

ANALYSIS OF HB 1370

House Agriculture & Ecology Committee

January 29, 1999

Extends the date by which monies transferred from a district fruit and vegetable fund must be expended for apple maggot control activities or be returned to the district fund.

BACKGROUND:

State law authorizes the Director of Agriculture to establish a fee-for-service program to provide, *upon request, services to growers and other interested parties for special inspections and certifications, identifications, diagnostic services, and activities needed to facilitate the movement or sale of plant products or bees and bee products. Monies collected from providing these services are deposited in the Plant Pest Account in the Agricultural Local Fund. The account is a revolving fund for providing these services. Other funds deposited in this Account may also be used to provide these services. (RCW 17.24.131.)*

Other laws require the Director of Agriculture to establish standards and grades for apples, apricots, Italian prunes, peaches, sweet cherries, pears, potatoes and asparagus and allow the Director to establish them for other fruits and vegetables. (Chapter 15.17 RCW and RCW 15.17.050) For the purposes of these laws, the state is divided into not less than three fruit and vegetable inspection districts. The Director may assign a district manager to each district to administer the regulatory and inspection program within the district. (RCW 15.17.230.) The fees collected for these services are deposited in a district fund, which is used as a revolving fund to carry out services within the district. Some of the monies in the district fund are also transferred to the state Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Trust Account. (RCW 15.17.240 and .245.)

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In 1997, legislation authorized a transfer of \$200,000 in District #2 funds to the Plant Pest Account for activities related to apple maggot control. Funds from this transfer that are unexpended by June 30, 1999, are to be returned to the district fund. (Chapter 227, Laws of 1997 and RCW 15.17.243.) The titles assigned to the district managing personnel and the names given to the district and state inspection accounts were changed by legislation that re-wrote the horticulture laws in 1998. (Chapter 154, Laws of 1998.)

By rule, District #2 is made up of Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania, Yakima, and a portion (the Prosser, Kiona, and Benton City areas) of Benton County. (WAC 16-458-075.)

SUMMARY:

The date by which monies transferred from the district fund of District #2 must be expended from the Plant Pest Account for apple maggot control activities or be returned to the district fund is extended to June 30, 2001 (from June 30, 1999).

EFFECTIVE DATE: *The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect June 30, 1999.*