AN ACT Relating to the agricultural labor skills and safety grant program; adding a new section to chapter 43.330 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature recognizes that Washington is one of the most productive growing regions in the country and Washington's agriculture is an integral part of this state's economic health. The legislature also recognizes the agricultural industry's need for skilled workers and the workers' need in upgrading their agricultural skills and marketability. The legislature recognizes that providing skills and safety training for Washington agricultural workers helps ensure their success and safety and helps to ensure the continued success of Washington's agricultural industry.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 43.330 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall create and administer the agricultural labor skills and safety grant program that will provide training opportunities for Washington agricultural workers.
(2) The department shall select one recipient that has a community-based organization whose primary mission is to provide services to Washington agricultural workers and that has the ability to carry out the objectives in subsection (3) of this section. The department must ensure that the grant recipient gives priority to Washington agricultural workers. The training is open to all workers in Washington agriculture, and is intended to improve job employability of workers who live in Washington state and to improve the skills and knowledge of workers who work on a permanent, local seasonal, or seasonal migrant basis, and who intend to return to Washington state to work in Washington state agriculture. 

(3) The grant recipient shall provide training to agricultural workers in workforce skills and safety training by working with agricultural employee and agricultural employer organizations in:

(a) Designing and implementing an agricultural skills development program;

(b) Developing a plan to increase the number of skilled agricultural workers through outreach to Washington agricultural workers;

(c) Providing agricultural health and safety training to its participants and ensuring that participation in the training program is voluntary;

(d) Conducting project evaluations on agricultural trainings and service delivery strategies for agricultural workers and employers;

(e) Partnering with an agricultural employee and an agricultural employer organization that has focused on agricultural labor and employment issues and services for Washington agricultural workers for at least ten years, and that has experience in providing training to agricultural employees in developing and providing the training curriculum; and

(f) Delivering training through a service delivery system that is sensitive to the unique needs of Washington agricultural employers and agricultural workers, including the barriers to employment for agricultural workers.

(4) The grant recipient may receive up to one million dollars per year.

(5) This section expires July 1, 2018.

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