

Section 6C. (a) There shall be established a Massachusetts food policy council, hereinafter referred to as the council. The council shall consist of 17 members, 1 of whom shall be a member of the house of representatives; 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate; 1 of whom shall be a member of the house of representatives who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of agricultural resources, or the commissioner's designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of public health, or the commissioner's designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of elementary and secondary education, or the commissioner's designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of environmental protection, or the commissioner's designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of transitional assistance or the commissioner's designee; 1 of whom shall be the secretary of housing and economic development, or the secretary's designee; and 7 of whom shall be appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be a farmer or representative of a farm organization, 1 of whom shall represent food distribution, processing and marketing interests, 1 of whom shall represent direct-to-consumer marketing efforts, 1 of whom shall represent a local health department addressing food safety and nutrition, 1 of whom shall be an expert in food safety, 1 of whom shall be an expert in food processing and handling and 1 of whom shall represent community-based efforts addressing nutrition and public health.

(b) Members of the council shall be appointed for terms of 3 years or until a successor is appointed. Members shall be eligible for reappointment. The chair of the council shall be elected by the members of the council for a term not to exceed 2 years. In the event of a vacancy, the original appointing authority shall, within 60 days of the occurrence of a vacancy, appoint a new member in accordance with

subsection (a) to fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term. Members of the council shall serve without compensation. The council may request administrative support from the department.

(c) The council shall have an advisory committee. The council shall appoint members to the advisory committee and the committee shall include, but not be limited to, the following members: 2 of whom shall be active farmers or who shall represent farmer associations; 1 of whom shall represent an organization engaged in farmland protection and conservation; 1 of whom shall represent an organization engaged in developing new farm businesses, urban and community supported agriculture, community gardening, immigrant and refugee farming or youth education through agriculture; 1 of whom shall represent the cooperative extension service at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; 1 of whom shall represent food distribution, processing and marketing interests; 1 of whom shall represent a school of nutrition or public health; 1 of whom shall represent a community-based coalition or health care provider addressing obesity and chronic disease; 1 of whom shall represent citizens in need of transitional assistance; and 1 of whom shall represent an anti-hunger organization. The council may create other committees as it deems necessary to carry out the purpose of this section. The advisory committee and any other committees shall serve at the direction of the council.

(d)(1) The purpose of the council shall be to develop recommendations to advance the following food system goals for the commonwealth: (A) increased production, sales and consumption of Massachusetts-grown foods; (B) the development and promotion of programs that deliver healthy Massachusetts-grown foods to Massachusetts residents, through programs such as: (i) targeted state subsidies; (ii) increased state purchasing of local products for school and summer meals and other child and adult care programs; (iii) double coupon initiatives; (iv) direct

market subsidies to communities with identified needs; (v) increased institutional purchases of Massachusetts-grown foods and other programs to make access to healthy Massachusetts products affordable, and (vi) increased access to healthy Massachusetts-grown foods in communities with disproportionate burdens of obesity and chronic diseases; (C) the protection of the land and water resources required for sustained local food production; and (D) the training, retention and recruitment of farmers and providing for the continued economic viability of local food production, processing and distribution in the commonwealth.

(2) Recommendations the council shall consider shall include, but shall not be limited to, methods by which the following may contribute to achieving the food system goals: (i) increased collaboration and communication between state agencies; (ii) increased collaboration and communication between state and federal agencies; (iii) innovative public-private partnerships; (iv) institutional purchasing agreements; (v) changes to state or federal laws or regulations; (vi) changes in the manner in which state and federal programs are implemented; and (7) additional federal, state, local or private investments.

(3) Recommendations of the council shall include benchmarks and criteria for measuring progress towards achieving each goal. In developing its recommendations, the council shall solicit public input through public hearings or informational sessions. The council may conduct research and analysis as needed and invite additional stakeholder participation through its advisory committee or other committees to address issues identified by the council as requiring further study or particular expertise. The council shall review progress made on each of its recommendations based upon the benchmarks and criteria developed.

(e) The council shall submit an annual report of its findings, conclusions, proposals, recommendations and progress towards reaching benchmarks provided in subsection (d) not later than December 31. The report shall be submitted to the governor, the president of the senate, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the joint committee on public health, the chairs of the joint committee on environment, natural resources and agriculture, the clerk of the house of representatives and the clerk of the senate.

(f) The council shall meet periodically at the call of the chair, but not less than 4 times annually. All meetings shall be public.

(g) The council shall keep a public record of all meetings, votes and other business.