

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 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Farmer
5 Equity and Innovation Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. In this Act:

7 "Limited resource farmer" means a farmer who has a total
8 household income at or below the national poverty level for a
9 family of 4, or less than 50% of the county median household
10 income in each of the previous 2 years.

11 "Socially disadvantaged farmer" means a farmer who has
12 been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudices because of their
13 identity as a member of a group without regard to their
14 individual qualities.

15 Section 10. Farmer Equity and Innovation Center.

16 (a) Subject to appropriation by the General Assembly and
17 approval by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, the
18 Farmer Equity and Innovation Center is created at the
19 University of Illinois Extension.

20 (b) The Farmer Equity and Innovation Center shall:

21 (1) ensure the continued economic viability of
22 small-scale and moderate-scale diversified farms by

1 creating a coordinated, statewide program to support the
2 operators of those farms, prioritizing limited resource
3 farmers and socially disadvantaged farmers;

4 (2) establish a Farmer Equity and Innovation Program
5 administered by the Center;

6 (3) utilize the University of Illinois Small Farm
7 Advisors, and require the University to increase its Small
8 Farm Advisor positions to 6 in number;

9 (4) include applied research on specified subjects
10 concerning farming in Illinois, outreach regarding those
11 subjects, and informational services on assistance
12 provided by or through the Center or nonprofit
13 organizations designated by the Center;

14 (5) authorize the Program to include special training
15 for new and beginning farmers, with priority given to
16 socially disadvantaged farmers; and

17 (6) conduct a study to determine and issue an annual
18 report to the Governor and General Assembly containing a
19 demographic breakdown of farmers who participate in the
20 Program.