

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1426

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Agriculture & Rural Development
Appropriations*

Title: An act relating to research and extension programs of Washington State University.

Brief Description: Establishing the center for sustaining agriculture and natural resources, and the food and environmental quality laboratory as research and extension programs of Washington State University.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Grant, Ballard, Rayburn, Nealey, Rust, Belcher, Ludwig, Prince, Heavey, Inslee, Bray, Rasmussen, Jacobsen, Lisk, Kremen, Spanel and Edmondson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Agriculture & Rural Development, February 7, 1991, DPS;
Appropriations, March 10, 1991, DPS(AG)-A.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Majority Report: *That Substitute House Bill No. 1426 be substituted therefore, and the substitute bill do pass.*
Signed by 11 members: Representatives Rayburn, Chair; Kremen, Vice Chair; Nealey, Ranking Minority Member; P. Johnson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler; Grant; R. Johnson; Lisk; McLean; Rasmussen; and Roland.

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background: State law designates courses of instruction in agriculture, veterinary medicine, and economic science (as it applies to agriculture and rural life) as exclusive major lines of instruction at Washington State University (WSU). WSU, a federal land grant university, is the research, instructional, and administrative center for the cooperative extension program in this state.

The federal Interregional Research Project Number Four (IR-4) program was established to provide data required for the registration of pesticides for the production of minor crops.

Amendments to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act require pesticides registered with the federal government before November 1, 1984, to be reregistered under current registration standards and criteria.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Center & Lab Created; Appropriation. A Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources is established at Washington State University (WSU) and a Food and Environmental Quality Laboratory is created at WSU at the Tri-Cities. The sum of \$7.8 million is appropriated from the general fund to WSU for the 1991-1993 biennium. Of this amount, \$6.6 million is for the center and \$1.2 million is for the laboratory.

Center. The center's primary activities include: (1) research programs focusing on alternative production and marketing systems through integrated pest management, biological pest control, applied genetics, conservation, and knowledge of ecological nutrient management; (2) extension programs focusing on on-farm demonstrations and evaluations of alternative production practices and on information dissemination and training regarding sustainable agriculture; and (3) on-farm testing and research regarding costs, benefits, and trade-offs inherent in farming systems and technologies.

The center is managed by an administrator who holds a joint appointment as an assistant director in WSU's Agricultural Research Center and Cooperative Extension. An advisory committee is created. The administrator must consult the advisory committee in recommending research and extension priorities for the center, conducting a competitive grants process, and advising WSU on the progress of the center's programs.

Laboratory. The laboratory is established to conduct pesticide residue studies concerning fresh and processed foods, residues in the environment, and human and animal safety. The laboratory must: (1) conduct studies on pesticides on crops and in the environment; (2) improve pesticide information and education programs; (3) assist federal and state agencies with questions regarding the registration of pesticides which are deemed critical to crop production; (4) assist in the registration of biopesticides, pheromones, and other alternative chemical and biological pest control methods; and (5) evaluate regional requirements for minor crop registration through the federal Interregional Research Project Number Four (IR-4) program. The laboratory must conduct research activities using procedures and recordkeeping required of the IR-4 program and must coordinate its activities with the IR-4 program.

It must also cooperate with public and private laboratories in Idaho, Oregon, and this state.

An advisory board is created to advise the laboratory. The advisory board must use certain specified criteria in reviewing the chemicals investigated by the laboratory.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Added by the substitute bill are the provisions which: require the laboratory to assist in the registration of biopesticides, pheromones, and other alternative pest control methods; specify that the on-farm demonstrations and evaluations which must be conducted by the center are those for alternative production practices; require the members of the two advisory committees to serve without compensation but permit them to receive reimbursement for travel expenses; provide terms of office for members of the center's advisory committee; and require the laboratory's advisory board to be in liaison with the Pesticide Advisory Board and the Pesticide Incident Reporting and Tracking Panel. The substitute bill also alters the composition of the laboratory's advisory board.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 23, 1991.

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

Appropriation: Yes.

Testimony For: (1) The center will help identify means of reducing pesticide use through the use of proven alternatives. The laboratory will help secure the reregistration of pesticides which will otherwise be lost for use on what are nationally considered to be "minor" crops. These activities are necessary to sustain the agricultural industry in this state. (2) The center will use the entire state as its research "farm," linking farmers directly to the research. All research will have a technology transfer component. (3) Investigations into the biological control of pests will be expanded. (4) The federal residue testing lab can accommodate only four tests for locally important pesticides or issues each year. The Tri-Cities lab will give local interests access to approximately 30 such tests each year. (5) Monies for equipping the laboratory will be provided by the federal government. (6) The laboratory will give WSU for the first time the capability to trace the path of pesticides in soil and water. (7) The state should take early action regarding reregistration of pesticides and alternative practices rather than waiting until it is too late, as happened regarding the changes faced by the state's timber industry.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Larry Ganders, Fred Poston, Jim Zuiches, and Gary Piper, Washington State University (in favor); Tom Casey, Washington State Grange (in favor); Dan Coyne, Washington Dairy Federation (in favor); and Mark Triplett, Washington AgriBusiness Coalition (in favor).

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill by Committee on Agriculture & Rural Development be substituted therefor and the substitute bill as amended by Committee on Appropriations do pass.* Signed by 25 members: Representatives Locke, Chair; Inslee, Vice Chair; Spanel, Ranking Minority Member; Silver, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Morton; Appelwick; Belcher; Bowman; Braddock; Brekke; Dorn; Ebersole; Ferguson; Fuhrman; Hine; Lisk; McLean; Nealey; Pruitt; Rust; H. Sommers; Sprenkle; Valle; Wang; and Wineberry.

Staff: Sherie Story (786-7142).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee on Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee on Agriculture & Rural Development: A requirement is added for the center to prepare annual reports for the appropriate legislative committees, beginning on November 1, 1992. Additionally, the first report will identify criteria for determining acceptable risk for exposure to agricultural chemicals and the center's plan for conducting research and education to find and promote acceptable alternatives to chemicals that pose such risks. Subsequent reports will describe progress toward meeting identified goals. Clarification is added that the dean of the Washington State University College of Agriculture and Home Economics shall make appointments to the advisory committee.

Legislative intent is added to support the university's priority of establishing the Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources even without additional funding. The creation of the Tri-Cities Food and Environmental Quality Lab is made null and void if not specifically funded in the budget. The appropriations are removed.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Appropriation: Removed.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill as Amended: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: None.