

HB2743



94TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2005 and 2006

HB2743

Introduced 2/22/2005, by Rep. Tom Cross

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

505 ILCS 82/5

Amends the Food and Agriculture Research Act. Makes a technical change in a Section concerning the legislative purposes of the Act.

LRB094 06494 RCE 36582 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning agriculture.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Food and Agriculture Research Act is amended
5 by changing Section 5 as follows:

6 (505 ILCS 82/5)

7 Sec. 5. Findings. It is the ~~the~~ intent of this Act to
8 provide a solid base of State funding for public food and
9 agricultural research programs in Illinois while fostering
10 public confidence in this research through public
11 participation. Blessed with rich agricultural soils and a
12 favorable agricultural climate, Illinois traditionally ranks
13 fourth or fifth among the States in the nation's gross
14 agricultural production. The food and agricultural sector,
15 employing nearly 20% of the State's workers, is committed to
16 providing safe, nutritious, high-quality, affordable, and
17 convenient agricultural products and services to Illinois
18 citizens. Compared with all other states, however, Illinois
19 faces a tremendous challenge to meet its needs for ongoing
20 adequate research investments that improve human health while
21 protecting and enhancing its natural resources and
22 environment. Without adequate State funding, the food and
23 agricultural sector faces the consequences of falling behind in
24 information, projects, and programs affecting human lives and
25 the demand for improved nutrition, food quality, human health,
26 and environment.

27 Currently, the State's agricultural universities conduct
28 research that provides basic information about the structure
29 and function of food and agricultural systems. Although these
30 agricultural institutions have a remarkable record of
31 contributions to an improved food and agricultural sector,
32 their research is significantly underfunded. The State's

1 Agricultural Experiment Station, maintained as the food and
2 agricultural research facilities and program of the University
3 of Illinois, ranks only 29th in state funding among the state
4 agricultural experiment stations. Southern Illinois University
5 at Carbondale, Illinois State University, and Western Illinois
6 University also conduct food and agricultural research but
7 receive no State appropriated fund allocations. This
8 underfunding represents a missed opportunity for Illinois and
9 places it in poor competitive position with other important
10 agricultural states. The State's consumers and producers reap
11 high returns from existing public investment in food and
12 agricultural research, with a pretax return of 40%, the highest
13 among publicly supported research activities.

14 Illinois needs mechanisms that allow publicly supported
15 researchers to work closely with farmers, agribusiness,
16 consumers, conservationists, environmentalists, and other key
17 decision-makers. Together, these groups can identify
18 challenges and opportunities for researchers before they
19 conduct research and transfer the information and technology.
20 This will allow Illinois to retain its prominence as a leading
21 agricultural state.

22 The Illinois Council on Food and Agricultural Research
23 (C-FAR) is a statewide coalition committed to funding relevant
24 and high-quality research and related outreach programs
25 leading to profitable, consumer-sensitive, and environmentally
26 sound food and agricultural systems. The intent of this Act is
27 to secure funds to support targeted research initiatives so
28 that Illinois will continue to meet tomorrow's food and
29 agricultural needs while using our natural resources
30 responsibly.

31 The General Assembly of Illinois hereby:

32 (1) Identifies food and agricultural research as a
33 critically important activity with great public benefits.

34 (2) Identifies the State's agricultural universities
35 responsible for basic, developmental, and adaptive
36 research related to the food and agricultural sector; and

1 (3) Authorizes the expenditure of State funds to
2 enlarge, improve, and sustain the publicly supported
3 programs of food and agricultural research in Illinois.

4 (Source: P.A. 89-182, eff. 7-19-95.)