

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1150

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, April 2, 1999

Title: An act relating to planting stock certification.

Brief Description: Certifying planting stock.

Sponsors: Representatives G. Chandler, Linville and Cooper; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 4/2/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; T. Sheldon, Vice Chair; Gardner, Honeyford, Morton, Stevens and Swecker.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The Plant Certification Program is administered by the Department of Agriculture. The purpose of the program is to inspect and certify that planting stock is free of plant pests and is genetically pure. Eight types of stock are involved including fruit trees, seed potatoes, hop rootstock, grapevines, caneberry plants, strawberry plants, seed garlic and mint rootstock.

The program assures high quality planting stock for fruit and vegetable growers in the state and for domestic and foreign markets. The program is self-supported through assessments and fees. The statute has been largely unchanged since it was first passed in 1961.

In 1955, a statute was passed that applied to operation of the Northwest Washington Nursery by the Department of Agriculture. That 72-acre operation is no longer owned or operated by the Department of Agriculture.

Summary of Bill: The Plant Certification Program is updated to clarify authority to take samples, allow access to premises for inspection and sampling, and to require participants in the certification program to provide records showing compliance with certification rules. Authority is provided to publish names of growers and inspection results of certified plant stock. Also, if post-harvest tests show the planting stock has failed to meet certification requirements, growers are required to notify purchasers.

Authority for imposing a late charge of 1 1/2 percent per month for unpaid balances of over 30 days is provided. Services provided by the department may be refused to growers who

fail to comply with provisions of this chapter, or for nonpayment of fees or commodity commission assessments.

A 1955 statute that provided for operation of the Northwest Washington Nursery is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: It is needed to update the law to reflect the practices now found in the planting stock industry.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Mary Beth Lang, Dept. of Agriculture (pro).