

P.L. 2023, CHAPTER 87, *approved June 30, 2023*
Assembly, No. 5209

1 **AN ACT** establishing the Agritourism Fund and requiring an
2 appropriation to the fund of \$2.5 million annually from the
3 General Fund, and supplementing chapter 1A of Title 34 of the
4 Revised Statutes and making an appropriation.

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6 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
7 of New Jersey:

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9 1. a. As used in this section:

10 “Agritourism” means a form of commercial enterprise that links
11 agricultural production or agricultural processing with tourism to
12 attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, winery, brewery, or other
13 agricultural business for the purpose of entertaining or educating
14 the visitors and generating income for the farm, ranch, winery,
15 brewery, or agricultural business owner.

16 b. There is established in the Department of State a nonlapsing
17 revolving fund to be known as the “Agritourism Fund,” to be held
18 separate and apart from all other funds of the State. The Division of
19 Travel and Tourism shall administer the fund and ensure that
20 monies deposited in the fund, and any interest earned thereon, shall
21 be used for the purpose of making grants to New Jersey businesses
22 involved in agritourism. The division shall award grants annually
23 through a process established by the division.

24 c. There shall be appropriated annually from the General Fund
25 to the Department of State the sum of \$2.5 million for deposit in the
26 “Agritourism Fund” to effectuate the purposes and objectives of this
27 section. Any unspent monies in the fund shall be carried forward.

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29 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
30 Department of State the sum of \$2,500,000 for deposit in the
31 “Agritourism Fund” to effectuate the purposes and objectives of this
32 act, P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

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34 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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37 **STATEMENT**

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39 This bill provides a recurring source of funding for agritourism,
40 a significant part of farm-related revenue in New Jersey.

1 This bill defines “agritourism” as a form of commercial
2 enterprise that links agricultural production or agricultural
3 processing with tourism to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch,
4 winery, brewery, or other agricultural business for the purpose of
5 entertaining or educating visitors and generating income for the
6 farm, ranch, winery, brewery, or agricultural business owner. This
7 bill would establish the “Agritourism Fund” and require an
8 appropriation to the fund of \$2.5 million annually from the General
9 Fund. The Division of Travel and Tourism in the Department of
10 State would administer the fund and dispense grants to New Jersey
11 businesses involved in agritourism.

12 According to data from the National Agricultural Statistics
13 Service’s 2017 Census of Agriculture, New Jersey ranks seventh
14 nationally in the percent of farm revenue derived from agritourism,
15 with agritourism accounting for over a fifth of the State’s total farm
16 revenue. However, the number of New Jersey farms participating in
17 agritourism has declined from the last census count, highlighting
18 the importance of supporting farms and other agricultural
19 businesses that participate in agritourism and ensuring that as many
20 New Jersey agricultural businesses as possible can benefit from the
21 income agritourism generates. New Jersey’s rich agricultural
22 history, and its official nickname, the Garden State, are worthy of
23 continued investment.

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28 Establishes Agritourism Fund; requires annual appropriation of
29 \$2.5 million from General Fund; appropriates \$2.5 million.