

HB 2044 -- MEAT PRODUCTION JUSTICE GRANT PROGRAM

SPONSOR: Weber

Subject to appropriation, this bill establishes the "Meat Production Justice Grant Program" within the Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority within the Department of Agriculture to provide incentives to beef and pork producers to adhere to sustainable production practices that promote social, economic, and environmental justice. Any beef producer who maintains Beef Quality Assurance Certification and meets certain criteria or any pork producer who maintains Pork Quality Assurance Plus Certification and meets certain criteria is eligible for a grant under the Program to fund facility improvements and other facility or operation needs.

The Authority must post on the Authority's website the eligibility criteria for the Grant Program, the contents of the grant application, and the procedures and timelines by which producers may apply for grants.

The Authority must enter into a grant agreement as specified in the bill with each beef or pork producer receiving a grant. If a beef or pork producer breaches the written grant agreement by not satisfactorily meeting all standards for certification required, the Authority must develop a corrective action plan and any producers who do not comply with the corrective action plan will lose access to the Grant Program and pay back all money received that fiscal year.

The Department of Natural Resources must notify the Authority of a producer's violations of environmental laws or regulations and any citation for such violations issued to the producer. Upon notification, the Authority must develop steps for the producer to resolve the violations or citations under a corrective plan.

This bill creates the "Meat Production Justice Grant Program Fund", which will be used solely for awarding grants and administering the "Meat Production Justice Grant Program".

This bill is the same as HB 1100 (2023).