

**H.R. 2419, FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007:
FINAL PASSAGE (7/27/2007)**

TITLE I COMMODITIES

SEC. 1106 Planting Flexibility

Maintains the current restrictions that prevent the planting of fruits and vegetables on acres receiving program payments with one exception- creates a pilot program to be carried out in Indiana that allows planting of tomatoes grown from processing.

TITLE II CONSERVATION

SEC. 2105 Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Reauthorizes and amends EQIP and ramps up funding to \$2 billion by 2012. Includes provisions that allow for technical services for producers developing and implemented conservation plans for their operations.

Includes Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) funded at \$250 million over 5 years. Funding: \$5 million is allocated for use each year for outreach for specialty crop producers. Includes initiatives to support air quality improvement and performance incentives. Funding: \$10 million in '08, \$15 million in '09, \$30 million in '10, \$40 million in '11, and \$55 million in '12.

SEC. 2402 Improved Provision of Technical Assistance Under Conservation Programs

Includes provisions for specialty crop technical assistance in order to make sure specifications are complete and relevant. The provision seeks to ensure adequate technical assistance to specialty crop growers by directing the Secretary to develop programs that meet the needs of specialty crop growers using cooperative agreements with other federal agencies and NGOs, and include program specifications that allow the use of local resources in providing technical assistance.

SEC. 2403 Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative

Directs the Secretary to enter into 5 year agreements with eligible entities (including specialty crop producers) to enroll producers in specified conservation programs. Allows multiple producers and others to improve specific resources of concern related to farming on a local, State, or regional scale. CSP, EQIP, FRPP, RWEP, and WHIP are covered by this section.

SEC. 2501 Packing and Handling Operations as “on farm” Income

Adds “packing and handling” to approved list of on-farm income for purposes of the AGI related to conservation programs.

SEC. 2502 Encouragement of voluntary sustainability practices guidelines

Allows the Secretary to encourage the development of voluntary sustainability practices guidelines for producers and processors of specialty crops.

TITLE III TRADE

SEC. 3003 Market Access Program

Reauthorizes and provides mandatory funding. Funding: \$200 million per year for fiscal years '06 and '07 and \$225 million per year in fiscal years '08-12.

SEC. 3007 Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops

Reauthorizes and provides mandatory funding. Funding: \$4 million for fiscal year '08, \$6 million for fiscal year '09, \$8 million for fiscal year '10, to \$10 million for fiscal years 2011 and 2012.

SEC. 3008 Technical Assistance for the Resolution of Trade Disputes

Allows the Secretary of Agriculture to provide monitoring, analytic support, and other technical assistance to limited resource persons and organizations associated with agricultural trade to address unfair trade practices of foreign countries and to reduce trade barriers. Funding: authorized funds.

TITLE IV NUTRITION

SEC. 4015 Food Stamp Nutrition Education

Expresses the findings of Congress that food stamp nutrition education plays an essential role in improving the dietary practices of low income families and directs the Secretary of Agriculture to support and encourage the most effective interventions including public health approached as well as traditional education to implement FSNE.

SEC. 4301 Expansion of DOD Fresh Program

Increases fruit and vegetable purchases in school meal programs by increasing funding to the DOD Fresh Program. Funding: Directs Secretary to spend no less than \$50 million per year in '08 and '09, and \$75 million per year in '10 through '12 (mandatory funds)

SEC. 4303 Expansion of Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Nationally expands the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to 35 schools in every state. Funding: \$70 million mandatory funding each fiscal year from 2008-2012.

SEC. 4401 Seniors Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

Provides funds for the Farmer's Market Nutrition Promotion Program. Funding: \$15 million mandatory funding per year for fiscal years 2008-2012; Additional Funding: \$20 million for fiscal year '08, \$30 million for fiscal year '09, \$45 million for fiscal year '10, \$60 million for fiscal year '11, and \$75 million for fiscal year '12 (authorized).

SEC. 4404 Maximize Nutritional Value in School Lunch and Breakfast

Expresses the findings of Congress that food items provided in the school breakfast and school lunch program should be selected as to reduce incidence of juvenile obesity and to maximize nutritional value.

TITLE VI RURAL DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 6027 Value-Added Agricultural Market Development Program

Reauthorizes and provides mandatory funding to carry out grant program. Funding: \$30 million per year from fiscal year '08 –'12.

TITLE VII RESEARCH

SEC. 7104 Prioritizing Federal Research Activities for Specialty Crops

Provides that the Under Secretary of 6 research program offices shall coordinate with and assist producers and organizations of the specialty crop industry to develop and implement applied research and extension and coordinate among research initiatives funded and sponsored by USDA.

SEC. 7204 Specialty Crop Committee Report

Expands the list of recommendations the specialty crops committee must make annually to the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board to include economic analyses of the specialty crop sector and data that provide applied information useful to specialty crop growers.

SEC. 7411 Specialty Crop Research Initiative

Establishes the Specialty Crop Research Initiative to develop and disseminate science-based tools to address the needs of specific crops and their regions. Competitive grants awarded. Funding: \$215 million for fiscal years 2008-2012 (mandatory funding); provides an additional \$100 million per year for 2008 – 2012 (authorized).

Sec. 7412 Office of Pest Management Policy

Reauthorizes and extends program with authorized funds from 2008-2012.

Sec. 7511 Fresh Cut Produce Safety Grants

Allows Secretary to award competitive research and extension grants to entities to enable them to design, implement, and evaluate innovative, cost-effective programs to improve fresh cut produce safety. Funding: total level of \$25 million mandatory funding for fiscal years 2008-2012.

TITLE IX ENERGY

SEC. 9007 Adjustments to the Bioenergy Program.

Amends the definition of “eligible feedstock” in USDA’s Bioenergy Program to include specialty crop waste and byproducts.

TITLE X HORTICULTURE AND ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

SEC. 10101 Tree Assistance Program

Makes nursery tree growers eligible for TAP and increases payment limit from \$75K to \$150K.

SEC. 10102 Specialty Crop Block Grants

Extends the Specialty Crop Block Grants Program through 2012. Funding: Provides mandatory funding, \$60 million in FY '08, \$65 million in FY '09, \$70 million in FY '10, \$75 million in FY '11, and \$95 million by 2012.

SEC. 10103 Section 32 Specialty Crop Purchases

Increases the minimum threshold (currently at \$200 million per year) of Section 32 funds dedicated to fruit, vegetable and nut purchases and expands the Secretary's purchase discretion to include value-added fruit, vegetable and nut products. Funding: Mandatory funding increase from \$190 million in FY '08, \$193 million in FY '09, \$199 million in FY '10, \$203 million in FY '11, and \$206 million beginning in 2012. This funding is in addition to the \$200 million under current law.

SEC. 10104 Independent Evaluation of USDA Commodity Purchases Process

Requires the Secretary to perform an independent evaluation of the commodity purchasing processes used by USDA to remove surplus commodities from the market and support commodity prices and producer incomes, especially with regards to activities under Sec. 32 and the importance of increasing purchases of specialty crops.

SEC. 10106 Implementation of Food Safety Programs under Marketing Orders

Authorizes the implementation of quality-related food safety programs under specialty crop marketing orders.

SEC. 10107 Inclusion of Specialty Crops in Census of Agriculture

Includes a census of specialty crops as part of the general census of agriculture.

SEC. 10110 Fresh Produce Education Initiative

Directs the Secretary to establish a Fresh Produce Education Initiative to educate persons involved in the fresh produce industry about proper food safety handling and practices. Funding: Appropriated necessary sums.

SEC. 10201 Pest and Disease Program

Combines a series of policy priorities under HR 1600, and establishes a new program to determine and prioritize pest and disease threats to the domestic production of specialty crops. Directs the Secretary to develop risk assessments, prioritize pest and disease threats, develop action plans, and implement some. Directs the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into cooperative agreements with State Departments of Agriculture to conduct early pest detection activities. Provides for auditing and reporting on the use of funds. Establishes a program for the distribution of funds through cooperative agreements with specialty crop growers, their representative organizations, and State/local agencies to develop audit-based certification procedures to protect against the spread of pests and disease. Funding: ramps up mandatory funding \$10 million in fiscal year '08, \$25 million in fiscal year '09, \$40 million in fiscal year '10, \$55 million in fiscal year '11, and \$70 million in '12.

SEC. 10202 Multi Species Fruit Fly Research and Sterile Fly Production

Authorizes the construction of a warehouse and irradiation containment facility for fruit fly rearing and sterilization in Waimanalo, Hawaii. Funding: \$15 million is authorized to be appropriated for construction, \$1 million for each fiscal year is authorized.

SEC. 10401 Grant Program to Improve Movement of Specialty Crops

Authorizes the Secretary to make grants to State and local governments, grower cooperatives, and producer/shipper organizations to improve the movement of specialty crops Matching Grant Program. Funding: Appropriated necessary sums.

SEC. 10402 Authorization of Appropriations for Market News Activities Regarding Specialty Crops.

Authorizes necessary funds through 2012 for specialty crop market news activities. Funding: Appropriated necessary sums.

SEC. 10403 Farmers' Market Promotion Program

Provides \$35 million over 5 years to support direct farmer to consumer marketing activities. Not less than 10% of the funds shall be used to support the use of electronic benefit transfers (EBT) at farmers' markets. Funding: \$5 million mandatory funds in fiscal years 2008, 2009, and 2010, and \$10 million mandatory funds in fiscal years 2011 and 2012.

SEC. 10405 National Clean Plant Network

Directs the Secretary to establish the National Clean Plant Network which will provide a funding mechanism to distribute healthy plant stock throughout the specialty crop industry. Funding: a total of \$20 million mandatory funding over fiscal years 2008 through 2012. Additional funding: Authorized such sums necessary to carry out program.