



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #: 23-1426, Version: 1**

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **CELEBRATING THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE IN COOK COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, Illinois is home to more than 71,000 farms, 96 percent of which are family-owned; and

**WHEREAS**, Illinois agriculture and related industries support nearly 482,000 jobs and generates nearly \$51 billion; and

**WHEREAS**, Agriculture includes the growing, raising, and harvesting of crops for both human and animal consumption as well as the raising of livestock; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County is home to more than 12,000 acres of farmland; and

**WHEREAS**, Agriculture contributes nearly \$20 million to Cook County economy; and

**WHEREAS**, Over four percent of Cook County's total workforce is employed in an agricultural-related job including food handling and processing; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County agriculture includes vegetable, floriculture, grain, nursery, and row crop production as well as livestock; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County's agricultural landscape includes horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys; and

**WHEREAS**, According to the United States Department of Agriculture 2017 Census of Agriculture, Cook County is ranked second in the state for equine production with a sales volume of over \$1.5 million; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County ranks twelfth in the state for nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod production; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County is home to numerous examples of urban agriculture including the raising, cultivation, processing, marketing, and distribution of food in urban and suburban settings; and

**WHEREAS**, Urban agriculture generally involves outdoor and indoor vertical production, indoor warehouse farms, greenhouses, rooftop farms, hydroponic and aquaponic facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, Over two percent of Cook County farms are certified organic by the United States Department of Agriculture; and

**WHEREAS**, Over 15 percent of Cook County farmers sell directly to consumers at farmstands, roadside markets, farmers markets and through community support agriculture; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook and Illinois farmers grow healthy and nutritious food; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County farmers recognize that too many individuals suffer from food insecurity and encourage farmers to partner with food banks, food recovery organizations, and other food distribution organizations; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County Farm Bureau developed a program to purchase and deliver food and member donations to partner food pantries; to encourage online engagement to raise awareness of area food pantries, their needs, and service areas; and a grant program for local food pantries to expand their food offerings or facility in light of the unprecedented need due to the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, Farm Bureau volunteers partnered with over 70 community partners to assist over 7,400 individuals with their food needs; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook and Illinois farmers have made meaningful contributions toward water quality improvements; and

**WHEREAS**, Through the science-based framework provided by the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy, Cook County and Illinois farmers are using research, technology and industry experience to assess and reduce nutrient loss to Illinois waters and to the Gulf of Mexico; and

**WHEREAS**, Using tools and technology to better manage soil nutrients, field time and air quality, farmers are using fewer natural resources and reducing their carbon footprint while producing food; and

**WHEREAS**, Farmland is a finite resource that is vital to agriculture, food production, and the economic well-being of Cook County; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners recognize the value agriculture contributes to the local economy and support agriculture within the county; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a suitable copy of this resolution be tendered to the Cook County Farm Bureau®.