

**§219. Food self-sufficiency**

**1. Farm labor link network.** The department shall maintain an agricultural jobs network linking farms and facilities processing agricultural products grown in the State with available workers who wish to work on a farm or in a local food industry. An available worker under this subsection may include a person involved in raising, processing, preparing or preserving food or who is required to perform community service as a low-income recipient of state supplemental income benefits or under a court order. The department shall coordinate with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension to identify farms and food processing facilities willing to participate in the network and coordinate with the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Department of Corrections and the Judicial Department in identifying available workers willing to participate in the network. If a worker participating in the network wishes to pursue additional training or a career in agriculture or food production, the department shall refer the person to available resources or programs that train workers or develop skills or business practices in farming, food production or food processing. A worker may meet the requirements for community service obligations under a state supplemental income benefits program, judicial order or alternative sentencing program by performing work on a farm or food processing facility through participation in the network under this subsection.

[PL 2015, c. 347, §1 (NEW).]

**2. Educational marketing campaign.** The department shall coordinate with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, the Maine Community College System, the Department of Labor, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Economic and Community Development to conduct an educational marketing campaign to promote food self-sufficiency by encouraging the public to grow gardens, raise farm animals, preserve garden-grown food and engage in other local food cultivation initiatives through the use of multiple media including social media, radio advertising, posters, brochures and publicly accessible department websites.

[PL 2015, c. 347, §1 (NEW).]

**3. Local purchases for food programs.** If the department, as part of a public-private partnership, purchases food for an emergency or supplemental food program for elderly or low-income persons, the department to the extent practicable shall purchase food that is grown, harvested, prepared, processed or produced in the State.

[PL 2015, c. 347, §1 (NEW).]

**4. Existing resources.** The department shall use existing programs and resources in carrying out the purposes of this section.

[PL 2015, c. 347, §1 (NEW).]

**SECTION HISTORY**

PL 2015, c. 347, §1 (NEW).

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