

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1889

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government

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

Brief Description: Concerning the fruit and vegetable district fund.

Sponsors: Representatives Chandler and Blake.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government: 2/23/13 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes a district to transfer \$150,000 from the Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Account to the Plant Pest Account for control activities related to *Rhagoletis pomonella*.
- Removes a provision regarding unexpended funds from a previous fund transfer.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Parker, Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Chandler, Dunshee, Hunt, Pedersen, Springer and Taylor.

Staff: Michael Bennion (786-7118).

Background:

Fruit and Vegetable District Funds.

The Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Account (Inspection Account) contains all fees collected by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) to recover the costs of

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.

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.

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.

Horticultural pest and disease boards are formed at the county level to do control work for pests that impact commercial fruit crops. The WSDA performs surveys to detect the presence of pests but the control work is performed by local horticultural pest and disease boards.

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, and there is concern about the impact that the apple maggot would have on the commercial fruit crop.

In 1997 \$200,000 of tree fruit inspection fees collected in one of the fruit and vegetable inspection districts was transferred from the Inspection Account to the Pest Account. In 2009 the Legislature authorized the same district to transfer an additional \$150,000 with the stipulation that any amount still available as of June 30, 2013, must be transferred back to the Inspection Account and credited to the fruit and vegetable inspection district which contains Yakima County. Monies from both transfers were required to be used for the control of *Rhagoletis pomonella* within the district.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

An additional \$150,000 is authorized to be transferred from the Inspection Account to the Pest Account by September 1, 2013. The funds involved in this transfer must originate from tree fruit inspection fees collected in one of the fruit and vegetable inspection districts, and 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.

Reference to where unexpended portions of the 2009 transfer are placed is removed. The purposes of the transfers expire on July 1, 2020.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill clarifies the intent of the original bill that an additional transfer of \$150,000 can be made by September 1, 2013.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect June 30, 2013.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a request similar to what has been done in the past to ensure the resources for coordination between the WSDA and county pest boards in the inspection and eradication of the apple maggot, which can virtually shut down access to foreign markets for state products if infestation or contamination occurs. The two accounts are industry funded through fees and the reserve in one account is periodically shifted to the other to ensure healthy crops.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: David Ducharme, Yakima Valley Growers Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.