

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6343

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to modifying the powers and duties of the Washington dairy products commission to include research and education related to the economic uses of nutrients produced by dairy farms.

Brief Description: Modifying the powers and duties of the Washington dairy products commission to include research and education related to the economic uses of nutrients produced by dairy farms.

Sponsors: Senators Warnick, Takko, Hobbs and Chase; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/23/16 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Washington Dairy Products Commission to conduct research and education related to the economic uses of nutrients produced by dairy farms.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Walkinshaw, Vice Chair; Buys, Ranking Minority Member; Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hurst, Lytton, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Schmick, Stanford and Van De Wege.

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

Dairy Nutrients.

"Nutrients produced on dairy farms" (dairy nutrients) is the organic waste produced by dairy cows on a dairy farm operation. The Dairy Nutrient Management Program (Program) is

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administered by the Department of Agriculture (Department) to help protect water quality from dairy nutrient discharges. The Program requires all licensed cow dairies to develop and implement dairy nutrient management plans, register with the Department, and participate in regular inspections.

Dairy nutrients contain nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, and other nutrients, in varying quantities, which promote plant growth. For this reason, dairy and other livestock nutrients are sometimes composted to be used as garden fertilizer.

Washington Dairy Products Commission.

The Washington Dairy Products Commission (Dairy Commission) is one of several commodity commissions in the state, and promotes and provides public education regarding the state's dairy industry. The Dairy Commission also conducts research to develop efficient and equitable methods of marketing dairy products.

Summary of Bill:

The Dairy Commission is authorized to conduct research and education related to economic uses of nutrients produced on dairy farms.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a companion bill to a bill previously heard in this committee, and the House bill is currently moving through the Senate. It is well worth adding dairy nutrient research to the powers and duties of the Dairy Commission. This research will help the Dairy Commission to increase consumer confidence in the dairy industry, and contribute to public education regarding dairy farm practices and the various uses of dairy nutrients, including alternative energy and compost.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Warnick, prime sponsor; and Kirk Robinson, Department of Agriculture.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.