

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2413**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member John A. Pérez**

February 21, 2014

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An act to add Chapter 12 (commencing with Section 49000) to Division 17 of the Food and Agricultural Code, relating to food and agriculture, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2413, as introduced, John A. Pérez. The Office of Farm to Fork.

Existing law establishes the Department of Food and Agriculture, which is tasked with, among other things, promoting and protecting the agricultural industry of the state, and seeking to enhance, protect, and perpetuate the ability of the private sector to produce food and fiber in a way that benefits the general welfare and economy of the state. Existing law also establishes the California Healthy Food Financing Initiative for the purpose of promoting healthy food access in the state.

This bill would create the Office of Farm to Fork within the department to, among other things, work with various entities, including, among others, the agricultural industry and other organizations involved in promoting food access, to increase the amount of agricultural products available to underserved communities and schools in the state. The bill would require the office to, among other things, identify urban and rural communities that lack access to healthy food, and to coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies to promote and increase awareness of programs that promote greater food access. The bill would create the Farm to Fork Account in the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund that would consist of money made available from federal, state, industry, and other sources, and would continuously appropriate the money

deposited in the account without regard to fiscal years to carry out the purposes of the Office of Farm to Fork. By creating a continuously appropriated fund, the bill would make an appropriation.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 12 (commencing with Section 49000)  
2 is added to Division 17 of the Food and Agricultural Code, to read:

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CHAPTER 12. OFFICE OF FARM TO FORK

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6 49000. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

7 (a) There are many Californians who lack adequate access to  
8 healthy food.

9 (b) The lack of access to healthy food falls disproportionately  
10 on disadvantaged urban and rural communities.

11 (c) These same communities also suffer from an increased rate  
12 of obesity, diabetes, and other chronic health conditions related to  
13 poor diet.

14 (d) Facilitating access to healthy food in these communities is  
15 needed to address the gaps in the food distribution system and help  
16 mitigate the health consequences of this inadequacy.

17 (e) There are many county, state, federal, and private  
18 organizations attempting to address this issue, but there is no  
19 state-level body charged with coordinating these activities.

20 (f) A state-level office, charged with coordinating and  
21 facilitating food access, can increase the effectiveness of ongoing  
22 programs and ensure that efforts and funding are not duplicated.

23 (g) The Department of Food and Agriculture is uniquely situated  
24 to administer this office because of the department’s knowledge  
25 of the agricultural industry, and its ability to bring farmers together  
26 with hunger relief organizations, partner agencies, schools,  
27 colleges, community organizations, and others to increase the  
28 availability of healthy food.

29 49001. There is hereby created in the department the Office of  
30 Farm to Fork. This office shall work with the agricultural industry,  
31 direct marketing organizations, food policy councils, public health  
32 groups, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, academic

1 institutions, district agricultural associations, county, state, and  
2 federal agencies, and other organizations involved in promoting  
3 food access to increase the amount of agricultural products  
4 available to underserved communities and schools in this state.  
5 The office, under the auspices of the department, shall do all of  
6 the following:

7 (a) Work with regional and statewide stakeholders to identify  
8 urban and rural communities that lack access to healthy food,  
9 determine current barriers to food access, and share information  
10 to encourage best practices.

11 (b) Coordinate with other local, state, and federal agencies to  
12 promote and increase awareness of programs that promote greater  
13 food access.

14 (c) Promote greater retail sale of healthy food in underserved  
15 communities, including promoting the acceptance of California  
16 Special Supplemental Nutritional Program for Women, Infants,  
17 and Children (WIC) and CalFresh benefits at certified farmers'  
18 markets, encouraging the development and sustainability of local  
19 policies that support urban agriculture, increasing the number and  
20 quality of food retail outlets in inner city and rural communities,  
21 and maximizing resources in the interest of increasing food access.

22 (d) Foster partnerships between community partners, including  
23 farmers, businesses, and nonprofit and philanthropic organizations.

24 (e) Identify distribution barriers that affect limited food access,  
25 including, but not limited to, shortage of food retail outlets, limited  
26 store capacity, high distribution costs, and lack of capital funding  
27 opportunities, and work to overcome those barriers through the  
28 following:

29 (1) Encouraging food hubs or other aggregation systems.

30 (2) Coordinating institutional food procurement and buying  
31 practices.

32 (3) Increasing access to information, technical assistance, and  
33 resources, including developing opportunities through the  
34 California Healthy Food Financing Initiative (Article 3  
35 (commencing with Section 104660) of Chapter 2 of Part 3 of  
36 Division 103 of the Health and Safety Code) in the office of the  
37 Treasurer.

38 (f) Identify opportunities and provide technical assistance for  
39 collaboration between farmers, regional and local food banks,  
40 partner agencies, and nonprofit charitable organizations in the

1 gleaning, collection, and distribution of agricultural products for  
2 the purposes of reducing hunger and increasing access to healthy  
3 foods.

4 (g) Identify informational resources and organizations to provide  
5 technical assistance on small scale and backyard farming,  
6 community gardens, and other agricultural products for residents  
7 of underserved communities.

8 (h) Identify opportunities for collaboration with community  
9 organizations, social services, and partner agencies to provide  
10 cooking and nutrition education classes to residents of underserved  
11 communities.

12 (i) Coordinate with school districts and representatives to do  
13 the following:

14 (1) Provide tools to facilitate relationships between local  
15 producers and school food procurement personnel, and encourage  
16 opportunities to incorporate best purchasing practices such as Good  
17 Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification and insurance.

18 (2) Increase the nutritional profile of foods provided in schools.

19 (3) Increase access to nutrition education programs and  
20 information in schools.

21 49002. (a) There is hereby created the Farm to Fork Account  
22 in the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund that shall consist  
23 of money made available from federal, state, industry,  
24 philanthropic, and private sources.

25 (b) Notwithstanding Section 13340 of the Government Code,  
26 all money deposited in the Farm to Fork Account is hereby  
27 continuously appropriated to the department without regard to  
28 fiscal years to carry out the purposes of this chapter.