

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5723

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As Passed Senate, February 25, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to standards and grades for fruits and vegetables.

**Brief Description:** Extending an asparagus exception to the standards for fruits and vegetables.

**Sponsors:** Senators Delvin, Rasmussen, Schoesler, Mulliken and Rockefeller.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 2/8/05 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/25/05, 42-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Delvin, Jacobsen, Morton and Sheldon.

**Staff:** Bob Lee (786-7404)

**Background:** Prior to 2004, it was mandatory for the Department of Agriculture to establish grades and standards for asparagus. For several other agricultural commodities, the department had discretion to establish standards.

In 2004, the requirement that rules be adopted establishing standards for asparagus exempted asparagus being shipped out of state for fresh packing. This provision was temporary and expires on December 31, 2005.

**Summary of Bill:** The expiration date of December 31, 2005 is extended two years to December 31, 2007.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Last year, the need arose due to the closure of the Del Monte plant and asparagus growers were needing additional options to market their crop. The two year extension is needed because the Seneca plant will be closing and there is a desire for shipment of fresh asparagus to California for export markets.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Kevin Bouchey and Charlie Brown, Washington Asparagus Council.