416, Reissue Revised Statutes of  
11 Nebraska, is amended to read:

12 2-5416 The purposes of the Agricultural Opportunities and  
13 Value-Added Partnerships Act are to:

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

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

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

25 (4) Strengthen the value-added production industry by

1 promoting strategic partnerships and networks through multigroup  
2 cooperation for the creation of employment opportunities in the  
3 value-added agriculture industry;

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

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

9 (7) Enhance opportunities for farming and ranching  
10 operations to participate in electronic commerce and new and  
11 emerging markets that strengthen rural economic opportunities,  
12 including the implementation of electronic scanners or  
13 point-of-sale devices to expand the ability of Nebraskans  
14 to utilize federally subsidized food and nutrition program benefits  
15 at farmers markets; and

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

20 Sec. 3. Section 2-5419, Reissue Revised Statutes of  
21 Nebraska, is amended to read:

22 2-5419 (1) Grants under the Agricultural Opportunities  
23 and Value-Added Partnerships Act shall be used to support projects  
24 in the following areas:

25 (a) Research;

1 (b) Education and training;

2 (c) Market development;

3 (d) Nonadministrative business planning assistance,  
4 feasibility and market studies, capitalization plans, and technical  
5 assistance;

6 (e) Development of cooperatives;

7 (f) Community and multicomunity initiatives;

8 (g) Creation, retention, and transfer of value-added  
9 agricultural business initiatives in rural communities;

10 (h) Efforts to obtain startup or working capital or other  
11 capital expenditures necessary for the development of the project;

12 (i) Community-based, farmer-owned, or rancher-owned  
13 value-added initiatives; and

14 (j) The purchase of electronic scanners or point-of-sale  
15 devices to expand the ability of Nebraskans to utilize federally  
16 subsidized food and nutrition program benefits at farmers markets,  
17 and for the marketing, promotion, and outreach related to such  
18 federal programs; and

19 ~~(j)~~ (k) Other activities that are deemed necessary to  
20 fulfill the purposes specified in section 2-5416.

21 (2) Such projects shall demonstrate the ability to  
22 provide private new enterprise formation or expanded incomes and  
23 economic opportunities for existing enterprises.

24 Sec. 4. Original sections 2-5414, 2-5416, and 2-5419,  
25 Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, are repealed.