

Date of Hearing: March 25, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Esmeralda Soria, Chair

AB 1731 Wilson – As Amended March 19, 2026

SUBJECT: Office of Farm to Fork: California Healthy Food Procurement Fund Program

SUMMARY: This bill would require the Department of Food and Agriculture’s (CDFA) Office of Farm to Fork (OF2F), to establish the California Healthy Food Procurement Fund Program (CHFPPF) for purposes of cultivating equity, nurturing students, building climate resilience, supporting California agriculture, and creating scalable and sustainable changes in the school food system by or before January 1, 2028. Specifically, *this bill*:

- 1) Creates the Program with in OF2F.
- 2) Defines the following for this chapter:
 - a. “Office” means OF2F.
 - b. “Program” means the California Healthy Food Procurement Fund Program.
- 3) Requires OF2F, by January 1, 2028, to establish CHFPPF for purposes of cultivating equity, nurturing students, building climate resilience, supporting California agriculture, and creating scalable and sustainable changes in the school food system.
 - a. Requires the CHFPPF increase the procurement of healthy foods, including institutions serving pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.
- 4) Requires OF2F, if funding is available, to implement initiatives under the CHFPPF, including, but not limited to, an initiative to do any of the following:
 - a. Provide funding to approved vendors to procure foods that are whole or are minimally processed and are grown or produced in California using climate-smart agriculture practices and climate-smart agriculture production systems, so that the approved vendors can contract with institutions serving pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to deliver procured foods at no cost.
 - b. Establish an application process to approve vendors that meet all the following requirements:
 - i. The vendor sources and distributes foods that are whole or are minimally processed and are grown or produced in California using climate-smart agriculture practices and climate-smart agriculture production systems. If the vendor sources products from multiple farms, 50% or more of the total producers that the vendor purchases from are California farms using climate-smart agriculture practices and climate-smart agriculture production systems.

- ii. The vendor serves institutions serving pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.
 - iii. The vendor tracks and readily provides itemized source identification information, including the producer or processor of origin, and certifications to the office. The vendor keeps records of purchase invoices from sourced entities and may be subject to audit of purchasing.
 - iv. The vendor aligns with the priorities of the office.
 - v. The vendor maintains robust compliance that ensures the farms and ranches with which it works comply with all laws, rules, and regulations, including food safety, labor, and environmental requirements and standards.
- c. Requires OF2F to ensure that vendors throughout the state are selected, and may establish limits on vendor participation to maintain a competitive and diverse marketplace .
- d. Publish the list of approved vendors on the department's internet website, including the region that each vendor serves and their contact information.
- e. Conduct outreach to institutions serving pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to promote contracting with approved vendors.
- 5) Creates the California Healthy Food Procurement Account in CDFA Fund. Requires this account consists of moneys from federal, state, industry, philanthropic, and private sources. Requires moneys in this account to be available to CDFA, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for the purposes of CHFPPF.
- 6) Requires OF2F to submit a report on the status of the CHFPPF to the Legislature every three years. The report shall include information on the progress of the program, including, but not limited to, all the following:
- a. The number and type, with respect to size, ownership, and production practices, of farms and ranches from which food products were sourced.
 - b. The number and type of institutions served by approved vendors, and the volumes of food products provided to each institution.
 - c. The number and type, with respect to business model, of vendors providing food products to institutions.
 - d. The amount of funds distributed to each vendor and to each institution.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Creates OF2F within CDFA, and requires OF2F, to the extent that resources are available, to 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. (*Food and Agriculture code 49001*)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: This bill responds to a pivotal moment for California’s food system, which faces two urgent and interconnected challenges: the rapid loss of California’s small and mid-sized farms and the need for schools to transition away from ultra-processed foods following the passage of AB 1264 (Gabriel, 2024). To successfully implement this transition and ensure that California’s farmers - rather than national suppliers - are providing the healthy food that schools will require, schools need reliable access to minimally processed foods and regional supply chains capable of providing them.

California has made significant investments in farm-to-school infrastructure through programs administered by CDFA, including the Farm to School Program and the California Food Hubs Program.

These popular programs help schools build the capacity to prepare fresh food and support the development of regional food distribution networks. They are heavily oversubscribed, with nearly 2.5 times the demand for Farm to School funding and more than 11 times the demand for Food Hub funding in the most recent grant cycles. However, CDFA’s most recent Farm to School Program evaluation found that most grant funding is currently used for kitchen infrastructure and equipment as schools transition from “heat-and-serve” models toward scratch cooking. As a result, only a small share of funds is spent on buying food from farmers.

The evaluation recommends establishing a dedicated procurement fund to bridge this gap and ensure the success of the state’s Farm to School investments. In addition, for the state’s investments in regional food hubs to succeed in the long-term, food hubs must have consistent market opportunities, including the ability to participate in school food purchasing.

This bill implements this recommendation by establishing a procurement fund and approved vendor program designed to facilitate school purchasing of whole or minimally processed foods sourced from California farms using climate-smart practices. The approved vendor program removes the administrative burden of sourcing, verifying, and tracking farm-level procurement from schools, while enabling regional food hubs and distributors to participate in school markets.

By helping farmers adopt climate smart practices and stay in business, this bill also advances state climate goals (AB 1757, Garcia).

According to the author, supporting our farmers as they face stability challenges, while ensuring our state’s children have access to nutritious foods, is not just important, it’s essential. This bill is a powerful step forward, empowering California’s farmers to give back to their communities with healthier food options, and ensuring our children thrive with the nourishment they deserve.

Supporters state, this bill builds a streamlined pathway for schools to purchase whole and minimally processed foods grown by California farmers using sustainable practices through local and regional distributors. The bill addresses a critical gap at a time when schools are transitioning away from ultra processed foods under this bill, ensuring that California's own agricultural producers are positioned to meet that rising demand rather than ceding it to national supply chains.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

6 Degrees Collective
 68 Produce, Llc.
 A Voice for Choice Advocacy
 Abundant Harvest Organics
 Admiral Maltings
 Alba
 Alex Boldt Farms
 Alexandre Family Farm
 All STAR Organics
 Almeria Farms
 American Academy of Pediatrics, California
 Angela's Ranch
 Apple Creek Vineyard Farm
 Ayoquezco Organic Produce
 Baba Small Batch, LLC
 Bayard Fox Selections
 Benalinad Organic Farm LLC DbA Aglady
 Microgreens
 Better-produce, INC.
 Blossom Bluff Orchards
 Blossom Vineyards
 Blue Bottle Coffee
 Box 7 Imports
 Burnett and Son Food Manufacturing
 Facility
 Cabrillo College Horticulture Department
 Cali Berry
 California Against Waste
 California Certified Organic Farmers
 (CCOF)
 California Climate & Agriculture Network
 (CALCAN)
 California Food and Farming Network
 Californians for Pesticide Reform
 Campodonico Olive Farm
 Center for Good Food Purchasing
 Central Coast Organic Berries
 Certified Quality Assurance LLC
 Chinchiole Family Farms
 Coastal Roots Farm
 Coke Farm
 Conscious Kitchen
 Creekside Organics INC
 Cultivo Mixteco 953 Organic Farm

Del Rey Avocado
 Desert Vista Ranches
 Devine Organics
 Domaine Helena
 Double D Ranch
 Duncan Peak Wines
 Eckert Cold Storage
 Eel River Produce
 Esperanza Community Farms
 Etto Pastificio
 Farm2people
 Ferrari Farms INC.
 Ferrari Ranch
 Food Safety & Process Technology Group.
 INC.
 Four Elements Organics
 Fresno Unified School District
 Fullwell
 Global Life Partners
 Gold Ridge Organic Farms
 Green Farmersland
 Green Gold Organic Farms
 Green Planet Organics
 Hass Heights Growers, INC.
 Herencia Organic Farm
 Homeless Garden Project
 Hummingbird Ranch
 J.I Adrich Ranch
 Jacobs Farm
 Jessie's Organic Farms
 Johnson Farms
 Jsm Organics, INC.
 Keystone Land and Livestock
 L and a Farms
 LA Purisima LLC
 Ladyhawke Farm
 Larocca Vineyards
 Latham Avocados
 Le Prunier
 Leftcoast Grassfed LLC
 Let's Go Farm
 Limón Orchards
 Liviaone™ Probiotics
 Lone Willow Ranch

Los Prismas Organic Farms
 Lucky Strike Farms
 Lundberg Family Farms
 Maha Estate
 Maha Vineyards
 Maisie Jane's California Sunshine Products
 Melanin Farms
 Mesa Grande Bdc - the Golden Eagle Farm
 Mesa Vineyard Management INC.
 Michael O'gorman Farming
 Miles Garrett Wines
 Mixteco Produce Organic Farm
 Molino Creek LLC
 Murray Vineyards
 Myrna Helen Trotter Estate
 Nana Joes Granola
 Napa County School District
 Neukom Family Farms
 Nuevo Amanecer Farms
 Olivino INC. Organic Olive Mill
 Organic Body Essentials
 Pacha
 Palmdale School District
 Panther Ridge Vineyard
 Pelican LLC
 Pleasant Grove Farms
 Port Rotta Operations LLC
 Quinco
 Rock Front Ranch Products LLC
 Rodale Institute
 Rojas Tepetitla Organic Farms
 Ronald Martella Farms, INC.
 Root Down Rise Up Ag
 Roots of Change
 Salerno Family Farms
 San Diego Food System Alliance

San Francisco Unified School District
 Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
 Santa Cruz Permaculture
 Sei Querce Vineyards
 Sierra Harvest
 Sierra Orchards
 Sierra Vista Ranches
 Silvia Organic Farm
 Smartsville Organics
 Sonoma State University
 Starbright Acres Family Farm
 Starwalker Organic Farms
 Strawhouse
 Sun Grown Organics
 Sunleaf Foods
 Sunstone Winery
 Sweetwater Farm
 T&d Willey Farms
 Tablas Creek Vineyard
 Taylor Farms
 The Farmhand Foundation
 The Queen of Vegetables Organic Farm
 Three Feathers Farm
 Tierra H&r Organic Farms LLC
 Tikvah Organics
 Torres Organic Farms
 Tres Sabores Winery
 Triangle S Farms
 Valley View Dairy
 Valliwide Marketing INC
 Veritable Vegetable
 Vitoli
 Water Grass Flats Jv
 Wild Roots Market, INC
 Windmill Pacific LLC

Opposition

None on file

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