



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 74

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 149

Senate, March 19, 2026

The Committee on Environment reported through SEN. LOPES of the 6th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 22-6g of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 For the purposes of sections 22-6g to 22-6p, inclusive, as amended by
4 this act:

5 (1) "Application" means a request made by an individual to the
6 department for [vendor] farmer certification in CFM/WIC on a form
7 provided by the department;

8 (2) ["Authorized farmers' market"] "Authorized benefit location"
9 means a farmers' market, farm stand or mobile market that operates
10 within the service area and is a site authorized by the department for
11 the exchange of [vouchers] benefits and Connecticut-grown fresh
12 produce and honey;

13 (3) ["Certified vendor"] "Certified farmer" means an individual who
14 has met all CFM/WIC conditions as outlined by the department and
15 who is guaranteed payment on all [vouchers] benefits accepted,

16 provided compliance is maintained by that individual regarding all
17 CFM/WIC rules and procedures as outlined in the [vendor] farmer
18 certification handbook;

19 [(4) "Certified vendor identification stamp" means a department-
20 issued stamp that shall be utilized by the certified vendor during each
21 occurrence of voucher deposit in the financial institution of certified
22 vendor choice. This stamp shall remain the sole property of the
23 department and shall be forfeited by the certified vendor to the
24 department in the event of suspension;]

25 [(5) "Certified vendor identification sign"] (4) "Certified farmer
26 identification sign" means a department-issued sign which shall be
27 clearly displayed by the certified [vendor] farmer at all times when
28 accepting or intending to accept [vouchers] benefits in an authorized
29 [farmers' market] benefit location. Signs shall remain the sole property
30 of the department and shall be forfeited by the certified [vendor] farmer
31 to the department in the event of suspension;

32 [(6) "Certified vendor number" means a personal identification
33 number issued by the department and assigned to an individual whom
34 the department has identified as a certified vendor;]

35 [(7)] (5) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture;

36 [(8)] (6) "Department" means the Department of Agriculture;

37 [(9)] (7) "Designated distribution WIC clinic" means a site authorized
38 by the department for dispersal of [vouchers] benefits by the local WIC
39 agency;

40 [(10)] (8) "Distribution" means the process outlined by the
41 department and the means by which local WIC agencies actually
42 [dispense vouchers] distribute benefits to eligible participants;

43 [(11)] (9) "Farm products" means any fresh fruits, vegetables,
44 mushrooms, nuts, shell eggs, honey or other bee products, maple syrup
45 or maple sugar, flowers, nursery stock and other horticultural

46 commodities, livestock food products, including meat, milk, cheese and
47 other dairy products, food products of "aquaculture", as defined in
48 subsection (q) of section 1-1, including fish, oysters, clams, mussels and
49 other molluscan shellfish taken from the waters of the state or tidal
50 wetlands, products from any tree, vine or plant and their flowers, or any
51 of the products listed in this subdivision that have been processed by
52 the participating farmer, including, but not limited to, baked goods
53 made with farm products;

54 [(12)] (10) "Farmers' market" means a cooperative or nonprofit
55 enterprise or association that consistently occupies a given site
56 throughout the season, which operates principally as a common
57 marketplace for a group of farmers, at least two of whom are selling
58 Connecticut-grown fresh produce, to sell Connecticut-grown farm
59 products directly to consumers, and where the products sold are
60 produced by the participating farmers with the sole intent and purpose
61 of generating a portion of household income;

62 [(13)] (11) "Fresh produce" means fruits and vegetables that have not
63 been processed in any manner and chicken eggs;

64 [(14)] (12) "CFM/WIC" means the Connecticut farmers' market
65 [supplemental food] nutrition program for women, infants and children
66 participants as administered by the department;

67 [(15)] (13) "Local WIC agency" means an entity that [administers local
68 health programs and which has entered into contract for voucher
69 distribution and related service with the department] contracts with the
70 Department of Public Health for the administration of the WIC program
71 and distributes benefits to eligible WIC participants;

72 [(16)] (14) "Connecticut-grown" means produce and other farm
73 products, [that have a traceable point of origin within Connecticut] as
74 defined in section 22-38;

75 [(17)] (15) "Posted hours and days" means the operational time frames
76 stated in assurances submitted by a duly authorized representative of

77 an authorized [farmers' market] benefit location which includes a
78 beginning and an ending date for each year of operation;

79 [(18)] (16) "Participant" means a client of WIC who is at least one year
80 of age, who possesses one of the WIC classification codes selected for
81 inclusion by the Department of Public Health and who is an active
82 participant in a designated distribution clinic;

83 [(19)] (17) "Season" means a clearly delineated period of time during
84 a given year that has a beginning date and ending date, as specified by
85 the department, which correlates with a major portion of the harvest
86 period for Connecticut-grown fresh produce;

87 [(20)] (18) "Service area" means the geographic areas that encompass
88 all of the designated distribution clinics and authorized [farmers'
89 markets] benefit locations within Connecticut for a given season;

90 [(21)] (19) "USDA-FNS" means the United States Department of
91 Agriculture-Food and Nutrition Service;

92 [(22) "Vendor certification handbook"] (20) "Farmer certification
93 handbook" means a publication by the department that is based on
94 USDA-FNS mandates and guidelines, addresses CFM/WIC rules and
95 procedures applicable to a certified [vendor,] farmer and provides the
96 basis for [vendor] farmer training. A copy of the publication shall be
97 issued to each individual prior to application. New editions supersede
98 all previous editions;

99 [(23) "Voucher"] (21) "Benefit" means a [negotiable instrument]
100 monetary amount issued by the department to participants that is
101 redeemable only for Connecticut-grown fresh unprocessed produce
102 from certified [vendors] farmers at authorized [farmers' markets]
103 benefit locations, with a limited negotiable period that directly
104 correlates to the season designated by the department; and

105 [(24)] (22) "WIC" means the special supplemental food program for
106 women, infants and children, as administered by the Department of
107 Public Health.

108 Sec. 2. Section 22-6h of the general statutes is repealed and the
109 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

110 (a) There is established the Connecticut Farmers' [Market/Women,]
111 Market Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children [Nutrition
112 Program] which [shall] may be jointly funded by the state of
113 Connecticut and the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States
114 Department of Agriculture. The program shall supply Connecticut-
115 grown fresh produce to participants of the [special supplemental food]
116 CFM/WIC program through the distribution of [vouchers] benefits that
117 are redeemable only at [designated Connecticut farmers' markets]
118 authorized benefit locations in Connecticut. The program is designed to
119 provide both a supplemental source of fresh produce for the dietary
120 needs of women, infants and children who are [judged] determined to
121 be at nutritional risk and to stimulate an increased demand for
122 Connecticut-grown fresh produce at authorized Connecticut [farmers'
123 markets] benefit locations.

124 (b) The program shall be administered by the Commissioner of
125 Agriculture who shall maintain all conditions as outlined in the farmers'
126 market nutrition program agreement entered into with USDA-FNS, as
127 amended.

128 Sec. 3. Section 22-6i of the general statutes is repealed and the
129 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

130 (a) The Department of Public Health WIC client screening processes
131 and records shall provide the basis for identifying participants eligible
132 for receipt of [vouchers] benefits.

133 (b) Local WIC agencies shall distribute [vouchers] benefits at
134 designated distribution clinics to participants in the manner specified
135 by the department in the program and procedures guide for distribution
136 clinic staff. Local WIC agency services shall ensure that:

137 [(1) Vouchers are distributed only to participants through verification
138 that the client name and number on the distribution registry provided

139 by the Department of Public Health correspond with the client name
140 and number printed on the WIC identification folder in the possession
141 of the participant.]

142 [(2)] (1) Each eligible participant is issued [five three-dollar vouchers
143 during each distribution as authorized by the department] a benefit
144 amount, determined annually, based on the federal and state allocation
145 for the given program year.

146 [(3)] The voucher serial numbers issued to the participant correspond
147 to the number in the distribution registry in which the participant
148 signature is affixed.

149 (4) Each voucher issued and the distribution registry are properly
150 signed by the participant in the presence of local agency staff at the time
151 of distribution or, if a proxy is utilized, a written, electronic or verbal
152 communication is made by the participant or such proxy which
153 acknowledges receipt from the local agency staff at the time of
154 distribution.]

155 [(5)] (2) Any adult may act as a proxy provided the participant
156 designates such adult as [his or her] such adult's proxy in writing.

157 [(6)] (3) Each participant is provided a thorough explanation of
158 program guidelines and participant responsibility as outlined by the
159 department.

160 [(7)] (4) All CFM/WIC support materials are put into use as outlined
161 by the department.

162 [(8)] (5) Accurate and complete records of all related CFM/WIC
163 activities in the possession of a WIC local agency are maintained and
164 retained for a minimum of [four] three years. In the event of litigation,
165 negotiation, or audit findings, the records shall be retained until all
166 issues arising from such actions have been resolved or until the end of
167 the regular [four-year] three-year period, whichever is later.

168 [(9)] (6) All agency records pertaining to this program shall be made

169 available for inspection to representatives of USDA-FNS, the
170 Comptroller General of the United States, the state Auditors of Public
171 Accounts, the department, and the Department of Public Health as
172 necessary, at any time during normal business hours, and as frequently
173 as is deemed necessary for inspection and audit. Confidentiality of
174 personal information shall be maintained as to all program participants
175 at all times.

176 Sec. 4. Section 22-6j of the general statutes is repealed and the
177 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

178 Participants shall be responsible for:

179 (1) [Qualifying under WIC program guidelines and attending]
180 Attending a designated distribution clinic during the relevant
181 distribution cycles when [vouchers are dispersed] benefits are
182 disbursed;

183 [(2) Properly countersigning a voucher prior to use;]

184 [(3)] (2) Using [vouchers] benefits only to purchase Connecticut-
185 grown fresh produce from certified [vendors] farmers who display
186 [CFM/WIC signs at authorized farmers' markets] a certified farmer
187 identification poster at authorized benefit locations;

188 [(4)] (3) Redeeming [vouchers] benefits on or before the expiration
189 date [printed on the face] of the [voucher] benefit or surrendering all
190 claim to the value of [vouchers] benefits that remain unredeemed;

191 [(5)] (4) Ensuring [vouchers] benefits that are received are not
192 assigned to any other party other than as provided by the [department]
193 program;

194 [(6)] (5) Reporting violations or problems to the department or the
195 local agency; and

196 [(7)] (6) Reporting all incidents of lost or stolen [vouchers] benefits to
197 the local agency.

198 Sec. 5. Section 22-6k of the general statutes is repealed and the
199 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

200 (a) Each authorized [farmers' market] benefit location shall maintain
201 records of operation which shall be provided to the department and
202 which shall include posted hours and days and shall be signed by a duly
203 authorized representative of the [farmers' market] benefit location.
204 [Farmers' market] Benefit location assurances shall be submitted in a
205 manner outlined by the department and shall provide evidence of:

206 (1) Whether a [farmers' market] benefit location possesses the
207 capability to serve the additional demands brought about by
208 distribution of [vouchers] benefits in the area without causing undue
209 harm to the existing farmers' market, farm stands or mobile market
210 consumer base; and

211 (2) A willingness by persons associated with the [farmers' market]
212 authorized benefit location to meet all [CFM/WIC] program
213 requirements. Information submitted by a [farmers' market] benefit
214 location shall include, but not be limited to:

215 (A) The number of Connecticut-grown fresh produce [vendor] farmer
216 participants;

217 (B) Hours of operation to be maintained per week;

218 (C) Season of operation; and

219 (D) Accessibility and consistency of [farmers' market] benefit
220 location.

221 (b) The department shall give priority to a [farmers' market] benefit
222 location with previous involvement in CFM/WIC provided the
223 [farmers' market] benefit location has maintained the conditions
224 outlined in its [farmers' market] assurances and does not have a high
225 incidence of certified [vendor] farmer noncompliance or suspensions.

226 [(c) In determining a farmers' market's authorization, the

227 commissioner shall consider the number of eligible applications
228 received by the department prior to the first of May which indicate the
229 intent to participate in the proposed farmers' market. The standard for
230 the authorization of a single or principal farmers' market in a county
231 shall be one eligible application for every one hundred participants who
232 participate in the distribution clinic in said county. A minimum of two
233 or more eligible applications shall be required for a farmers' market to
234 receive authorization.

235 (d) The number of farmers' markets authorized for the season shall
236 be determined by the department no later than the thirty-first day of
237 May prior to each season.]

238 Sec. 6. Section 22-6l of the general statutes is repealed and the
239 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

240 (a) [Vendor] Farmer certification shall not be in effect and [vouchers]
241 benefits shall not be accepted until receipt by the applicant of a certified
242 [vendor] farmer identification [stamp, a certified vendor identification
243 sign] poster and the applicant copy of the [department-vendor]
244 department-farmer agreement.

245 (b) Each [vendor] farmer certification shall be valid for three years.
246 The department shall not limit the number of [vendors] farmers who
247 may become certified under CFM/WIC. A [vendor] farmer who
248 satisfies all the following criteria shall be certified to accept [vouchers]
249 benefits:

250 (1) Agrees to maintain only Connecticut-grown fresh produce on
251 display in a certified [vendor] farmer stall;

252 (2) Indicates an intent to participate in one or more authorized
253 [farmers' markets] benefit locations;

254 (3) [Demonstrates participation] Participates in training on
255 CFM/WIC rules and procedures through attendance in an entire
256 session of one of the scheduled training meetings conducted by
257 department staff [;] and completes an annual online learning module

258 and receives a passing score on a knowledge test; and

259 [(4) Submits a signed statement of receipts of a vendor certification
260 handbook;]

261 [(5)] (4) Submits a timely completed application and crop plan to the
262 department [prior to the deadline established by the department; and]
263 utilizing the application form and processes established by the
264 department.

265 [(6) Submits completed and signed certified vendor agreements to the
266 department.]

267 Sec. 7. Section 22-6m of the general statutes is repealed and the
268 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

269 (a) A certified [vendor] farmer may accept [vouchers] benefits only
270 for a transaction that takes place at [a certified farmers' market] an
271 authorized benefit location and only in exchange for Connecticut-grown
272 fresh produce and may accept [vouchers] benefits as payment for
273 Connecticut-grown fresh produce only if presented [on or before the
274 usage expiration date printed on the face of the voucher] by an eligible
275 participant.

276 (b) A certified [vendor] farmer shall (1) prominently display a
277 certified [vendor identification sign] farmer identification poster as
278 outlined in the certified [vendor] farmer handbook, (2) provide
279 Connecticut-grown fresh produce and honey to participants upon
280 receipt of [a valid and properly completed voucher, which is signed by
281 the WIC client] benefits, (3) handle transactions with [WIC] participants
282 in the same manner as transactions with all other customers, (4) not
283 collect state or local taxes on purchases involving [vouchers] benefits,
284 (5) charge participants a price for Connecticut-grown fresh produce that
285 is equal to or less than the current price charged to nonparticipant
286 customers, (6) not levy a surcharge based on the use of [vouchers]
287 benefits by participants, (7) return no cash or issue credit in any form to
288 participants during sales transactions that involve [vouchers] benefits

289 only and in the event of a single transaction in which a participant
290 presents a combination of cash and [vouchers] benefits for the purchase
291 of Connecticut-grown fresh produce and honey, cash or credit up to the
292 value of the cash portion of the payment shall be given to the
293 participant, (8) participate in training as the department deems
294 necessary to carry out the intent of CFM/WIC, (9) cooperate with the
295 department in the evaluation of each season by completely and
296 accurately responding to a survey, with resubmission to the department
297 in a specified and timely manner, (10) immediately inform the
298 department in the event of loss, destruction [,] or theft of [either the
299 certified vendor endorsement stamp or] a certified [vendor] farmer
300 identification [sign] poster so that a replacement may be issued, and (11)
301 comply with all procedures and rules as herein outlined and as
302 delineated in the [department-vendor] department-farmer agreement,
303 the certified [vendor] farmer handbook and official written notices of
304 clarification issued by the department to the [vendor] farmer.

305 Sec. 8. Section 22-6n of the general statutes is repealed and the
306 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

307 (a) [The commissioner shall return a voucher to a certified vendor
308 unpaid if the certified vendor identification number is not properly
309 affixed to the back of the voucher, the certified vendor does not endorse
310 the voucher or the participant's signature is missing on the face of the
311 voucher.] A [voucher] transaction may be resubmitted for payment in
312 the event that the [signature or vendor certification identification] error
313 can be properly and legally corrected by the certified [vendor] farmer.
314 Violations of CFM/WIC procedures and rules applicable to a certified
315 [vendor] farmer shall be identified as Class I violations, Class II
316 violations and Class III violations. Violations involving the use of
317 multiple [vouchers] benefits in a single sales transaction shall be
318 considered as a single violation. Violations involving multiple sales
319 transactions, regardless of time elapsed, shall be considered multiple
320 violations at a standard of one violation per sales transaction.

321 (b) For Class I violations, the commissioner shall issue a warning

322 letter to the violating certified [vendor] farmer. Failure to appropriately
323 display the certified [vendor] farmer identification [sign] poster and
324 prices as specified in the signage requirements shall constitute a Class I
325 violation.

326 (c) For Class II violations, the commissioner shall issue an official
327 written citation of noncompliance to the violating certified [vendor]
328 farmer. The following shall constitute Class II violations:

329 (1) Noncompliance with rules and procedures as outlined in the
330 [vendor] farmer certification handbook and in the [department-vendor]
331 department-farmer agreement which is not specifically identified as a
332 Class I violation;

333 (2) Participant is charged a price that is greater than that charged
334 nonparticipant or is charged for items not received;

335 (3) Refusal to accept valid [vouchers] benefits for Connecticut-grown
336 fresh produce and honey;

337 (4) Failure to permit or comply with procedures regarding inspection
338 of evidence by the department when point of origin of fresh produce
339 and honey on display or offered for sale in a certified [vendor] farmer
340 staff is in question;

341 (5) Abusive or discriminatory treatment of participants or CFM/WIC
342 staff;

343 (6) Displaying or offering for sale non-Connecticut-grown fresh
344 produce and honey in a certified [vendor] farmer stall;

345 (7) An authorized [farmers' market] benefit location is neither open
346 nor staffed during posted hours and days during the season in which
347 the certified [vendor] farmer is a designated participant; or

348 (8) The second like instance of a Class I violation by a single certified
349 [vendor] farmer.

350 (d) For Class III violations, the commissioner shall suspend the

351 violating [vendor] farmer from participation in CFM/WIC. The
352 following shall constitute Class III violations:

353 (1) A third Class I violation by a single [vendor] farmer;

354 (2) The second of two Class II violations of the same type by a single
355 [vendor;] farmer; or

356 (3) Exchanging ineligible products or cash for [vouchers; or] benefits.

357 [(4) Cashing vouchers for a noncertified market.]

358 (e) The commissioner shall issue a written official notice of
359 noncompliance to the certified [vendor] farmer within seventy-two
360 hours of receipt of evidence involving an act of noncompliance.
361 Suspension of a certified [vendor] farmer from participation in
362 CFM/WIC shall remain in effect for the remainder of the season. An
363 exception shall occur when suspension occurs within thirty days of the
364 expiration date for [voucher] benefit usage by participants. In such case,
365 suspension shall also include the entire season of the following calendar
366 year. In the event of a suspension, the [vendor] farmer shall reimburse
367 the commissioner for the value of any [vouchers] benefits deposited and
368 paid upon after the official date of suspension notification. At the
369 conclusion of a suspension period, the [vendor] farmer may reapply for
370 certification in order to resume participation in CFM/WIC.

371 (f) Any [vendor] farmer successfully recertified following a
372 suspension shall be on probationary status for one full season.
373 Recurrence of a Class II violation during the probationary period and
374 for which the certified [vendor] farmer has been cited shall be sufficient
375 grounds for immediate and automatic suspension.

376 Sec. 9. Section 22-60 of the general statutes is repealed and the
377 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

378 A written notice of noncompliance or suspension from the
379 department shall be pending for seventy-two hours of receipt by the
380 certified [vendor] farmer. The certified [vendor] farmer shall be granted

381 the pending period for presenting sufficient evidence to the department
382 to substantiate a reversal. Remedies undertaken in response to receipt
383 of written notice of a pending citation of noncompliance or suspension
384 shall not constitute evidence in defense of such citation. Failure to
385 present any evidence to the department within the specified pending
386 period shall constitute acceptance of the citation of noncompliance or
387 suspension by the certified [vendor] farmer. Submission of insufficient
388 evidence by the certified [vendor] farmer for determination of reversal
389 on the pending citation by the department shall result in an official
390 citation of noncompliance or suspension upon completion of the
391 pending period.

392 Sec. 10. Section 22-6p of the general statutes is repealed and the
393 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

394 (a) Assurances, on forms provided by the department, [must] shall be
395 submitted no later than the first day of March in order for the [farmers'
396 market] authorized benefit location to receive consideration of
397 authorization for the upcoming season.

398 [(b) All applications shall be submitted no later than one month
399 preceding the last date in which vouchers may be used by participants
400 at authorized farmers' markets.]

401 [(c)Vouchers] (b) Benefits shall be valid from the time of issue
402 through the season ending date as designated by the department. [Such
403 date shall be clearly printed on the voucher face. Voucher] Benefit usage
404 shall be null and void after [expiration date] the end of the season.

405 [(d) All vouchers accepted by a certified vendor shall be deposited on
406 or before thirty days following the date of expiration for voucher usage
407 by participants. Such date shall be clearly printed on the front of
408 vouchers. Any claim to voucher payment beyond the voucher
409 reimbursement expiration date is not valid and shall be denied.]

410 [(e)] (c) Deadlines for submission of records, reports, survey
411 instruments and undistributed [vouchers] benefits by local agencies

412 shall be established by the department and specified in the agreement
413 entered into with the local agency.

414 [(f)] (d) The department shall develop and submit a completed
415 operations report in January in a manner prescribed by USDA-FNS
416 which summarizes the [CFM/WIC] program operations for the
417 previous year.

418 Sec. 11. Section 22-6q of the general statutes is repealed and the
419 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

420 (a) There is established the Connecticut Farmers' Market/Senior
421 Nutrition Program which shall be provided for from funds available to
422 the commissioner and from other sources as such funds may become
423 available. The program shall supply Connecticut-grown fresh produce
424 and honey to senior participants through the distribution of [vouchers]
425 benefits that are redeemable only at designated Connecticut [farmers'
426 markets] benefit locations. For purposes of this section, a "senior
427 participant" is defined as a person who is sixty years of age or older and
428 is currently residing in elderly housing, or is a participant of a registered
429 congregate meal site, or has been identified by a municipal elderly agent
430 as being at nutritional risk. The program is designed to provide both a
431 supplemental source of fresh produce and honey for the dietary needs
432 of seniors who are [judged] determined to be at nutritional risk and to
433 stimulate an increased demand for Connecticut-grown produce and
434 honey at Connecticut [farmers' markets] benefit locations. For purposes
435 of this section, "fresh produce" means fruits and vegetables that have
436 not been processed in any manner and chicken eggs.

437 (b) The program shall be administered by the Commissioner of
438 Agriculture who shall maintain all conditions for its operations.

439 Sec. 12. Section 22-26k of the general statutes is repealed and the
440 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

441 [(a)] There is established a farm transition grant program which shall
442 be administered by the Department of Agriculture. Matching grants

443 shall be made to farmers and agricultural cooperatives for
444 diversification of existing farm operations, transitioning to value added
445 agricultural production and sales, and developing farmers' markets and
446 other venues in which a majority of products sold are grown in the state.

447 [(b) The Commissioner of Agriculture shall adopt regulations, in
448 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, for the administration of
449 the program established by this section. Such regulations shall require
450 the development of business plans by applicants as part of the
451 application process.]

452 Sec. 13. Section 22-34 of the general statutes is repealed and the
453 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

454 No person shall use any words, titles or names designated by the
455 Commissioner of Agriculture, under the provisions of sections 22-27, 22-
456 28 and 22-29 [,] and subsection (b) of section 22-31, [and section 22-33,]
457 for use in grading or marketing of farm products, unless the products
458 which he is identifying, advertising, designating or describing thereby
459 fully meet the requirements of the official grade indicated by such
460 words, titles or names. If, in the opinion of the Commissioner of
461 Agriculture or his representative, any lot or lots of such products so
462 identified, advertised, designated or described are not of the grade
463 indicated, said commissioner shall cause inspections thereof to be made
464 by regularly appointed inspectors for the purpose of determining the
465 actual grade of such products. Any person, firm or corporation which
466 violates any provision of this section shall be fined not more than fifty
467 dollars for the first offense and not more than two hundred dollars for
468 each subsequent offense.

469 Sec. 14. Subsection (b) of section 51-164n of the 2026 supplement to
470 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
471 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

472 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, any person
473 who is alleged to have committed (1) a violation under the provisions of
474 section 1-9, 1-10, 1-11, 2-71h, 4b-13, 7-13, 7-14, 7-35 or 7-41, subsection (c)

475 of section 7-66, section 7-83, 7-147h, 7-148, 7-283, 7-325, 7-393, 8-12, 8-25,
476 8-27, 9-63, 9-322, 9-350, 10-185, 10-193, 10-197, 10-198, 10-230, 10-251, 10-
477 254, 10a-35, 12-52, 12-54, 12-129b or 12-170aa, subdivision (3) of
478 subsection (e) of section 12-286, section 12-286a, 12-292, 12-314b or 12-
479 326g, subdivision (4) of section 12-408, subdivision (3), (5) or (6) of
480 section 12-411, section 12-435c, 12-476a, 12-476b, 12-476c, 12-487, 13a-
481 26b, 13a-71, 13a-107, 13a-113, 13a-114, 13a-115, 13a-117b, 13a-123, 13a-
482 124, 13a-139, 13a-140, 13a-143b, 13a-253, 13a-263 or 13b-39f, subsection
483 (f) of section 13b-42, section 13b-90 or 13b-100, subsection (a) of section
484 13b-108, section 13b-221 or 13b-292, subsection (a) or (b) of section 13b-
485 324, section 13b-336, 13b-337, 13b-338, 13b-410a, 13b-410b or 13b-410c,
486 subsection (a), (b) or (c) of section 13b-412, section 13b-414 or 14-4,
487 subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 14-12, subsection (d) of
488 section 14-12, subsection (f) of section 14-12a, subsection (a) of section
489 14-15a, section 14-16c, 14-20a or 14-27a, subsection (f) of section 14-34a,
490 subsection (d) of section 14-35, section 14-43, 14-44j, 14-49, 14-50a, 14-58
491 or 14-62a, subsection (b) of section 14-66, section 14-66a or 14-67a,
492 subsection (g) of section 14-80, subsection (f) or (i) of section 14-80h,
493 section 14-97a or 14-98, subsection (a), (b) or (d) of section 14-100a,
494 section 14-100b, 14-103a, 14-106a, 14-106c, 14-145a, 14-146, 14-152, 14-
495 153, 14-161 or 14-163b, subsection (f) of section 14-164i, section 14-213b
496 or 14-219, subdivision (1) of section 14-223a, subsection (d) of section 14-
497 224, section 14-240 or 14-250, subdivision (2) of subsection (e) of section
498 14-251, section 14-253a, 14-261a, 14-262, 14-264, 14-266, 14-267a, 14-269,
499 14-270, 14-272b, 14-274, 14-275 or 14-275a, subsection (c) of section 14-
500 275c, section 14-276, subsection (a) or (b) of section 14-277, section 14-
501 278, 14-279 or 14-280, subsection (b), (e) or (h) of section 14-283, section
502 14-283d, 14-283e, 14-283f, 14-283g, 14-289l, 14-291, 14-293b, 14-296aa, 14-
503 298a, 14-300, 14-300d, 14-300f, 14-319, 14-320, 14-321, 14-325a, 14-326, 14-
504 330 or 14-332a, subdivision (1), (2) or (3) of section 14-386a, section 15-
505 15e, 15-25 or 15-33, subdivision (1) of section 15-97, subsection (a) of
506 section 15-115, section 16-15, 16-16, 16-44, 16-256e, 16-278 or 16a-15,
507 subsection (a) of section 16a-21, section 16a-22, subsection (a) or (b) of
508 section 16a-22h, section 16a-106, 17a-24, 17a-145, 17a-149 or 17a-152,
509 subsection (b) of section 17a-227, section 17a-465, subsection (c) of

510 section 17a-488, section 17b-124, 17b-131, 17b-137, 19a-33, 19a-39 or 19a-
511 87, subsection (b) of section 19a-87a, section 19a-91, 19a-102a, 19a-102b,
512 19a-105, 19a-107, 19a-113, 19a-215, 19a-216a, 19a-219, 19a-222, 19a-224,
513 19a-286, 19a-287, 19a-297, 19a-301, 19a-309, 19a-335, 19a-336, 19a-338,
514 19a-339, 19a-340, 19a-425, 19a-442, 19a-502, 19a-565, 20-7a, 20-14, 20-
515 153a, 20-158, 20-231, 20-233, 20-249, 20-257, 20-265, 20-324e, 20-329c or
516 20-329g, subsection (b) of section 20-334, section 20-341l, 20-366, 20-482,
517 20-597, 20-608, 20-610, 20-623, 21-1, 21-38, 21-39, 21-43, 21-47, 21-48 or
518 21-63, subsection (d) of section 21-71, section 21-76a or 21-100,
519 subsection (c) of section 21a-2, subdivision (1) of section 21a-19, section
520 21a-20 or 21a-21, subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 21a-25,
521 section 21a-26, subsection (a) of section 21a-37, section 21a-46, 21a-61,
522 21a-63, 21a-70b or 21a-77, subsection (b) or (c) of section 21a-79, section
523 21a-85 or 21a-154, subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 21a-159,
524 section 21a-278b, subsection (c), (d) or (e) of section 21a-279a, section
525 21a-415a, 21a-421eee, 21a-421fff or 21a-421hhh, subsection (a) of section
526 21a-430, section 22-12b, 22-13, 22-14, 22-15, 22-16, 22-26g, 22-30, 22-34, as
527 amended by this act, 22-35, 22-36, 22-38, 22-39, 22-39f, 22-49, [22-54,] 22-
528 61j or 22-61l, subdivision (1) of subsection (n) of section 22-61l,
529 subsection (f) of section 22-61m, subdivision (1) of subsection (f) of
530 section 22-61m, section 22-84, 22-89, 22-90, 22-96, 22-98, 22-99, 22-100 or
531 22-111o, subsection (d) of section 22-118l, section 22-167, subsection (c)
532 of section 22-277, section 22-278, 22-279, 22-280a, 22-318a, 22-320h, 22-
533 324a or 22-326, subsection (b), subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (e) or
534 subsection (g) of section 22-344, subsection (a) or (b) of section 22-344b,
535 subsection (d) of section 22-344d, section 22-344f, 22-350a, 22-354, 22-
536 359, 22-366, 22-391, 22-413, 22-414, 22-415, 22-415c, 22a-66a or 22a-246,
537 subsection (a) of section 22a-250, section 22a-256g, subsection (e) of
538 section 22a-256h, section 22a-363 or 22a-381d, subsections (c) and (d) of
539 section 22a-381e, section 22a-449, 22a-450, 22a-461, 23-4b, 23-38, 23-45,
540 23-46 or 23-61b, subsection (a) or subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of
541 section 23-65, section 25-37 or 25-40, subsection (a) of section 25-43,
542 section 25-43d, 25-135, 26-18, 26-19, 26-21, 26-31, 26-40, 26-40a, 26-42, 26-
543 43, 26-49, 26-54, 26-55, 26-56, 26-58 or 26-59, subdivision (1) of subsection
544 (d) of section 26-61, section 26-64, subdivision (1) of section 26-76,

545 section 26-79, 26-87, 26-89, 26-91, 26-94, 26-97, 26-98, 26-104, 26-105, 26-
546 107, 26-114a, 26-117, subsection (b) of section 26-127, 26-128, 26-128a, 26-
547 131, 26-132, 26-138, 26-139 or 26-141, subdivision (1) of section 26-186,
548 section 26-207, 26-215, 26-217 or 26-224a, subdivision (1) of section 26-
549 226, section 26-227, 26-230, 26-231, 26-232, 26-244, 26-257a, 26-260, 26-
550 276, 26-280, 26-284, 26-285, 26-286, 26-287, 26-288, 26-290, 26-291a, 26-
551 292, 26-294, 27-107, 28-13, 29-6a, 29-16, 29-17, 29-25, 29-143o, 29-143z or
552 29-156a, subsection (b), (d), (e), (g) or (h) of section 29-161q, section 29-
553 161y or 29-161z, subdivision (1) of section 29-198, section 29-210, 29-243
554 or 29-277, subsection (c) of section 29-291c, section 29-316 or 29-318,
555 subsection (b) of section 29-335a, section 29-381, 30-19f, 30-48a or 30-86a,
556 subsection (b) of section 30-89, subsection (c) or (d) of section 30-117,
557 section 31-3, 31-10, 31-11, 31-12, 31-13, 31-14, 31-15, 31-16, 31-18, 31-23,
558 31-24, 31-25, 31-32, 31-36, 31-47 or 31-48, subsection (b) of section 31-48b,
559 section 31-51, 31-51g, 31-52, 31-52a, 31-53 or 31-54, subsection (a) or (c)
560 of section 31-69, section 31-70, 31-74, 31-75, 31-76, 31-76a, 31-89b or 31-
561 134, subsection (i) of section 31-273, section 31-288, 31-348, 33-624, 33-
562 1017, 34-13d or 34-412, subdivision (1) of section 35-20, subsection (a) of
563 section 36a-57, subsection (b) of section 36a-665, section 36a-699, 36a-
564 739, 36a-787, 38a-2 or 38a-140, subsection (a) or (b) of section 38a-278,
565 section 38a-479qq, 38a-479rr, 38a-506, 38a-548, 38a-626, 38a-680, 38a-713,
566 38a-733, 38a-764, 38a-786, 38a-828, 38a-829, 38a-885, 42-133hh, 42-470 or
567 42-480, subsection (a) or (c) of section 43-16q, section 45a-283, 45a-450,
568 45a-634 or 45a-658, subdivision (13) or (14) of section 46a-54, section 46a-
569 59, 46a-81b, 46b-22, 46b-24, 46b-34, 46b-38d, 47-34a, 47-47 or 47-53,
570 subsection (i) of section 47a-21, subdivision (1) of subsection (k) of
571 section 47a-21, section 49-2a, 49-8a, 49-16, 52-143 or 52-289, subsection
572 (j) of section 52-362, section 53-133, 53-199, 53-212a, 53-249a, 53-252, 53-
573 264, 53-280, 53-290a, 53-302a, 53-303e, 53-311a, 53-314, 53-321, 53-322, 53-
574 323 or 53-331, subsection (b) of section 53-343a, section 53-344,
575 subsection (b) or (c) of section 53-344b, subsection (b) of section 53-345a,
576 section 53-377, 53-422 or 53-450 or subsection (i) of section 54-36a, or (2)
577 a violation under the provisions of chapter 268, or (3) a violation of any
578 regulation adopted in accordance with the provisions of section 12-484,
579 12-487 or 13b-410, or (4) a violation of any ordinance, regulation or

580 bylaw of any town, city or borough, except violations of building codes,
 581 the health code or an ordinance described in subdivision (5) of this
 582 subsection, for which the penalty exceeds ninety dollars but does not
 583 exceed two hundred fifty dollars, unless such town, city or borough has
 584 established a payment and hearing procedure for such violation
 585 pursuant to section 7-152c, or (5) a violation of any ordinance adopted
 586 by a town, city or borough pursuant to section 14-224a, 14-390 or 14-
 587 390m for which the penalty does not exceed two thousand dollars,
 588 unless such town, city or borough has established a payment and
 589 hearing procedure for such violation pursuant to section 7-152c, shall
 590 follow the procedures set forth in this section.

591 Sec. 15. Section 22-33 and sections 22-50 to 22-54, inclusive, of the
 592 general statutes are repealed. (*Effective from passage*)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	22-6g
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	22-6h
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	22-6i
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	22-6j
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	22-6k
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	22-6l
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>	22-6m
Sec. 8	<i>from passage</i>	22-6n
Sec. 9	<i>from passage</i>	22-6o
Sec. 10	<i>from passage</i>	22-6p
Sec. 11	<i>from passage</i>	22-6q
Sec. 12	<i>from passage</i>	22-26k
Sec. 13	<i>from passage</i>	22-34
Sec. 14	<i>from passage</i>	51-164n(b)
Sec. 15	<i>from passage</i>	Repealer section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 3(b)(5), "four-year period" was changed to "[four-year] three-year period" for consistency.

ENV Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill makes various changes to the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, which conforms current practice to law and does not result in a fiscal impact.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 149*****AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes various changes to the Department of Agriculture's (DoAg) Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). By law, the FMNP generally gives (1) people eligible for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and (2) low-income people age 60 or older funds to buy eligible Connecticut-grown fresh produce and chicken eggs. Under the bill, FMNP participants may also use program benefits to buy honey.

The bill makes many minor, technical, and conforming changes. Among other things, it changes specific FMNP statutory definitions and terminology to align with program modernizations, including a transition to electronic benefits and expansion of eligible benefit redemption locations, and DoAg's current practices. Additionally, the bill allows, rather than requires as under current law, the FMNP to be jointly funded by Connecticut and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Under current federal law, FNS gives grants to state agencies to administer the FMNP. The bill also eliminates a statutorily defined benefit amount of five \$3 vouchers issued to each program participant in a distribution period, and instead requires DoAg to annually set the benefit amount each FMNP participant will get based on the federal and state allocation for the given program year.

Lastly, the bill makes changes to three other DoAg programs. Specifically, it eliminates the requirement that the DoAg commissioner adopt regulations to administer the farm transition grant program. In practice, the department issues annual program guidance to administer the program instead. It also repeals two defunct programs: the (1)

Connecticut Quality Seal Program, which ensured quality and authenticity of Connecticut-produced products, and (2) Apple Marketing Order program, which promoted the sale of apples and apple products and related market research in the state. In practice, both programs' goals were largely incorporated into DoAg's active CT Grown campaign.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

TRANSITION TO ELECTRONIC BENEFITS

The bill makes changes to FMNP statutes to reflect the modern use of electronic benefits rather than paper vouchers, including replacing references to "vouchers" with "benefits."

To align with DoAg's current practice of coupling FMNP benefit distribution with WIC benefit distribution, made possible by the transition to electronic benefits, the bill also changes the definition of a "local WIC agency" to be an entity that contracts with the Department of Public Health to administer the WIC program and distribute WIC benefits to participants (rather than an entity contracting with DoAg to distribute FMNP vouchers, as under current law). Correspondingly, it eliminates obsolete procedures for the WIC agency to verify a program participant's identity when distributing paper vouchers. The bill also reduces, from four years to three years, the period that local WIC agencies must generally keep FMNP-related records.

The bill also eliminates the requirement for authorized vendors to have a DoAg-issued certified vendor number and use a certified vendor identification stamp on deposited benefit vouchers, and it eliminates a process for vendors to deposit any vouchers they accepted. Similarly, it eliminates the requirement for program participants to countersign a voucher before using it.

EXPANDED BENEFIT REDEMPTION LOCATIONS AND VENDOR CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The bill replaces "authorized farmers' market" with "authorized benefit location" in FMNP statutes to reflect an expansion of approved

benefit redemption locations to include farm stands and mobile markets, in addition to farmers’ markets. It also replaces “vendors” with “farmers.”

The bill also makes changes to the requirements a vendor must meet to become certified to accept FMNP benefits. Under existing law, to become certified a vendor must attend a training on FMNP rules and procedures. The bill adds the requirement that vendors also complete an annual online learning module and get a passing score on a knowledge test. Existing law also requires vendors to submit a completed application and crop plan before becoming certified to accept benefits. The bill specifies that they must do so using a form and process DoAg creates. Lastly, the bill eliminates the requirement for vendors to submit to DoAg a signed (1) receipt of a vendor certification handbook and (2) certified vendor agreement before accepting FMNP benefits.

The bill also eliminates a process for the DoAg commissioner to determine whether to authorize a farmers’ market to accept FMNP benefits based on how many vendors apply to participate in the market. In practice, this process was made obsolete by the benefit redemption location expansion and transition to a system that allows individual vendors to accept FMNP benefits. Correspondingly, the bill eliminates the obsolete law making it a violation for vendors to cash vouchers for a noncertified market, as this is not possible under the modern benefit redemption system.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 0 (03/04/2026)