

As Introduced

**136th General Assembly
Regular Session
2025-2026**

S. B. No. 288

**Senator Hicks-Hudson
Cosponsors: Senators Craig, Smith**

To create the Ohio Food and Agriculture Policy	1
Council and to make an appropriation.	2

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. (A) The Ohio Food and Agriculture Policy	3
Council is created to make recommendations to the General	4
Assembly regarding food systems that strengthen the state's food	5
and farm economies. The Council shall engage in advocacy,	6
education, and policy work to enhance the health and wellness of	7
the citizens of Ohio and to encourage the sustainability of	8
natural resources.	9
(B) The Council shall consist of the Director of	10
Agriculture or the Director's designee and all of the following	11
members appointed by the Governor:	12
(1) One member who represents the Ohio Hospital	13
Association;	14
(2) One member who represents Ohio State University	15
Extension;	16
(3) One member who represents Central State University	17
Extension;	18

(4) Three members who represent the Ohio Farm Bureau;	19
(5) One member who represents urban farming;	20
(6) One member who represents rural farming;	21
(7) One member who represents statewide food banks;	22
(8) One member who is a registered lobbyist who represents Ohio cooperatives.	23 24
(C) (1) The Governor shall make appointments to the Council not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section. The Council shall convene not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section. Each appointed member of the Council shall serve for a four-year term. Each appointed member is subject to removal at the pleasure of the Governor. Any vacancy on the Council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. After the expiration of each appointed member's four-year term, the Council ceases to exist.	25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33
(2) The Council shall be considered a part of the Department of Agriculture for administrative purposes. The Director of Agriculture or the Director's designee shall serve as Chairperson of the Council. The Council may request from the Director, and the Director shall provide, meeting space, assistance, services, and information to enable the Council to carry out its duties.	34 35 36 37 38 39 40
(D) The Council shall develop a statewide plan containing policy and funding recommendations for promoting and supporting an equitable, healthy, and sustainable food system on the state and local level. The Council shall engage in educational outreach and shall make recommendations to the General Assembly as needed. The Council also shall compile and deliver, not later than the first day of March each year, an annual report to the	41 42 43 44 45 46 47

General Assembly detailing the Council's recommendations	48
concerning all of the following topics:	49
(1) Food security;	50
(2) Food access;	51
(3) Food production and distribution;	52
(4) Food waste;	53
(5) Economic development;	54
(6) Food procurement;	55
(7) Food chain workers;	56
(8) Food systems resilience.	57
Section 2. All items in this act are hereby appropriated	58
as designated out of any moneys in the state treasury to the	59
credit of the designated fund. For all operating appropriations	60
made in this act, those in the first column are for fiscal year	61
2026 and those in the second column are for fiscal year 2027.	62
The operating appropriations made in this act are in addition to	63
any other operating appropriations made for these fiscal years.	64
Section 3.	65
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A	AGR DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE			
B	General Revenue Fund			
C	GRF 700514 Special Projects		\$500,000	\$0
D	TOTAL GRF General Revenue Fund		\$500,000	\$0

E	TOTAL ALL BUDGET FUND GROUPS	\$500,000	\$0
	SPECIAL PROJECTS		67
	The foregoing appropriation item 700514, Special Projects,		68
	shall be used to support the activities of the Ohio Food and		69
	Agriculture Policy Council established under Section 1 of this		70
	act.		71
	Section 4. Within the limits set forth in this act, the		72
	Director of Budget and Management shall establish accounts		73
	indicating the source and amount of funds for each appropriation		74
	made in this act, and shall determine the manner in which		75
	appropriation accounts shall be maintained. Expenditures from		76
	operating appropriations contained in this act shall be		77
	accounted for as though made in, and are subject to all		78
	applicable provisions of, H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly.		79