

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2813

To amend the Agricultural Adjustment Act to assist small cheese producers.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 10, 2018

Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. CASEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the Agricultural Adjustment Act to assist small cheese producers.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Local Cheese Pro-
5 motion and Dairy Support Act of 2018”.

6 **SEC. 2. ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL CHEESE PRODUCERS.**

7 The Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 601 et
8 seq.), reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural
9 Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, is amended by adding
10 at the end the following:

1 **“SEC. 24. ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL CHEESE PRODUCERS.**

2 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

3 “(1) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligi-
4 ble institution’ means—

5 “(A) a land-grant college or university (as
6 defined in section 1404 of the National Agricul-
7 tural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy
8 Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103));

9 “(B) a local office of the National Institute
10 of Food and Agriculture or other regional office
11 of the Department of Agriculture;

12 “(C) a group of regional experts (as deter-
13 mined by the Secretary) that advises beginning
14 farmers or ranchers (as defined under section
15 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural
16 Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a))); or

17 “(D) a nonprofit organization.

18 “(2) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means
19 the Secretary of Agriculture.

20 “(3) SMALL CHEESE PRODUCER.—The term
21 ‘small cheese producer’ has the meaning given the
22 term by the Secretary.

23 “(b) GRANT PROGRAM.—

24 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-
25 lish a program under which the Secretary shall make

1 competitive grants to, as determined by the Sec-
2 retary—

3 “(A) eligible small cheese producers; and

4 “(B) cooperative groups of small cheese
5 producers.

6 “(2) PREFERENCE.—In making grants under
7 this subsection, the Secretary shall give preference
8 to small cheese producers that use locally or region-
9 ally sourced product to produce cheese.

10 “(3) USE OF FUNDS.—The recipient of a grant
11 under this subsection may use grant funds—

12 “(A) to purchase equipment or renovate
13 and make repairs to production facilities;

14 “(B) to develop a business plan or perform
15 a feasibility study to grow the business of the
16 small cheese producer;

17 “(C) to promote and market cheese;

18 “(D) to participate in accounting and fi-
19 nancial literacy education and training or pur-
20 chase necessary software;

21 “(E) to upgrade facilities to meet food
22 safety standards;

23 “(F) to participate in food safety training;

24 and

1 “(G) to participate in relevant job training,
2 such as training in—

3 “(i) cheese-making quality; or

4 “(ii) the production of a variety of
5 cheese that the recipient has not produced
6 before.

7 “(c) CHEESE PRODUCTION EDUCATION AND PRO-
8 MOTION PILOT PROJECT.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall not use
10 more than 10 percent of the funds made available to
11 carry out this section to establish at one or more eli-
12 gible institutions a pilot project that will—

13 “(A) develop, or support an existing, re-
14 gional cheese-making resource center with the
15 technical assistance and electronic resource ca-
16 pabilities to provide small cheese producers with
17 financial, marketing, food safety, and produc-
18 tion assistance;

19 “(B) support a group of experienced cheese
20 producers or subject matter experts (as deter-
21 mined by the Secretary) to advise beginning
22 cheese producers; and

23 “(C) establish, or grow an existing, na-
24 tional cheese-making resource center to act as

1 a clearinghouse for best practices applicable to
2 small cheese producers.

3 “(2) REQUIREMENTS.—To be eligible to receive
4 funding to establish a pilot project described in
5 paragraph (1), an eligible institution shall dem-
6 onstrate to the Secretary—

7 “(A) the capacity and technical expertise
8 to provide the services described in that para-
9 graph;

10 “(B) the support of the eligible institution
11 in the agricultural community; and

12 “(C) the availability of resources (in cash
13 or in kind) of definite value to achieve the goal
14 and sustain the mission of the pilot project.

15 “(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
16 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
17 \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023,
18 to remain available until expended.”.

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