
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1731 (Wilson) - Office of Farm to Fork: California Healthy Food Procurement Fund Program

Version: May 18, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: AGRI. 5 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Robert Ingenito

Bill Summary: AB 1731 would require the Office of Farm to Fork within the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), upon appropriation by the Legislature, to establish the California Healthy Food Procurement Fund Program (CHFPFP), as specified. Additionally, the bill would (1) require the Office to implement initiatives that would provide funding for approved vendors to procure only food products that are whole or are minimally processed and are grown or produced in California using climate-smart agriculture practices and production systems, and (2) require the Office to report to the Legislature, specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- CDFA indicates this bill would result in both one-time and ongoing administrative costs to establish and implement the new program, including creating and administering a dedicated fund (General Fund, special fund, or future bonds). The magnitude of these costs would depend on factors such as the amount appropriated, program complexity, and the volume of applications received. One-time costs would include fund and account establishment, program development, and necessary modifications to existing information technology systems. Ongoing costs would include personnel, accounting and fund administration, application review, grant management, monitoring and compliance activities, execution and amendment of grant agreements, and processing grantee payments.
- Additionally, CDFA would incur a cost pressure, likely in the millions of dollars annually, for CDFA to provide funding to approved vendors to contract with institutions serving pupils in K-12 schools to deliver procured foods at no cost (General Fund, special fund, or future bond funds).

Background: CDFA's Office of Farm to Fork administers the State's farm-to-school and food access initiatives, including grant programs that promote procurement of California-grown foods, strengthen connections between schools and agricultural producers, and support local food system development. Since its establishment, the Legislature has provided ongoing General Fund support to expand the Office's staffing and statewide capacity, including funding in the 2020-21 and 2022-23 Budget Acts.

Beginning in 2020, the Legislature provided funding for CDFA to establish and administer the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program. Between 2021 and 2024, the department awarded approximately \$90 million for roughly 375 projects

statewide to support local food procurement, food education, and related infrastructure. The 2026-27 enacted budget includes an increase of \$24.6 million General Fund in 2026-27 (\$25.2 million ongoing) and statutory changes to provide ongoing funding for the Farm to School supply chain. The Farm to School Incubator Grant program increases the number of California schools offering children access to local, climate smart, and nutritious food, as well as nutritional education programs. Additionally, this proposal supports farmers in the adoption of climate smart agricultural practices and market development to ensure they can access their local school food procurement programs.

The Office also administers the Farm to Community Food Hubs Program, which received a one-time General Fund appropriation of \$13.75 million to support the development and expansion of regional food hubs through competitive grants. CDFA awarded grant funding under the program in 2025.

In addition to state funding, California previously received approximately \$23 million in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Local Food for Schools program to support school purchases of locally produced foods and expand market opportunities for local, regional, and socially disadvantaged agricultural producers. That funding has since been terminated by the federal administration.

Proposed Law: This bill would, among other things, do the following:

- Require the Office of Farm to Fork, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to establish the California Healthy Food Procurement Fund Program for purposes of cultivating equity, nurturing students, building climate resilience, supporting California agriculture, and creating scalable and sustainable change in the school food system.
- Require that the program increase procurement of healthy food products, including for institutions serving pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.
- Require the office, to the extent that funding is available, to implement initiatives under the program, including, but not limited to, an initiative that would, among other things, provide funding to approved vendors to procure only food products 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, as specified.
- Create the California Healthy Food Procurement Account in the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund, consisting of moneys from federal, state, industry, philanthropic, and private sources, which the bill would make available to the department upon appropriation by the Legislature for the purposes of the program.
- Require the Office to submit a report on the status of the CHFPFP to the Legislature, as specified.

-- END --