

Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance

Working to Make American Agriculture Stronger

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SPECIALTY CROP PRODUCERS LOOK FORWARD TO SENATE CONSIDERATION OF THE FARM BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance (SCFBA), a national coalition of more than 120 specialty crop organizations representing 350 individual specialty crops, has issued the following statement in connection with the passage of the Farm Bill by the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee:

“Today’s action in the Senate Agriculture Committee is an important step forward in recognizing the importance of specialty crops in national farm policy. We appreciate the bipartisan support for our priorities that helped shape the bill passed by the committee, and look forward to continuing to work together with Congressional allies to address specialty crop needs as the bill is considered on the Senate floor and in conference. This legislation makes a strong commitment in improving nutrition and obesity among children by expanding the USDA Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program to 5,000 schools and 4.5 million children. The Senate Farm Bill acknowledged other key priorities such as providing trade assistance and market promotion tools to open new and expand existing international markets, investing in research to improve the quality, taste and nutrition of fruits and vegetables and support for state specialty crop competitiveness projects that target the specific needs of local specialty crop producers. In addition, today’s action coupled with the Senate Finance Committee will foster significant improvements in efforts by USDA to combat invasive pest and diseases.

Over the last two years, specialty crop producers have been advocating for a Farm Bill that is more balanced and equitable for our producers. The Farm bill approved by the Senate Agriculture Committee reflects that goal. We appreciate the leadership of Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Chambliss, Senators Stabenow, Conrad, Casey, and Crapo, in particular, for their leadership on behalf of the nation’s specialty crop producers.”

Priorities of Specialty Crop Producers

- Expansion of the USDA Fruit & Vegetable Snack Program to all 50 states. The program and others involving healthy foods and community projects help develop life-long health through consumption of fruits and vegetables
- Greater investment in research to improve the taste and quality of foods
- Expansion of the “State Specialty Crop Competitiveness” projects based on its proven track record of delivering results for specific local needs
- Enhanced critical trade assistance and market promotion tools that will grow international markets for specialty crops
- Investment in prevention and mitigation protocols to combat invasive pest and diseases, which cost the economy millions of dollars per year

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