

By Mr. Webber, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 981) of Peter C. Webber and Christopher J. Hodgkins for legislation to authorize the Commissioner of Food and Agriculture to establish a program to promote the building of sites for the sale of Massachusetts-grown agricultural products. Natural Resources and Agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety.

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR IMPROVED PROMOTION OF MASSACHUSETTS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The commissioner of food and agriculture is
2 hereby authorized and directed to establish a grant program to
3 assist municipalities in establishing, improving and promoting
4 sites and structures to be utilized for farmers' markets pursuant
5 to Chapter 128 of the General Laws, in order to facilitate access
6 between Massachusetts producers, and consumers and wholesal-
7 ers of Massachusetts-grown produce.

8 To carry out the purposes of this Act, the commissioner shall
9 establish regulations by which the department shall administer the
10 program and evaluate and prioritize applications for assistance
11 hereunder, within ninety days of the effective date of this Act. Said
12 regulations shall include, but not be limited to, criteria by which
13 projects will be judged, including the economic impact of the
14 proposed market on the region it will serve, the anticipated level
15 of municipal participation, and the extent to which Massachusetts
16 farmers would benefit through the direct sale of farm and food
17 products at such locations, provided further that in no case shall
18 grants awarded under this Act be of an amount in excess of fifty
19 percent of the total cost of the entire project.

1 SECTION 2. For the purpose of implementing the terms of
2 this Act, the sum of three million dollars is hereby appropriated

3 to Account 2511-4000 within the department of food and
 4 agriculture. The commissioner shall annually file a report with the
 5 clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives detailing the
 6 expenditure of all monies awarded under the terms of this Act.