

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1426

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & WATER RESOURCES,
MARCH 28, 1991**

Brief Description: Establishing the center for sustaining agriculture and natural resources, and the food and environmental quality laboratory as research and extension programs of Washington State University.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Agriculture & Rural Development (originally sponsored by Representatives Grant, Ballard, Rayburn, Nealey, Rust, Belcher, Ludwig, Prince, Heavey, Inslee, Bray, Rasmussen, Jacobsen, Lisk, Kremen, Spanel and Edmondson).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & WATER RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Barr, Chairman; Anderson, Vice Chairman; Bailey, Conner, Gaspard, Hansen, and Newhouse.

Staff: John Stuhlmiller (786-7446)

Hearing Dates: March 26, 1991; March 28, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Concern over the safety of the food supply has prompted university and regulatory interests to consider ways to increase public confidence as to the adequacy of food safety programs in the state. Expressed needs in the area of safety assurance include developing the necessary facilities to conduct pesticide residue analysis. Additionally, growers have expressed the need for increased research and extension assistance to help them develop alternative pest control methods.

The federal Interregional Research Project Number Four (IR-4) program was established to provide data required for the registration of pesticides for the production of minor crops.

SUMMARY:

Center and Lab Created; Appropriation. A Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources is established at Washington State University and must operate with or without additional state funding. A Food and Environmental Quality Laboratory is created at Washington State University at the Tri-Cities if funding for the laboratory is specifically provided in the 1991-1993 biennial budget.

Center. The Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources is established at Washington State University. The center is created to provide leadership in research, extension and resident instruction programs to sustain agriculture and natural resources. The activities of the center will be concentrated in areas such as on-farm testing and research in farming systems and technologies and improved farm management including integrated pest management and food safety and quality issues.

The center will be managed by an administrator who will also serve as an assistant director in the Washington State University Agricultural Research Center and Cooperative Extension. An advisory committee consisting of representatives from government and industry organizations is created to assist the administrator.

The administrator, in consultation with the advisory committee, is directed to recommend research and extension priorities for the center, to conduct a competitive grants process to prioritize research and extension proposals, and advise Washington State University on the progress of the development and implementation of research, teaching and extension programs in sustaining agriculture and natural resources.

Laboratory. A Food and Environmental Quality Laboratory is established at Washington State University in the Tri-Cities. The laboratory is to evaluate regional needs for minor crop pesticide registration through the IR-4 program; conduct pesticide residue studies; improve pesticide information and education programs; and assist in the registration of alternative pest control methods.

An advisory board for the laboratory is to be appointed by the dean of the Washington State University College of Agriculture and Home Economics. The advisory board is made up of education, research, government, chemical industry, agriculture, consumer and environmental representatives. The board will review the chemicals investigated by the laboratory in its research programs.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

Language requiring the center to be established without additional funding is eliminated.

Farm labor is added to the center's advisory committee.

Washington State University is required to work cooperatively with the University of Washington on forestry issues.

Washington State University is given the authority to locate the laboratory any place in the Tri-Cities area.

The language dealing with the annual report required of the center is modified such that the center is directed to use existing federal criteria for determining acceptable risk for human and environmental exposure, rather than creating new state standards.

Appropriations of \$1.2 million for the center and \$1.2 million for the laboratory are made. Those appropriations are made null and void if funding is not provided in the budget.

The Department of Agriculture is directed to develop a program to provide assistance and information on the registration and reregistration process for plant protection products. The department shall consult with the Minor Uses Advisory Committee to track the availability of effective pest control methods, provide information to grower organizations, and provide technical and financial assistance to minor use research efforts at Washington State University.

The Minor Uses Advisory Committee is created in the Department of Agriculture consisting of the Coordinator of the Interregional Project Number 4 (IR4) Program at Washington State University and six members appointed by the Director of Agriculture. The committee shall advise the department on all minor uses issues, cooperate with the United States Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency in obtaining federal registrations of plant protection products for minor uses, and maintain close contact between the Department of Agriculture and agricultural producers regarding the need for research to support the registration of plant protection products for minor uses.

An appropriation of \$49,500 is made to the Department of Agriculture for purposes of developing a minor use program.

TESTIMONY FOR:

This is an important measure for agriculture and very much needed. The bill sends an important message to all in the state. The pesticide laboratory is especially important to establish in the state.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Bruce R. Ellingson, Washington Association of Apple Growers (pro); Larry Ganders, Washington State University (pro); Larry Schrader, Washington State University (pro); Lou Hiett, Washington Friends of Farms and Forest (pro); David Rutherford, Washington State Grange (pro)