

WHEREAS, The State of Michigan is a major producer of more than 200 crops and, in fact, ranks in the top ten in the export of fruits and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, over the last forty years, the proportion of American children who are overweight has increased dramatically; and

WHEREAS, more than 90% of Americans do not eat the recommended five daily servings of fruits and vegetables associated with a healthy diet; and

WHEREAS, a Farm to School Program can provide school children with greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as hands-on educational opportunities about local agriculture and food systems; and

WHEREAS, while school food procurement rules normally require a complex, formal bid process, state and federal laws allow for a small purchase threshold (SPT) that permits a simpler, informal bid process, conducive to purchasing foods directly from local farmers; and

WHEREAS, the federal SPT limit is currently \$100,000, while the State SPT limit is currently set at \$19,650; and

WHEREAS, an increase in the state SPT limit would increase the opportunity for Michigan schools to purchase healthy foods for school children from local farmers; and

WHEREAS, an increase in the state SPT limit would also create new market opportunities for Michigan farmers and keep more dollars within local economies; and

WHEREAS, for every \$1 spent locally, that \$1 impacts three to seven different local businesses before leaving the local economy.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Michigan Commission of Agriculture, that by the adoption of this resolution, the Commission hereby encourages the Michigan Legislature to enact legislation to increase the SPT limit for food purchases in the Michigan School Code; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Michigan Commission of Agriculture transmits copies of this resolution to Governor Granholm, the Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives, and the Michigan Senate Majority Leader.