

## CHAPTER 40

AN ACT concerning the New Jersey “Farm to School” Program and supplementing Title 4 of the Revised Statutes.

**BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

C.4:10-25.2b “Best in New Jersey ‘Farm to School’ Awards Program.”

1. a. The Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Department of Education and any agricultural or farming organization as determined appropriate by the Department of Agriculture, shall establish an awards program to be known as the “Best in New Jersey ‘Farm to School’ Awards Program.”

The program shall annually recognize schools or school districts with outstanding achievements in the incorporation of farm-to-school principles into their school meal and snack programs, including, but not limited to:

- (1) innovative use of local farm produce and products in a school;
- (2) outstanding and consistent high levels of nutritional balance and excellence in the use of farm produce and products in a school; and
- (3) quantifiable increases in pupil awareness of the contribution of farmers and farms to the quality of a school’s meal or snack program.

b. The department shall establish an application procedure and criteria and guidelines for the eligibility, nomination, and judging of applications for the awards program. Applications shall be evaluated using performance criteria, including but not limited to: (1) incorporation of department farm-to-school principles and measurable increase and documentation of the use of farm produce and products in the school or school district; (2) education and outreach concerning the nutritional importance of fresh produce and food products and the connection of a school or school district to farms and farmers in the State; (3) leadership and innovation by the school or school district; (4) exceedance of nutritional requirements of the school breakfast program or school lunch program; and (5) increased participation in the school breakfast program or school lunch program.

c. The department shall post the names of the recipients of the “Best in New Jersey ‘Farm to School’ Awards” prominently on the department’s website, and shall recognize the recipients through the award of a certificate, a press announcement, or another form of recognition deemed appropriate to highlight the achievements of these recipients. The department may coordinate with the Department of Education and any agricultural or farming organization as determined appropriate by the Department of Agriculture, in recognizing the award recipients.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 25, 2014.