

# BILL TITLE:

# Florida Agricultural Reimbursement for Meals (FARM) II Act



<https://www.farmtoinstitute.com/advocacy>

## SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE

This Act may be cited as the "Florida Agricultural Reimbursement for Meals (FARM) II Act."

## SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Act is to promote the integration of locally produced Florida commodities into school and healthcare facility meal programs by providing financial incentives through a reimbursement mechanism, or allocation based on average school meal enrollment. This initiative aims to support local agriculture, improve the nutritional quality of meals served, and stimulate the state's economy.

## SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Act:

1. **"Locally Produced Commodity"** means agricultural products grown and produced within the state of Florida.
2. **"Eligible Meal"** means a meal served by a public school or institution that includes at least one *serving (meeting age appropriate, USDA guidelines) of a locally produced commodity.*
3. **"Reimbursement Amount"** means the amount of 20 cents per meal that includes a locally produced commodity.

## SECTION 4. REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

1. **Establishment of the Reimbursement Program** The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) or Agency for Healthcare Administration (ACHA) or Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) shall establish a reimbursement program to provide financial incentives to eligible schools and healthcare facilities that include locally produced commodities in their meal programs.
2. **Eligibility Requirements** To be eligible for reimbursement, schools and healthcare facilities must: a. Serve meals that include at least one serving as established by USDA guidelines of locally produced commodity. b. Submit documentation verifying the inclusion of locally produced commodities in the meals served. c. Comply with all reporting requirements established by FDACS or AHCA or FLDOE.
3. **Reimbursement Amount** Eligible schools and institutions shall receive a reimbursement of 20 cents per meal for each meal served that includes qualifying serving size of a locally produced commodity.
4. **Application and Payment Process** a. Schools and healthcare facilities shall apply for reimbursement through a designated application process established by FDACS and/or FLDOE and/or ACHA. The department(s) shall process and approve reimbursement claims and issue payments in a timely manner, subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

## SECTION 5. FUNDING

### 1. Appropriation of Funds

The Legislature shall appropriate funds annually to the department(s) processing reimbursement for the implementation of the reimbursement program established under this Act.

### 2. Use of Funds

Funds appropriated for the reimbursement program shall be used exclusively for providing reimbursements to eligible schools and healthcare facilities with up to standard amount for administrative cost.

## SECTION 6. REPORTING AND EVALUATION

### 1. Annual Report

2. The department(s) shall prepare an annual report detailing the effectiveness of the reimbursement program, including the number of meals reimbursed, the impact on local agriculture, and any recommendations for program improvements.

### 3. Evaluation

4. The report shall be submitted to the Governor, the Legislature, and other relevant stakeholders (FARM II committee which is to include 9 parties) by December 1st each year.

## SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025, or as otherwise provided by law.