

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1681

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Agriculture & Natural Resources

**Title:** An act relating to the fruit and vegetable district fund.

**Brief Description:** Regarding the fruit and vegetable district fund.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Newhouse, Chandler, Upthegrove, Johnson and Ross.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/5/09, 2/12/09 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Authorizes a transfer of \$150,000 from the Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Account to the Plant Pest Account for control activities related to *Rhagoletis pomonella*.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Jacks, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Smith, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, Lias, McCoy, Nelson, Ormsby, Pearson, Van De Wege and Warnick.

**Staff:** Jason Callahan (786-7117)

**Background:**

Fruit and Vegetable District Funds.

The Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Account (Inspection Account) houses all fees collected by the Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) to recover the costs of inspections or certifications of fruits and vegetables. Funds in the Inspection Account are to be used for the WSDA's fruit and vegetable inspection program.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Washington is divided into two fruit and vegetable inspection districts. Each district has an individual district fund within the larger Inspection Account. If the district fund contains a certain amount of money, the inspection fees for that district are reduced.

#### Plant Pest Account.

The Plant Pest Account (Pest Account) is used by the WSDA as a receptacle for any fees collected for special inspections, plant diagnostic services, pest control activities, or special certifications requested by growers, farmers, or other interested parties. These services may be requested of the WSDA to facilitate the movement or sale of various agricultural products, including forest products, floricultural products, and horticultural products.

#### *Rhagoletis Pomonella* Control.

*Rhagoletis pomonella*, commonly referred to as the apple maggot, but also known as the railroad worm, is a native insect to North America. It is considered to be a pest of several fruits, including apples.

In 1997 a set amount of the tree fruit inspection fees collected in one of the fruit and vegetable inspection districts was transferred from the Inspection Account to the Pest Account. The transfer was for \$200,000 and was required to be used for the control of *Rhagoletis pomonella* within the district.

If any amount of the \$200,000 is still available as of June 30, 2009, that amount must be transferred back to the Inspection Account and credited to the fruit and vegetable inspection district which contains Yakima County.

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#### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

An additional transfer of \$150,000 from the Inspection Account to the Pest Account is authorized by July 1, 2009. Like the 1997 transfer, the funds involved in this transfer must originate from tree fruit inspection fees collected in one of the fruit and vegetable inspection districts, and the funds must be used for the control of *Rhagoletis pomonella* within the district. The fruit and vegetable inspection district affected by the transfer includes Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania, Yakima, Pacific, Lewis, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Clark, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Asotin, Whitman, and Garfield counties.

If any amount of the \$150,000 is still available as of June 30, 2013, that amount must be transferred back to the Inspection Account and credited to the fruit and vegetable inspection district that contains Yakima County.

#### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The original bill was ambiguous as to whether a new transfer of funds was being authorized, or if the amount of a past authorization was being reduced. The substitute bill repeals the existing authority for the past transfer and creates a new section clearly authorizing a new transfer.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The bill only uses fees paid by growers to the WSDA for inspections. The accumulation of these fees over time can generate a small surplus that can be used for other services that benefit the agriculture producers paying the fees. The original \$200,000 transfer in 1997 was used for apple maggot control and is just now spent down to \$0.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Dave Ducharme, Yakima Valley Growers and Shippers Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.