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Sen. Goodman's Farm Mentoring & Education Fund Bill Advances Through Senate

JEFFERSON CITY— A bill passed through the Senate this week is designed to benefit not only established farmers, but those individuals beginning various agricultural enterprises throughout the state.

Senate Bill 1222, sponsored by Sen. Jack Goodman, R-Mount Vernon, will create the "Farm Mentoring and Education Fund" which will be administered through the University of Missouri extension offices at various locations in the state. The authority will assist and educate aspiring farmers through classroom instruction and mentoring with experienced farmers to help individuals plan and begin sustainable and traditional farm enterprises.

"This will benefit established and beginning farmers alike," said Sen. Goodman, "by providing classroom education, apprenticeships and hands-on training in low-cost diversified farming techniques."

The bill provides up to \$99,000 to the authority per fiscal year, and will involve a different region of the state each year through the University of Missouri extension offices. The authority will promote the program across the state, hoping to reach both full-time farmers and those interested in starting agricultural endeavors.

The provisions of this bill will extend through August 28, 2009.

"This bill will reinvigorate the agricultural community by integrating modern technology with traditional farming techniques," Sen. Goodman said.

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