

## STATE OF MAINE

—

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND AND THIRTEEN

—

S.P. 120 - L.D. 287

**An Act To Improve Funding of Agricultural Development Projects**

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §306-A, sub-§3**, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 72, §5, is amended to read:

**3. Rulemaking.** The commissioner shall establish, by rule, in a manner consistent with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter ~~H-A~~ 2-A criteria for the allocation of grant money, application requirements consistent with the provisions of this section, a schedule for accepting and reviewing applications, reporting requirements on grant expenditures and project results and any other administrative requirements necessary for the efficient implementation of this program. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are ~~routine technical~~ major substantive rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter ~~H-A~~ 2-A. The commissioner is guided by the following criteria:

A. Applications may be submitted by individuals, firms or organizations in response to a request for proposals for competitive grants. The commissioner may also contract directly with individuals, firms or organizations for a special project under section 307;

B. ~~At least 25%~~ A percentage of the total cost of any project must be funded by the applicant or applicants and ~~at least 10%~~ a percentage of the total cost must be funded from nonpublic sources. These percentages must be established by rule. A single grant may not exceed ~~20%~~ 50% of the total funds available to be granted in a given year; ~~however, in no case may a single grant exceed \$30,000;~~

C. Information relative to market research or development activities provided to the commissioner prior to formal application, included in grant applications or provided to the commissioner to fulfill reporting requirements is confidential information and may not be publicly disclosed by the commissioner as long as:

(1) The person to whom the information belongs or pertains has requested that certain information be designated as confidential; and

(2) The commissioner has determined that the information gives the person making the request opportunity to obtain business or competitive advantage over another person who does not have access to the information or will result in loss of business or other significant detriment to the person making the request if access is provided to others; and

D. When possible, the commissioner shall award grants to applicants representing diverse agricultural enterprises and geographic areas of the State.

**Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §306-A, sub-§4**, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 72, §5, is amended to read:

**4. Advisory committee.** The commissioner shall establish the Agricultural Development Committee to evaluate market and production development competitive grant applications and review project results.

**Sec. 3. 7 MRSA §307**, as amended by PL 1999, c. 72, §6, is further amended to read:

**§307. Special projects**

The commissioner may contract directly with the University of Maine System or qualified individuals, firms or organizations for market research, for testing new technologies and for research on ~~pressing, short-term~~ technical problems related to the production, marketing, storage and processing of agricultural commodities.