
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 675 (Aguiar-Curry) - Office of Farm to Fork: California Farm to School Program

Version: June 17, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: July 14, 2025

Policy Vote: AGRI. 5 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Robert Ingenito

Bill Summary: AB 675 would establish the California Farm to School Act, as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- By placing the Farm to School Program in statute, this bill would result in an annual cost pressure to provide funding for the Program. The magnitude is unknown, but could reach the millions of dollars annually. (General Fund/special funds/bond funds).
- The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) indicates that the bill would not result in a fiscal impact. CDFA has been provided ongoing resources in previous budgets to support related administration. Specifically, the 2020-21 enacted budget approved \$1.5 million in ongoing funding (General Fund) to hire four permanent staff. The enacted 2022-23 budget approved an additional \$2.9 million in ongoing funding for CDFA's Office of Farm to Fork (OFF) to hire eight regional network leads and eight producer engagement specialists to further support local planning and implementation of the Program.
- The California Department of Education (SDE) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) would likely incur minor costs to interface with CDFA regarding the Program.

Background: Though not codified or authorized in statute, OFF administers the Farm to School Program, which serves as a statewide resource to assist schools in procuring more locally grown food and engaging students to eat healthier meals.

OFF also manages the Incubator Program, which provides competitive grants to support the adoption and expansion of farm to school practices. Specifically, this Program (1) supports schools and child care centers in procuring locally grown food and providing hands on food education, (2) assists producers in increasing production capacity to supply food to schools and child care centers, and (3) supports organizations in providing technical assistance to schools, child care centers, and producers seeking to implement and advance farm to school practices.

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

- Establish the California Farm to School Program (Program), to be developed, administered, and implemented by the Office of Farm to Fork under CDFA.

- Require the Program to increase procurement of foods that are grown or produced in California and are whole or minimally processed from food producers in California for school meal programs.
- Require the Program to increase hands-on food education opportunities that engage pupils and connect the classroom with the cafeteria.
- Allow OFF, to the extent that funds are available, to implement initiatives under the California Farm to School Program, including, but not limited to:
 - Initiatives that advance the California farm to school network, provide resources and facilitate relationships between local producers and school personnel.
 - Encourage opportunities to incorporate best practices such as scratch cooking, hands-on education, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), climate-smart agricultural practices, certification, and insurance.
 - Increase the nutritional profile of foods provided in schools.
 - Facilitate a California Farm to School Interagency Working Group.
- State that OFF shall administer the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program under the California Farm to School Program.
- State the OFF shall develop the programming for the California Farm to School Program in consultation with SDE and DSS.

Related Legislation:

- AB 826 (Nava, 2005) would have created the California Farm to School Child Nutrition Improvement Program (Farm to School program), which would have required the State Department of Education (SDE), to the extent funds are available from identified sources, and in collaboration with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the California Department of Health Services (DHS), to implement outreach and training of school food service personnel and the agricultural industry in order to facilitate the delivery of fresh fruits and vegetables to school cafeterias. The bill was vetoed by the Governor.
- AB 2121 (Nava, 2006) would have established the Farm Fresh Schools (FFS) program, administered jointly by CDFA and the Department of Health Services (DHS), in consultation with SDE. The bill was held under submission on the Suspense File of the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Staff Comments: The Incubator Program was first established in 2020-21 with an \$8.5 million General Fund appropriation, with subsequent budgets providing General Fund appropriations of \$30 million in 2021-22 and \$60 million in FY 2022-23. All of these funding was done on a one-time basis. The Incubator Program has awarded all funding received from previous budgets and has a history of oversubscription. For instance, the

most recent grant round (2024) had 499 applicants requesting a total of \$129 million, but had sufficient funding to award only \$53 million to 195 grantees.

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