

Agriculture & Ecology Committee

HB 1780

Brief Description: Concerning moneys in the fruit and vegetable district fund.

Sponsors: Representatives Armstrong, Linville, B. Chandler and Grant.

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Extends the date by which monies transferred from a district fruit and vegetable fund must be expended for apple maggot control activities or be returned to the district fund.*

Hearing Date: 2/20/01

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background:

State law authorizes the Director of Agriculture to establish a fee-for-service program to provide, upon request, services to growers and other interested parties for special inspections and certifications, identifications, diagnostic services, and activities needed to facilitate the movement or sale of plant products or bees and bee products. Monies collected from providing these services are deposited in the Plant Pest Account in the Agricultural Local Fund. (RCW 17.24.131.)

Other laws require the Director of Agriculture to establish standards and grades for apples, apricots, Italian prunes, peaches, sweet cherries, pears, potatoes and asparagus and allow the Director to establish them for other fruits and vegetables. (Chapter 15.17 RCW and RCW 15.17.050) For the purposes of these laws, the state is divided into not less than three fruit and vegetable inspection districts. The Director may assign a district manager to each district to administer the regulatory and inspection program within the district. (RCW 15.17.230.) The fees collected for these services are deposited in a district fund, which is used as a revolving fund to carry out services within the district. Some of the monies in the district fund are also transferred to the state Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Trust Account. (RCW 15.17.240 and .245.)

In 1997, legislation authorized a transfer of \$200,000 in District #2 funds to the Plant Pest Account for activities related to apple maggot control. Funds from this transfer that are unexpended by June 30, 2001, are to be returned to the district fund. (RCW 15.17.243.)

Summary of Bill:

The date by which monies transferred from the district fund of District #2 must be expended from the Plant Pest Account for apple maggot control activities or be returned to the district fund is extended by two years to June 30, 2003.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Available.*

Effective Date: *The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on June 30, 2001.*