

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1999**

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**HOUSE BILL 1623\***

Short Title: Reauthorize Small Family Farm Preservation Commission. (Public)

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Sponsors: Representatives Mitchell; Culp, McMahan, and Setzer.

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Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

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May 18, 2000

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED**

**AN ACT TO REAUTHORIZE THE COMMISSION ON SMALL FAMILY FARM PRESERVATION.**

Whereas, the Commission on Small Family Farm Preservation has diligently been addressing issues related to the preservation of small family farms in this State; and

Whereas, the Commission was unable to initiate its work until the 1999-2000 Interim due to the unanticipated length of the 1998 Regular Session; and

Whereas, the preservation of small family farms is of vital importance to the well-being of rural North Carolina; and

Whereas, the Commission has identified several areas of potential action to benefit the State's small family farmers that require more study for the crafting of meaningful proposals; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. The Commission on Small Family Farm Preservation is created in the General Assembly. The Commission may study any issue related to the preservation of small family farms in the State.

Section 2. The Commission on Small Family Farm Preservation shall develop a proposal for the establishment of a small farm center that will promote the economic viability of small family farms by:

- 1 (1) Providing information to small farmers on products, production  
2 methods, and marketing strategies that may increase the farmers' profit  
3 margins, including production systems in which smaller farms  
4 potentially have the advantage over larger farms.
- 5 (2) Providing technical assistance to small farmers in business management  
6 and on-farm problem solving.
- 7 (3) Administering cost-share programs that assist small farmers in  
8 establishing value-added agricultural enterprises, establishing direct-  
9 marketing channels, and converting farming operations to produce  
10 higher-value products.
- 11 (4) Administering a value-added agricultural enterprise incubator that  
12 provides resources and support for individuals and cooperatives seeking  
13 to establish enterprises that will help small farmers and farming  
14 communities capture a greater share of the dollars consumers spend on  
15 food and fiber from agricultural sources.

16 Section 3.(a) The Commission on Small Family Farm Preservation shall consist of  
17 19 members:

- 18 (1) One member of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of  
19 the Senate.
- 20 (2) One member of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of  
21 the Senate.
- 22 (3) One member of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of  
23 the Senate.
- 24 (4) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker  
25 of the House of Representatives.
- 26 (5) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker  
27 of the House of Representatives.
- 28 (6) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker  
29 of the House of Representatives.
- 30 (7) One farmer, appointed by the Governor, who currently operates a well-  
31 managed small family farm in North Carolina.
- 32 (8) One farmer, appointed by the Governor, who currently operates a well-  
33 managed small family farm in North Carolina.
- 34 (9) The Master of the North Carolina State Grange or the Master's designee.
- 35 (10) The President of the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation or the  
36 President's designee.
- 37 (11) The Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services or the  
38 Commissioner's designee.
- 39 (12) The Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources or the Secretary's  
40 designee.
- 41 (13) The Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary's designee.
- 42 (14) The Dean of the School of Agriculture and Life Sciences at North  
43 Carolina State University or the Dean's designee.

- 1 (15) The Dean of the School of Agriculture at North Carolina Agricultural  
2 and Technical State University or the Dean's designee.
- 3 (16) The Dean of the School of Design at North Carolina State University or  
4 the Dean's designee.
- 5 (17) The Dean of the School of Regional Planning at the University of North  
6 Carolina at Chapel Hill or the Dean's designee.
- 7 (18) The Director of the North Carolina Environmental Defense Fund or the  
8 Director's designee.
- 9 (19) The Director of the Southern Environmental Law Center or the  
10 Director's designee.

11 Section 3.(b) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the  
12 House of Representatives shall each designate a member of the General Assembly who is  
13 a member of the Commission as cochair of the Commission. A majority of the  
14 Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

15 Section 4. The Commission on Small Family Farm Preservation shall file a  
16 final report to the 2001 General Assembly. The Commission shall submit its final report  
17 by filing the report with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the  
18 House of Representatives. The final report shall contain the findings, recommendations,  
19 and legislative proposals of the Commission.

20 Section 5. Members appointed to the Commission shall serve until the  
21 Commission makes its final report. Vacancies on the Commission shall be filled by the  
22 same appointing officer who made the original appointments. The Commission shall  
23 terminate upon the filing of its final report.

24 Section 6. The Commission may contract for consultant services as provided  
25 by G.S. 120-32.02. The Commission may obtain assistance from the State's universities.  
26 Upon approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the Legislative Services Officer  
27 shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the work of the Commission.  
28 Clerical staff shall be furnished to the Commission through the offices of the House of  
29 Representatives' and Senate's Supervisors of Clerks. The Commission may meet in the  
30 Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building upon the approval of the  
31 Legislative Services Commission. The Commission, while in the discharge of official  
32 duties, may exercise all the powers authorized by G.S. 120-19 through G.S. 120-19.4.

33 Section 7. Members of the Commission shall receive per diem, subsistence,  
34 and travel allowances as follows:

- 35 (1) Commission members who are also General Assembly members, at the  
36 rate established in G.S. 120-3.1.
- 37 (2) Commission members who are officials or employees of the State or  
38 local government agencies, at the rate established in G.S. 138-6.
- 39 (3) All other Commission members, at the rate established in G.S. 138-5.

40 Section 8. The Commission on Small Family Farm Preservation shall file a  
41 final report to the 2001 General Assembly. The Commission shall submit its final report  
42 by filing the report with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the

1 House of Representatives. The final report shall contain the findings, recommendations,  
2 and legislative proposals of the Commission.

3 Section 9. The sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) is appropriated  
4 from the General Fund for fiscal year 2000-2001 to fund the activities of the Commission  
5 on Small Family Farm Preservation.

6 Section 10. This act is effective when it becomes law.