

118th CONGRESS
2nd Session

H. R. XXXX

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

[Date]

Mr./Ms. [Name of the Representative] introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on [Committee Name].

A BILL

To establish the National Emergency Dehydrated Food Supply Program to address food waste, enhance food security, and create a sustainable, cost-neutral food reserve that can be deployed during national emergencies or significant market disruptions.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “National Emergency Dehydrated Food Supply Act.”

SECTION 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that:

- (1) Up to 40% of the food supply in the United States is wasted annually, amounting to over 108 billion pounds of food and \$160 billion in value.
- (2) A significant portion of this waste stems from cosmetic standards such as consumer rejection of oddly shaped carrots and yellow plums that lead to the discarding of perfectly edible produce.

- (3) Current private initiatives to rescue mishapen or cosmetically flawed (“visually imperfect”) produce have only managed to recover a small fraction of this food waste.
- (4) The United States lacks a comprehensive, cost-effective emergency food reserve capable of addressing large-scale disruptions in the food supply.
- (5) The use of solar dehydration technology to preserve surplus and visually imperfect produce offers a sustainable, cost-neutral method to build a national food reserve.
- (6) The creation of a National Emergency Dehydrated Food Supply Program will enhance food security, reduce food waste, and contribute to the reduction of the national debt.

SECTION 3. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to establish a National Emergency Dehydrated Food Supply Program to:

- (a) Collect and dehydrate surplus and visually imperfect produce using solar dehydration technology.
- (b) Create a stable, long-lasting food reserve to be deployed in times of national emergency or significant market shortage.
- (c) Reduce food waste and enhance food security without imposing additional costs on taxpayers.
- (d) Utilize revenues generated from the sale of dehydrated food, including guaranteed sales to U.S. food aid programs, to pay back the initial investment, fund the program’s expansion, and contribute to the reduction of the national debt.

SECTION 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY DEHYDRATED FOOD SUPPLY PROGRAM.

- (a) **Program Establishment.** The Secretary of Agriculture (hereafter referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish the National Emergency Dehydrated Food Supply Program (hereafter referred to as the “Program”) to collect, dehydrate, store, and distribute surplus and cosmetically imperfect produce.
- (b) **Subsidiarity Clause.** Any duties, responsibilities, or tasks necessary for the implementation of this Act shall, whenever feasible, be executed by private individuals or entities. Should these duties, responsibilities, or tasks be beyond the capacity of private individuals or entities, they shall be undertaken by the local government. If the local government is unable to fulfill these duties, responsibilities, or tasks, they

shall be undertaken by the state government. Only when these duties, responsibilities, or tasks cannot be fulfilled by private individuals, entities, local government, or state government shall they be executed by the federal government.

- (c) **Public-Private Partnership.** The Program shall be implemented as a hybrid public-private partnership:
 - (1) **Public Mandate.** Grocery stores, farmers, and food distributors shall be required to contribute unsellable but unexpired produce to the Program.
 - (2) **Private Operation.** The Secretary or authorized state or local government authorities shall contract with private entities to manage the dehydration, storage, and sale of dehydrated food, ensuring operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
 - (3) **Guaranteed Sales and Financial Sustainability.** To further strengthen the financial sustainability of the Program, a portion of the dehydrated produce shall be sold to established U.S. food aid programs, including but not limited to Food for Peace (PL 480) and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. This guaranteed sale ensures a steady income stream for the Program, regardless of market demand for dehydrated food in the broader marketplace.
 - (4) **Partnership Opportunities.** Companies that derive a substantial portion of their revenue from selling dehydrated food shall be offered partnership opportunities within the Program. These opportunities may include joint ventures, access to government-subsidized solar dehydration facilities, or participation in research and development initiatives aimed at improving dehydration technology.
- (d) **Revenue Allocation.** The Secretary shall ensure that revenues generated from the sale of dehydrated food are allocated as follows:
 - (1) 100% of the revenues shall first be allocated to paying off the initial investment in the Program, including the costs of constructing solar dehydration facilities and other initial setup expenses.
 - (2) Once the initial investment is fully repaid, the revenues shall be allocated as follows:
 - (a) 50% shall be reinvested into the Program for the construction of additional solar dehydration facilities and other expansion-related activities.
 - (b) 50% shall be allocated to the U.S. Treasury to contribute to the reduction of the national debt.

SECTION 5. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.

- (a) **Partnerships.** The Secretary shall:
 - (1) Forge agreements with grocery stores, farmers, and food distributors to secure a consistent supply of surplus and visually imperfect produce.

- (2) Establish contracts with private entities to manage the dehydration, storage, and distribution of dehydrated food.
 - (3) Establish agreements with U.S. food aid programs, including but not limited to Food for Peace (PL 480) and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, for the purchase of a portion of the dehydrated produce.
- (b) **Infrastructure Development.** The Secretary shall:
- (1) Identify strategic locations for the construction of solar dehydration facilities, with priority given to regions with high levels of surplus produce and optimal sunlight exposure.
 - (2) Oversee the construction and operation of these facilities to ensure they meet all federal safety and environmental standards.
- (c) **Pilot Program.** The Secretary shall initiate a pilot program in select regions within 18 months of the enactment of this Act. The pilot program's results shall be reported to Congress within 36 months of enactment, including recommendations for national expansion.
- (d) **Public Awareness.** The Secretary shall develop and implement a public awareness campaign to educate the public about the Program and the benefits of dehydrated food, especially in emergency situations.
- (e) **Competitive Pricing Model.** The pricing of dehydrated food products produced under the Program shall be set at or above the average market rate to ensure fair competition and to prevent undercutting existing businesses in the market.
- (f) **Market Impact Review.** The Secretary shall conduct an annual review of the Program's impact on the dehydrated food market. Should any negative impacts be identified, adjustments shall be made to the Program's operations or revenue allocation to ensure fair competition.

SECTION 6. EMERGENCY DEPLOYMENT AND USE OF DEHYDRATED FOOD.

- (a) **Declaration of Emergency.** The President may authorize the deployment of the national dehydrated food reserve upon the declaration of a national emergency, disaster, or any circumstance that disrupts the food supply, including but not limited to natural disasters, economic crises, pandemics, or other events that significantly impede access to food for the population.
- (b) **Market Stabilization.** The Secretary may deploy the dehydrated food reserve when there is a substantial and rapid increase in the price of food staples, such as grains,

fruits, vegetables, and proteins, which is not attributable to normal market fluctuations but rather to events such as supply chain disruptions, hoarding, or speculative activities. This deployment is intended to stabilize the market and ensure food availability as a proactive measure.

- (c) **Distribution.** The Secretary shall coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other relevant agencies to ensure the rapid and efficient distribution of dehydrated food to affected areas or markets to prevent or alleviate disruptions in food availability and affordability.

SECTION 7. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

- (a) **Annual Report.** The Secretary shall submit an annual report to Congress detailing the Program's operations, financial performance, and impact on food waste and food security. This report shall include:
 - (1) The amount of produce collected, dehydrated, and stored.
 - (2) The revenue generated and its allocation.
 - (3) The impact on food waste reduction.
 - (4) The quantity of dehydrated produce sold to U.S. food aid programs and the associated revenue.
 - (5) Recommendations for program improvement and expansion.
- (b) **Audit.** The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct an audit of the Program every five years to assess its effectiveness and financial management.

SECTION 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, with the understanding that the Program is intended to be cost-neutral and self-sustaining.

SECTION 9. SUNSET PROVISION.

This Act shall be reviewed by Congress twenty years after its enactment to assess its impact and effectiveness. Congress may reauthorize, amend, or repeal the Act based on this review.

SECTION 10. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this Act and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 11. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect 90 days after the date of its enactment.