

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: SB 1902

INTRODUCER: Senator Torres

SUBJECT: Farm-to-Plate Investment Plan

DATE: January 25, 2022

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Fink</u>	<u>Becker</u>	<u>AG</u>	Favorable
2.	_____	_____	<u>AEG</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	<u>AP</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 1902 directs the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) to create a Farm-to-Plate Investment Plan with recommendations for legislative action to stabilize and revitalize farm and food businesses in Florida. The Farm-to-Plate Investment Plan shall include strategies to:

- Increase economic output, employment, and vitality of farm and food businesses;
- Diversify production and increase demand for Florida grown food;
- Produce jobs with livable wages and safe conditions;
- Promote farm environmental stewardship and ecological diversity;
- Prevent waste;
- Support farm and food businesses and stakeholders in prioritizing racial equity;
- Market and promote farm-to-school programs; and
- Promote sales of food grown in Florida.

To develop the plan, the bill also allows the department to consult and contract with public and private entities, hire and assign staff, seek and accept funds from public and private entities, and take any other actions necessary.

The bill requires the department to submit the plan by October 1, 2024 to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.

II. Present Situation:

Florida's 47,500 farms and ranches utilize 9.7 million acres and continue to produce a wide variety of safe and dependable food products.¹ From the citrus groves and nurseries in Central and South Florida, to the vegetables in various regions around the state, to the cattle and calves throughout the state, these farms and ranches provide Florida with a large and stable economic base. In 2019 Florida ranked first in the United States in the value of production for bell peppers for fresh market, grapefruit, oranges, sugarcane, fresh market tomatoes, and watermelons; second in the value of production for bell peppers, fresh market sweet corn, and strawberries; and third in fresh market cabbage, cabbage, peanuts and squash. There were 5,000 farms with sales exceeding \$100,000. The average farm size was 205 acres. Florida ranks 15th among all states in number of farms and 30th in land in farms.²

Florida's share of U.S. citrus production in 2019-2020 is 73.2 million boxes, down 5 percent from the previous season's 77.4 million boxes. Florida's orange production, at 67.3 million boxes, is down 6 percent from the previous season. Grapefruit utilization in Florida, at 4.85 million boxes, is up 8 percent from last season's utilization. Tangerine and tangelo production in 2019-2020 is up 3 percent from the previous season. California accounted for 54 percent of total United States citrus production; Florida totaled 42 percent, and Texas and Arizona produced the remaining 4 percent.³

Florida's orange production has been on a quarter century slide due to citrus greening, a bacteria that can cause massive fruit drops and eventually kill citrus trees, as well as another disease which can cause the leaves and fruit of citrus trees to drop prematurely and create unappealing lesions on the fruit. Due to citrus greening, and other issues, Florida is on pace to produce the smallest crop of oranges in more than 75 years.⁴

Additionally, Florida's farmers have been affected by the COVID-19 virus. With restaurants closed, supply chains have been disrupted, and some farmers have had nowhere to sell their produce. Many were forced to destroy crops, as it did not make financial sense to hire workers to harvest them.⁵

Food waste is also a growing problem in modern society. In the United States, food waste is estimated at between 30-40 percent of the food supply.⁶ This amount of waste has far-reaching impacts on society. Land, water, labor, energy and other inputs are used in producing,

¹ United States Department of Agriculture, "2020 State Agriculture Overview,"

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/Ag_Overview/stateOverview.php?state=FLORIDA (last visited Jan. 24, 2022).

² Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, "Florida Agriculture Overview and Statistics," <https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Florida-Agriculture-Overview-and-Statistics> (last visited Jan. 24, 2022).

³ Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, "Florida Citrus Statistics," https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Florida/Publications/Citrus/Citrus_Statistics/2019-20/fcs1920b.pdf (last visited Jan. 24, 2022).

⁴ The Associated Press, "Florida on pace for smallest orange crop in over 75 years," (Jan. 19, 2022, 11:42 AM) <https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/florida-pace-smallest-orange-crop-75-years-82352462>.

⁵ Daniel Rivero, "How COVID (Almost) Reshaped Florida Agriculture, And Why It Still Might," Health News Florida, (June 4, 2021 at 8:24 AM EDT) <https://health.wusf.usf.edu/health-news-florida/2021-06-04/how-covid-almost-reshaped-florida-agriculture-and-why-it-still-might>.

⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Food Waste FAQs," <https://www.usda.gov/foodwaste/faqs> (last visited Jan. 24, 2022).

processing, transporting, preparing, storing, and disposing of discarded food.⁷ Not to mention all the wasted food that could have gone to those in need, instead of the landfill.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1902 creates s. 570.237, F.S., to require the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) to create a Farm-to-Plate Investment Plan with recommendations for legislative action to stabilize and revitalize farm and food businesses in Florida.

The bill requires that the plan include strategies to:

- Increase the economic output, employment, and establishment of farm and food businesses;
- Increase demand for food grown in Florida;
- Diversify the state's agricultural production;
- Provide farm and food jobs or careers with livable wages and safe conditions;
- Provide opportunities to gain knowledge and skills for farm and food jobs or careers;
- Assist farm and food businesses in increasing carbon sequestration and reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Promote farm stewardship that increases ecological diversity;
- Ensure that edible food, food scraps, and other food residuals are not treated or disposed of as waste;
- Increase the amount of food grown in the state that meets the dietary and cultural needs of people in the state;
- Ensure that agricultural land remains in productive agricultural use and access to such land is more affordable and equitable;
- Increase the number of locations where food grown in the state is sold, served, or provided;
- Support farm and food businesses and stakeholders in prioritizing racial equity;
- Support existing farm-to-school programs to increase the purchase of food grown in the state; and
- Market and promote food grown in the state within and outside the state.

To develop the plan, the bill also allows the department to consult and contract with public and private entities, hire and assign staff, seek and accept funds from public and private entities, and take any other actions necessary.

The bill requires the department to submit the plan with recommendations for legislative action to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by October 1, 2024

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.

⁷ Eliza Barclay, "When You Waste Food, You're Wasting tons of Water, Too," NPR, (June 6, 2013, 4:15 PM) <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2013/06/06/189192870/when-you-waste-food-youre-wasting-tons-of-water-too>.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The department may incur costs related to the provision of staff and in developing the Farm-to-Plate Investment Plan.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 570.237 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
