

175.12 Beginning farmer program.

1. The authority shall develop a beginning farmer loan program to facilitate the acquisition of agricultural land and improvements and depreciable agricultural property by beginning farmers. The authority shall exercise the powers granted to it in this chapter in order to fulfill the goal of providing financial assistance to beginning farmers in the acquisition of agricultural land and agricultural improvements and depreciable agricultural property. The authority may participate in and cooperate with programs of the United States department of agriculture consolidated farm service agency, federal land bank or any other agency or instrumentality of the federal government or with any program of any other state agency in the administration of the beginning farmer loan program and in the making or purchasing of mortgage or secured loans pursuant to this chapter.

2. The authority may participate in any federal programs designed to assist beginning farmers or in any related federal or state programs.

3. The authority shall provide in a beginning farmer loan program that a mortgage or secured loan to or on behalf of a beginning farmer shall be provided only if the following criteria are satisfied:

a. The beginning farmer is a resident of the state. If the beginning farmer is a partnership, all partners shall be residents of the state. If a beginning farmer is a family farm corporation, all shareholders shall be residents of the state. If the beginning farmer is a family farm limited liability company, all members shall be residents of the state.

b. The agricultural land and agricultural improvements or depreciable agricultural property the beginning farmer proposes to purchase will be located in the state.

c. The beginning farmer has sufficient education, training, or experience in the type of farming for which the beginning farmer requests the mortgage or secured loan. If the beginning farmer is a partnership, all partners shall have sufficient education, training, or experience in the type of farming for which the beginning farmer requests the mortgage or secured loan. If the beginning farmer is a family farm corporation, all shareholders who are not minors shall have sufficient education, training, or experience in the type of farming for which the beginning farmer requests the mortgage or secured loan. If the beginning farmer is a family farm limited liability company, all members who are not minors shall have sufficient education, training, or experience in the type of farming for which the beginning farmer requests the mortgage or secured loan.

d. A loan to a beginning farmer for the acquisition of agricultural land and agricultural improvements does not exceed five hundred thousand dollars. A loan to a beginning farmer for the acquisition of depreciable agricultural property does not exceed one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars.

e. If the loan is for the acquisition of agricultural land, the beginning farmer has or will have access to adequate working capital, farm equipment, machinery or livestock. If the loan is for the acquisition of depreciable agricultural property, the beginning farmer has or will have access to adequate working capital or agricultural land.

f. The beginning farmer shall materially and substantially participate in farming. If the beginning farmer is a partnership, family farm corporation, or family farm limited liability company, each partner, shareholder, or member shall materially and substantially participate in farming.

g. If the beginning farmer is an individual, the agricultural land and agricultural improvements shall only be used for farming by the individual, the individual's spouse, or the individual's minor children. If the beginning farmer is a partnership, family farm corporation, or family farm limited liability company, the agricultural land and agricultural improvements shall only be used for farming by any or all of the partners, shareholders, or members, including their spouses and minor children.

h. The beginning farmer has not previously received financing under the program for the acquisition of property similar in nature to the property for which the loan is sought. However, this restriction shall not apply if the amount previously received plus the amount of the loan sought does not exceed five hundred thousand dollars in the case of agricultural land and improvements or one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars in the case of depreciable agricultural property.

i. Other criteria as the authority prescribes by rule.

4. The authority may provide in a mortgage or secured loan made or purchased pursuant to this chapter that the loan may not be assumed or any interest in the agricultural land or improvements or depreciable agricultural property may not be leased, sold or otherwise conveyed without its prior written consent and may provide a due-on-sale clause with respect to the occurrence of any of the foregoing events without its prior written consent. The authority may provide by rule the grounds for permitted assumptions of a mortgage or for the leasing, sale or other conveyance of any interest in the agricultural land or improvements. However, the authority shall provide and state in a mortgage or secured loan that the authority has the power to raise the interest rate of the loan to the prevailing market rate if the mortgage or secured loan is assumed by a farmer who is already established in that field at the time of the assumption of the loan. This provision controls with respect to a mortgage loan made or purchased pursuant to this chapter notwithstanding the provisions of chapter 535.

5. The authority may participate in any interest in any mortgage or secured loan made or purchased pursuant to this chapter with a mortgage lender. The participation interest may be on a parity with the interest in the mortgage or secured loan retained by the authority, equally and ratably secured by the mortgage or securing agreement securing the mortgage or secured loan.

[C81, §175.12; 81 Acts, ch 68, §3, 4]

85 Acts, ch 15, §4, 5; 94 Acts, ch 1118, §4 – 7; 95 Acts, ch 216, §25