

By: Miles

H.B. No. 2669

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to the creation of an advisory committee to study urban  
3 farming.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

5 SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. In this Act:

6 (1) "Community garden" means land gardened by a  
7 cooperative group of people residing in a neighborhood or community  
8 for the purpose of providing fresh produce for the benefit of the  
9 residents of the neighborhood or community.

10 (2) "Urban farm" means land used to cultivate,  
11 process, and distribute food in or near an urban area. The term  
12 includes a food plot in a community garden, on an inner-city lot, or  
13 on the property of a school, a fish farm, a municipal composting  
14 facility, an apiary, a garden that provides food for local  
15 restaurants, or an orchard in the yard of a residence.

16 SECTION 2. URBAN FARM ADVISORY COMMITTEE. (a) The  
17 commissioner of agriculture shall establish an advisory committee  
18 to study and provide recommendations to the legislature regarding  
19 urban farms in this state.

20 (b) The advisory committee consists of eight members  
21 appointed by the commissioner of agriculture.

22 (c) In appointing members of the advisory committee, the  
23 commissioner of agriculture shall appoint as a member at least one  
24 person with expertise in property taxation and ensure that the

1 members represent the interests of:

- 2 (1) urban farmers and operators of community gardens;
- 3 (2) municipalities;
- 4 (3) counties; and
- 5 (4) electric and water utilities.

6 (d) An advisory committee member is not entitled to  
7 reimbursement of expenses or to compensation.

8 (e) The advisory committee shall meet not later than the  
9 30th day after the date the initial appointments are made and shall  
10 select a presiding officer. The committee shall meet regularly as  
11 necessary at the call of the presiding officer.

12 (f) The advisory committee shall:

13 (1) investigate the status of urban farms in this  
14 state;

15 (2) recommend:

16 (A) ways the state can assist individuals in  
17 starting and operating urban farms; and

18 (B) ways to reduce the cost of operating an urban  
19 farm in this state, including, if appropriate, the provision of a  
20 property tax credit or exemption for urban farmers; and

21 (3) perform other advisory duties as requested by the  
22 commissioner of agriculture regarding urban farms in this state.

23 (g) Not later than September 1, 2012, the advisory committee  
24 shall submit to the legislature a report outlining:

25 (1) the results of the investigation required by  
26 Subsection (f)(1) of this section; and

27 (2) the recommendations required by Subsection (f)(2)

1 of this section.

2 SECTION 3. INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN LAW. Chapter 2110,  
3 Government Code, does not apply to the advisory committee  
4 established under this Act.

5 SECTION 4. EXPIRATION. The advisory committee established  
6 under this Act is abolished and this Act expires September 1, 2013.

7 SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect  
8 immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members  
9 elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas  
10 Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for  
11 immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2011.