

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 6345

C 229 L 16
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Merging the department of agriculture's fruit and vegetable inspection districts and accounts.

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

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water & Rural Economic Development
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: The Washington State Department of Agriculture's (WSDA) Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program (Program) operates on delegated authority from the U.S. Department of Agriculture through fee-for-service-based, state sponsored programs.

The Program provides inspection services to the fresh produce and processing industry to ensure orderly marketing of fruits and vegetables. Major commodities inspected include apples, pears, cherries, peaches, asparagus, potatoes, and onions.

These commodities are inspected for quality, size, labeling, condition, and contract specifications; and may be certified as free from disease and insects as required by domestic and international markets. These inspections include phytosanitary certification, shipping point inspection, third party grading of raw product for processing, and export certification. The program also licenses controlled atmosphere storage facilities for factors affecting the marketability and export of fresh and processed fruits and vegetables.

These services are provided through two district offices, each with a district manager, and 10 field offices located throughout the state. The Northeast and Northwest Regions are administered from East Wenatchee. The Southwest and Southeast Regions are administered from Yakima.

The fees collected under the Program are deposited into the fruit and vegetable inspection account in the custody of the state treasurer. Within this account, WSDA must maintain separate accounts for each district. Two \$150,000 transfers of funds from tree fruit inspections were authorized for 2009 and 2013, for the control of *Rhagoletis pomonella* in District Two.

Summary: Authority to administer the Program through two districts is repealed.

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.

The positions of district manager are deleted.

The requirement for WSDA to maintain separate accounts for each district is deleted. The section addressing control of *Rhagoletis pomonella* is repealed.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 49 0

House 97 0

Effective: June 9, 2016