

AN ACT concerning agriculture.

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

Section 5. The County Cooperative Extension Law is amended by changing Section 2b as follows:

(505 ILCS 45/2b) (from Ch. 5, par. 242b)

Sec. 2b. The Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Illinois may ~~shall~~ establish a Rural Transition Program to be operated in cooperation with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to provide assessments, career counseling, on-the-job training, tuition reimbursements, classroom training, financial management training, work experience opportunities, job search skills, job placement, youth programs, and support service to farmers and their families, agriculture-related employees, other rural residents, and small rural businesses who are being forced out of farming or other primary means of employment or whose standard of living or employment has been reduced because of prevailing economic conditions in the agricultural or rural economy. Eligible farmers and their families shall include those who can demonstrate proof of financial stress, proof of foreclosure, proof of bankruptcy, proof of inability to secure needed capital, proof of voluntary foreclosure or proof of

income eligibility for assistance programs administered by the Department of Human Services (acting as successor to the Department of Public Aid under the Department of Human Services Act). Eligible agriculture related employees shall mean tenant farmers or other farm employees and employees of businesses related to agricultural production who are facing displacement, unemployment or underemployment due to a closure or reduction in operation of such business or farm due to poor economic conditions that prevail in the agricultural or rural economy. Other eligible rural residents shall include those residing in rural areas whose employment or standard of living has been reduced due to the poor economic conditions that prevail in the agricultural or rural economy. Eligible small rural businesses shall include those existing or new businesses established and operating in rural areas that lack access to other sources of services provided by this Section. In carrying out the provisions of this Section, the Cooperative Extension Service may enter into agreements with the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, community colleges, vocational schools, and any other State or local private or public agency or entity deemed necessary.

(Source: P.A. 94-793, eff. 5-19-06.)