

Subject Farm-to-school
Authors Lippert and others
Analyst Colbey Sullivan
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Overview

This bill would create a state program administered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to encourage farm-to-school sales of certain foods. The program would reimburse participating public and private schools, school districts, and child care centers for a portion of their costs to acquire Minnesota grown unprocessed or minimally-processed foods, as defined.

Summary

Section	Description
1	<p>Farm-to-school administrative support, technical assistance, training, and grant program.</p> <p>Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines key terms, including “eligible recipient,” “Minnesota grown,” and “unprocessed or minimally processed food.”</p> <p>Subd. 2. Establishment. Establishes the new program and its purpose – to facilitate and increase procurement of eligible foods in order to increase children’s access to healthy local food and to support the farmers who produce it.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Grants; limitations. Requires MDA to reimburse participating schools, school districts, and child care centers within the limits of available funding for the cost of procuring Minnesota grown unprocessed and minimally processed food. Identifies costs that are not eligible for reimbursement.</p> <p>Subd. 4. Reimbursement rate; process. Requires MDA to solicit interest from eligible applicants (i.e., public and private schools, school districts, and child care providers), who must declare their intent to participate in the program. Requires the Minnesota Department of Education to provide MDA available data on the number of eligible meals (i.e., school lunch, school breakfast, and other federal child nutrition program meals) served by each applicant. MDA would calculate the rate of reimbursement on a per-meal basis. If the calculated rate of reimbursement is less than four cents/meal, MDA would eliminate eligible applicants until the rate for remaining applicants is at least four cents/meal.</p>

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2	<p>Requires MDA to use specified factors when determining which eligible applicants to eliminate.</p> <p>Subd. 5. Application; documentation. Requires applicants to submit information required by MDA. Requires recipients to satisfy any MDA documentation and tracking requirements.</p> <p>Subd. 6. Eligible uses. Prohibits reimbursement for fluid milk, agricultural commodities, and certain yogurt products. Authorizes a recipient to use up to 20 percent of grant funds received for certain food-related educational activities.</p> <p>Appropriation. Appropriates \$4,000,000 from the general fund for purposes of this new program. Specifies that of this amount (1) \$300,000 is for a new farm-to-school program coordinator at MDA and (2) four percent of the total appropriation (or \$160,000) is for program administration and to provide specified outreach and assistance to farmers and eligible schools, school districts, and day care centers.</p>



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