

HB2747



96TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2009 and 2010

HB2747

Introduced 2/24/2009, by Rep. Tom Cross

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

505 ILCS 82/5

Amends the Food and Agriculture Research Act. Makes a technical change in a Section concerning the legislative purposes of the Act.

LRB096 07759 JDS 17860 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning agriculture.

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

4 Section 5. The Food and Agriculture Research Act is amended
5 by changing Section 5 as follows:

6 (505 ILCS 82/5)

7 Sec. 5. Findings. It is the ~~the~~ intent of this Act to
8 provide a solid base of State funding for public food and
9 agricultural research programs in Illinois while fostering
10 public confidence in this research through public
11 participation. Blessed with rich agricultural soils and a
12 favorable agricultural climate, Illinois traditionally ranks
13 fourth or fifth among the States in the nation's gross
14 agricultural production. The food and agricultural sector,
15 employing nearly 20% of the State's workers, is committed to
16 providing safe, nutritious, high-quality, affordable, and
17 convenient agricultural products and services to Illinois
18 citizens. Compared with all other states, however, Illinois
19 faces a tremendous challenge to meet its needs for ongoing
20 adequate research investments that improve human health while
21 protecting and enhancing its natural resources and
22 environment. Without adequate State funding, the food and
23 agricultural sector faces the consequences of falling behind in

1 information, projects, and programs affecting human lives and
2 the demand for improved nutrition, food quality, human health,
3 and environment.

4 Currently, the State's agricultural universities conduct
5 research that provides basic information about the structure
6 and function of food and agricultural systems. Although these
7 agricultural institutions have a remarkable record of
8 contributions to an improved food and agricultural sector,
9 their research is significantly underfunded. The State's
10 Agricultural Experiment Station, maintained as the food and
11 agricultural research facilities and program of the University
12 of Illinois, ranks only 29th in state funding among the state
13 agricultural experiment stations. Southern Illinois University
14 at Carbondale, Illinois State University, and Western Illinois
15 University also conduct food and agricultural research but
16 receive no State appropriated fund allocations. This
17 underfunding represents a missed opportunity for Illinois and
18 places it in poor competitive position with other important
19 agricultural states. The State's consumers and producers reap
20 high returns from existing public investment in food and
21 agricultural research, with a pretax return of 40%, the highest
22 among publicly supported research activities.

23 Illinois needs mechanisms that allow publicly supported
24 researchers to work closely with farmers, agribusiness,
25 consumers, conservationists, environmentalists, and other key
26 decision-makers. Together, these groups can identify

1 challenges and opportunities for researchers before they
2 conduct research and transfer the information and technology.
3 This will allow Illinois to retain its prominence as a leading
4 agricultural state.

5 The Illinois Council on Food and Agricultural Research
6 (C-FAR) is a statewide coalition committed to funding relevant
7 and high-quality research and related outreach programs
8 leading to profitable, consumer-sensitive, and environmentally
9 sound food and agricultural systems. The intent of this Act is
10 to secure funds to support targeted research initiatives so
11 that Illinois will continue to meet tomorrow's food and
12 agricultural needs while using our natural resources
13 responsibly.

14 The General Assembly of Illinois hereby:

15 (1) Identifies food and agricultural research as a
16 critically important activity with great public benefits.

17 (2) Identifies the State's agricultural universities
18 responsible for basic, developmental, and adaptive
19 research related to the food and agricultural sector; and

20 (3) Authorizes the expenditure of State funds to
21 enlarge, improve, and sustain the publicly supported
22 programs of food and agricultural research in Illinois.

23 (Source: P.A. 89-182, eff. 7-19-95.)