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2 An act relating to agriculture education and  
3 promotion facilities; creating s. 288.1175,  
4 F.S.; providing that the Department of  
5 Agriculture and Consumer Services shall be the  
6 state agency for screening applicants for state  
7 funding and certification as an agriculture  
8 education and promotion facility; providing for  
9 rules; providing definitions; providing  
10 criteria for applicants; providing for  
11 evaluation by the department; providing  
12 criteria; prohibiting the expenditure of funds  
13 to develop or subsidize privately owned  
14 facilities; providing an exception; providing  
15 an effective date.

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17 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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19 Section 1. Section 288.1175, Florida Statutes, is  
20 created to read:

21 288.1175 Agriculture education and promotion  
22 facility.--

23 (1) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer  
24 Services shall serve as the state agency for screening  
25 applicants for state funding pursuant to this section and for  
26 certifying an applicant as a qualified agriculture education  
27 and promotion facility as defined in subsection (3).

28 (2) The department shall develop rules pursuant to ss.  
29 120.536(1) and 120.54 for the receipt and processing of  
30 applications for funding of projects pursuant to this section.

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1           (3) As used in this section, the term "agriculture  
2 education and promotion facility" means an exhibition hall,  
3 arena, civic center, exposition center, or other capital  
4 project or facility which can be used for exhibitions,  
5 demonstrations, trade shows, classrooms, civic events, and  
6 other purposes that promote agriculture, horticulture,  
7 livestock, equestrian, and other resources of the state and  
8 educate the residents as to these resources.

9           (4) The department shall certify a facility as an  
10 agriculture education and promotion facility if the department  
11 determines that:

12           (a) The applicant is a unit of local government as  
13 defined in s. 218.369, or a fair association as defined in s.  
14 616.001(9), which is responsible for the planning, design,  
15 permitting, construction, renovation, management, and  
16 operation of the agriculture education and promotion facility  
17 or holds title to the property on which such facility is to be  
18 developed and located.

19           (b) The applicant has projections, verified by the  
20 department, which demonstrate that the agriculture education  
21 and promotion facility will serve more than 25,000 visitors  
22 annually.

23           (c) The municipality in which the facility is located,  
24 or the county if the facility is located in an unincorporated  
25 area, has certified by resolution after a public hearing that  
26 the proposed agriculture education and promotion facility  
27 serves a public purpose.

28           (d) The applicant has demonstrated that it has  
29 provided, is capable of providing, or has financial or other  
30 commitments to provide more than 40 percent of the costs  
31 incurred or related to the planning, design, permitting,

1 construction, or renovation of the facility. The applicant may  
2 include the value of the land and any improvements thereon in  
3 determining its contribution to the development of the  
4 facility.

5 (5) The department shall competitively evaluate  
6 applications for funding of an agriculture education and  
7 promotion facility. If the number of applicants exceeds three,  
8 the department shall rank the applications based upon criteria  
9 developed by the department, with priority given in descending  
10 order to the following items:

11 (a) The intended use of the funds by the applicant,  
12 with priority given to the construction of a new facility.

13 (b) The amount of local match, with priority given to  
14 the largest percentage of local match proposed.

15 (c) The location of the facility in a brownfield site  
16 as defined in s. 376.79(3), a rural enterprise zone as defined  
17 in s. 290.004(8), an agriculturally depressed area as defined  
18 in s. 570.242(1), a redevelopment area established pursuant to  
19 s. 373.461(5)(g), or a county that has lost its agricultural  
20 land to environmental restoration projects.

21 (d) The net increase, as a result of the facility, of  
22 total available exhibition, arena, or civic center space  
23 within the jurisdictional limits of the local government in  
24 which the facility is to be located, with priority given to  
25 the largest percentage increase of total exhibition, arena, or  
26 civic center space.

27 (e) The historic record of the applicant in promoting  
28 agriculture and educating the public about agriculture,  
29 including, without limitation, awards, premiums, scholarships,  
30 auctions, and other such activities.

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1           (f) The highest projection on paid attendance  
2 attracted by the agriculture education and promotion facility  
3 and the proposed economic impact on the local community.

4           (g) The location of the facility with respect to an  
5 Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) facility,  
6 with priority given to facilities closer in proximity to an  
7 IFAS facility.

8           (6) Funds may not be expended to develop or subsidize  
9 privately owned facilities, except for facilities owned by  
10 fair associations as defined in s. 616.001(9).

11           (7) An applicant may use funds provided pursuant to  
12 this section only for the public purpose of paying for the  
13 planning, design, permitting, construction, or renovation of  
14 an agriculture education and promotion facility or to pay or  
15 pledge for the payment of debt service on, or to fund debt  
16 service reserve funds, arbitrage rebate obligations, or other  
17 amounts payable with respect to, bonds issued for the  
18 planning, design, permitting, construction, or renovation of  
19 such facility or for the reimbursement of such costs or the  
20 refinancing of bonds issued for such purposes.

21           (8) Applications must be submitted by October 1 of  
22 each year. The department may not recommend funding for less  
23 than the requested amount to any applicant certified as an  
24 agriculture education and promotion facility; however, funding  
25 of certified applicants shall be subject to the amount  
26 provided by the Legislature in the General Appropriations Act  
27 for this program.

28           Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
29 law.  
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