

GOVERNOR'S EMERGENCY COMMISSION ON FOOD

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The Purpose of the Commission

1. To develop programs and policies which will provide an adequate supply of food for Vermont residents at reasonable and justifiable prices.
2. To develop programs and policies to restore and create a strong food production economy in Vermont.
3. To encourage actions that will improve the competitive position of the Vermont food economy.

The Need for the Commission

Never in the history of the United States have we witnessed such an emergency in terms of the supply and the price of food. Never have food prices spiraled so high. There are people in this country who are finding it difficult to afford to eat.

While the major decisions affecting food will be made at the national and international level, the crisis is so serious that we in Vermont must take action ^{the state} at a ~~local~~ level to protect our consumers and to maximize our own food production.

Since the end of World War II, Vermont has had a major restructuring of her food production industry. In times of abundant food supplies and low prices, we spent little time evaluating our food programs and policies. Major changes have now occurred in the food market not only in the United States but throughout the world. We must now re-examine our entire food production system. We must reach out for new ideas and new techniques. We must re-evaluate Vermont's position in the market place, especially our dependence on external sources of food and the high price that this dependence demands.

What is the Commission?

The Commission set by up Executive Order will consist of a ^{CHAIRPERSON} chairman, an executive director and a number of outstanding citizens of Vermont drawn from a representative spectrum of interests including consumers, workers, farmers, retailers, wholesalers, academics, businessmen, and government officials.

The Commission will attempt to look at every aspect of the food system including production, transportation, marketing, government institutions, and consumer policies.

To achieve this end, the Commission may set up ^{Five} ~~six~~ task forces in each of the above-mentioned areas. Each task force will have a chairperson who will be one of the members of the Commission.

Possible Task Force Objectives

1. Food Production and Supply

Basic objective: To determine the feasibility and identify the means for increasing food production in Vermont consistent with the needs and interests of all citizens.

2. Transportation, Distribution, Storage and Logistics

Basic objectives:

- (1) To determine ways to reduce food costs through more efficient transportation and storage of food products and animal feed.
- (2) Determine the feasibility of a water borne transportation system in comparison with other modes.

- (3) Examine the need for policies which would improve the competitive position of trucking.
- (4) Study the possibility of group buying by all participants in the food system in order to utilize multiple unit trains and reduce unit transportation costs.
- (5) Determine the feasibility of constructing a grain storage and other storage facilities in Vermont and determine the optimum location of such facilities.
- (6) Examine the logistics of the major components of the food and feed system.

3. Marketing

Basic objectives:

- (1) To determine the ways in which more effective marketing methods and government policies can improve the quality of food products and services to the consumer at the lowest prices possible.
- (2) Analyze marketing methods utilized by wholesale and retail food distributors with respect to costs and the level of service provided to consumers.
- (3) Evaluate the quality of the food supply.
- (4) Examine the possibilities for reducing marketing costs and food prices through increased productivity and reduced waste from farm supply to ultimate consumption.

4. Government Institutions and Structures

Basic objectives:

- (1) To determine how federal and state government can be structured to

facilitate the production and economic distribution of a food supply that adequately fulfills the needs of all consumers.

- (2) Examine the functions of federal and state government institutions as they relate to food production and distribution.

5. Food Prices and Consumer Policies

Basic objectives:

- (1) To identify programs and policies that will insure that all Vermont consumers receive a nutritious, wholesome food supply.
- (2) Evaluate the need to improve the nutritional content of the food supply and the need to provide educational and other programs to bring about nutritionally adequate diets for all consumers.
- (3) Appraise current administrative, legal and market practices to insure adequate inspection of food establishments, adequate information for food buying decisions and fair pricing and selling methods.
- (4) Identify ways to reach the disadvantaged through marketing innovations and special programs in order to provide them with the opportunity to obtain an adequate supply of food.
- (5) Review federal and state regulations relating to the production, processing and distribution of food and identify new or modified legislation required to assure consumers of maximum benefits from the food system.
- (6) Provide the means for participants in the food system and consumer representatives to continue the interchange that we hope to develop with this Commission.