



Georgia General Assembly Now In Session

The state legislature convened for their annual 40-day session earlier this month. We want you help you stay up to speed and engaged in what's happening under the Gold Dome. Care about possible **new sales tax on groceries**? What about a **statewide farm to school program** so kids can participate? Those topics as well as a **ban on BPA** in food containers and a proposal **change the way school nutrition** is funded in Georgia are all being discussed. All this and even a little action on the **GMO** front.

- [Click here for an update on these and other food and farm issues](#)
- [Click here for a handy tool to help you effectively engage with your state lawmaker](#)
- [Click here to visit the Georgia General Assembly website](#)



Support HB 367

A Bill To Establish a statewide Farm to School Program

Thanks to the bipartisan leadership of several state legislators including the bill's sponsor Jim Pruet (R-Eastman) and Representatives Terry England (R-Winder), Stephanie Stuckey Benfield (D-Decatur), Tom McCall (R-Elberton), Kathy Ashe (D-Atlanta) and Amy Carter (R-Valdosta), we now have a chance to pass legislation to give a big boost to Farm to School in Georgia!

The bill would establish a formal program and farm to school position within the Department of Education, to liaison and support the Farm to School coordinator already on staff and hard at work with the Georgia Department of Agriculture. The Education component is critical because it will better facilitate the purchasing of local, fresh food in school cafeterias and link student's curriculum and lesson plans to nutrition education based on whole, fresh foods.

- [Click here for more more information and action steps](#)

Opportunity: Get Farm to School In Your School District's Wellness Policy

School districts are currently in the process of updating their district wellness policies. Wellness policies provide direction for nutrition education, food served to students and more. Getting farm to school language in to your district's wellness policy would mean your child would learn where food comes from, enjoy locally grown food on the lunchline and even promote work in the school garden and farm tours.

Georgia Organics has developed a helpful tool to empower advocates to act! It covers the basics of what a wellness policy is, how farm to school fits in and even offers themes and suggested language for your school district to consider.



- [Click here to access a helpful tool, including model policy language](#)

Update on the Local Food, Farms and Jobs Act

We need to put the pressure on 11 Georgia Congressmen to Sign on!

As of early January, a total of 63 members of Congress had signed on to the Local Food, Farm Jobs Act. This number includes two Georgia Congressman: Rep. John Lewis (D-5) and Rep. Lou Johnson (D-4).

The [Local Food, Farms and Jobs Act](#) (LFFJA, for short) would provide critical support to local organic farmers, while making healthy, local sustainable food more widely available and accessible around the country. This is a marker bill for the Farm Bill, which means if we drum up enough support and co-sponsors, provisions from this bill would be well-positioned to be incorporated into the Farm Bill.

Will you help by taking these steps?

- [Educate yourself on the specifics of the legislation](#)
- [Reach out to Georgia's other Congressmen and encourage them to sign on](#)

Amendments to the Egg Products Inspection Act Introduced This Week

This week, a bipartisan group of four U.S. representatives, led by veterinarian Kurt Schrader, introduced the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012 at the urging of the United Egg Producers (UEP) and the Humane Society of the U.S. This legislation (H.R. 3798) would essentially double the space per laying hen, ban forced starvation molting of the hens, and create a labeling program to provide consumers with consistent information on production systems (e.g., “eggs from caged hens” and “eggs from cage-free hens” on cartons).

This presents an excellent opportunity to improve the welfare of laying hens as well as encourage more transparency in labeling.

- [Click here to read the legislation](#)
- [Click here to identify your Georgia Congressman and encourage their support](#)

EarthShare of Georgia

Did you know that you can support Georgia Organics in your company's employee giving campaign? You can designate to Georgia Organics through EarthShare of Georgia, and have a small donation taken out of your paycheck which adds up to a significant contribution at the end of the year! [EarthShare of Georgia](#) supports more than 60 environmental member organizations dedicated to conserving and protecting our air, land, and water.

